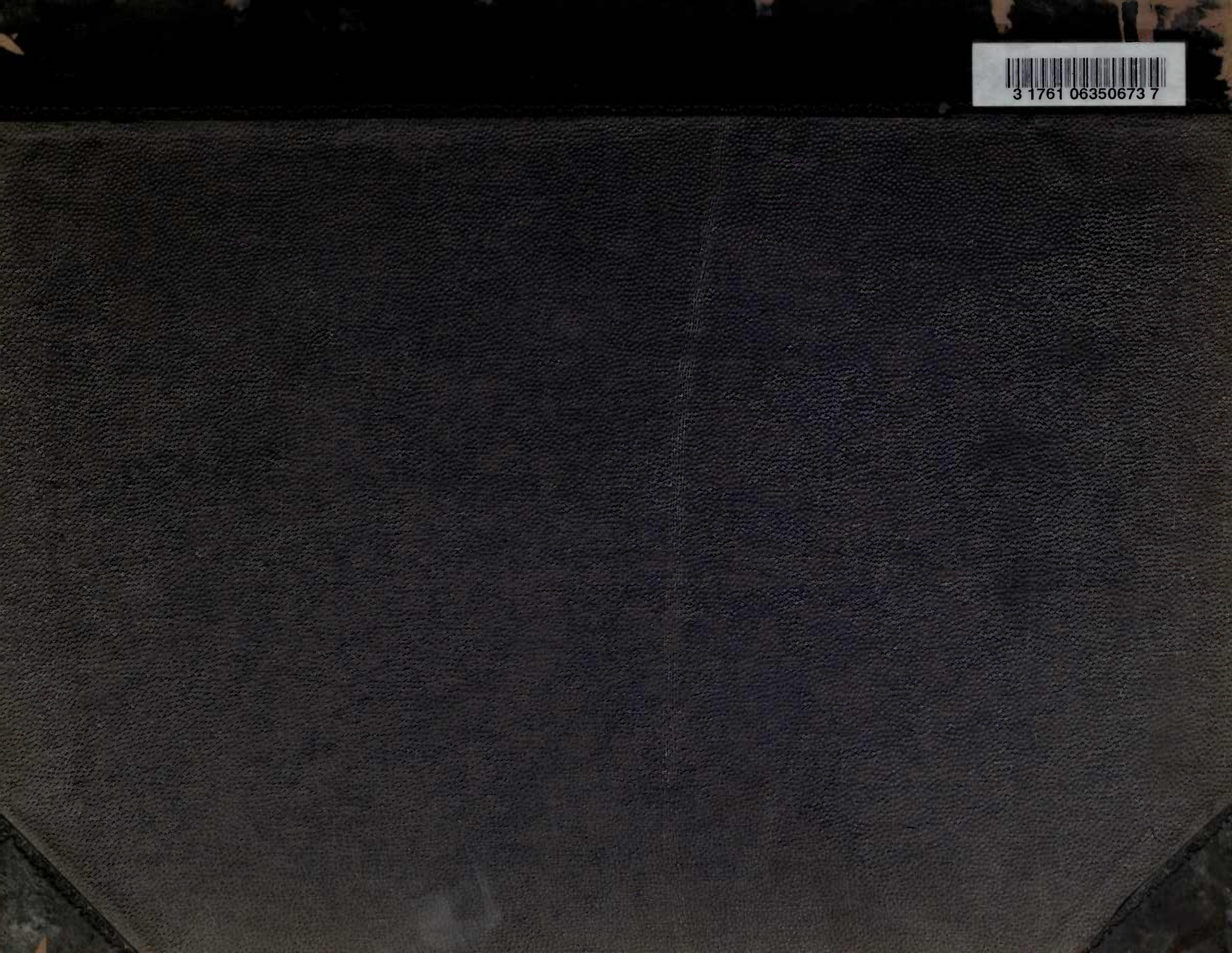

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A

CRITICAL

COMMENTARY AND PARAPHRASE

ON THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

AND THE

APOCRYPHA.

BY

PATRICK, LOWTH, ARNALD, WHITBY, AND LOWMAN.

A NEW EDITION:

CORRECTED BY THE

REV. J. R. PITMAN, M. A.

ALTERNATE EVENING PREACHER AT THE FOUNDLING AND MAGDALEN HOSPITALS.

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OBADIAH,	ZEPHANIAH,	ECCLESIASTICUS,	BEL AND THE DRAGON,

WITH

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A

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

TO THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

WILLIAM,

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE, LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY;

PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, AND METROPOLITAN;

AND ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY-COUNCIL.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

IN pursuance of my design to explain the prophetical writings, I humbly offer to your Grace the following Commentary upon the Prophet Ezekiel; the depth of whose thoughts and expressions might justly deter me from undertaking a work of so much difficulty: but, begging your Grace's and my reader's pardon if I have been guilty of lesser mistakes, I hope, at least, that I have avoided committing any dangerous errors, by carefully following those directions, which the text itself, and the labours of several judicious commentators upon it, have suggested to me; having had likewise the assistance of some very learned friends, who have been pleased to communicate their thoughts to me upon the most difficult passages of it.

The most remarkable difficulties of this prophecy relate to the description of the temple, represented to the Prophet in a heavenly vision. By the general consent of interpreters, this vision, in its mystical sense, sets forth a model or pattern of the *catholic church of Christ*, viewed in its state of perfection; of its largeness and extent, its strength and compactness, its beauty and order, and all those other qualifications, which are proper to edify and adorn this spiritual *house of the living God, the pillar and basis of truth.*

Our church, in conformity with that of the first and purest ages, hath always been careful to maintain those principles of *catholic unity and charity*, which, if they were generally embraced and received, would render the Christian church like that Jerusalem which was a figure of it, *a city at unity in itself.* And since it hath pleased the Divine Providence to appoint your Grace as a *wise master-builder* to preside over it, we may hope, that under his Majesty's most gracious protection, and your Grace's auspicious conduct, it may receive new accessions of strength and edification; and, according to the obliging words of the late royal promise, *be not only in a safe, but* likewise *in a flourishing condition.*

That becoming zeal which your Grace expressed against those *dangerous opinions* which every where spread and abound, in your excellent speech at the opening of the convocation, as it gave great satisfaction to all those who had the honour to hear it; so it may justly be looked upon as a certain indication of your continual care and concern for the advancement of true piety and religion among us.

That God, who hath advanced your Grace to this high station, may long continue you in it, and may prosper all your pious designs for the promoting his *glory*, and the *good of his church*, as it is the united prayer of that great body of the clergy placed under your Grace's jurisdiction, so it is of none more earnestly than of him who begs leave to subscribe himself,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most dutiful and obedient servant,

WILLIAM LOWTH.

PREFACE.

EZEKIEL was a prophet of the priestly order, carried away into Babylon with several other Jews in Jehoiachin's captivity, and therefore dates his prophecies by the years of that captivity. Clemens Alexandrinus tells us, some thought him contemporary with Pythagoras, and that they had conversed together in Babylon, (Strom. lib. i. n. 15.) This opinion he rejects as inconsistent with the age of Pythagoras, whom he supposes to have flourished about the sixty-second Olympiad, (ibid. n. 21.) which was near sixty years after Ezekiel was carried into Babylon. The late learned Bishop of Worcester, in his chronological account of Pythagoras's life, supposes him born about nine years

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after Ezekiel's coming to Babylon, and that Pythagoras himself came to Babylon at eighteen years of age; but there is no proof that ever he conversed with Ezekiel. Though it appears by the testimony of Hermippus, in Josephus, (lib. i. cont. Appion. n. 22.) that he had conversation with some Jews; and learned men have observed, that there is great resemblance between several of his symbols, and some of the precepts of the Jewish law.

But whatever became of Pythagoras, the accounts of whose life are very uncertain; it is certain that Ezekiel, being at Babylon, directed many of his prophecies to his fellow-exiles there, who, as St. Jerome observes in his preface to Ezekiel, repined at their ill fortune, and thought their countrymen, who remained in Judea, in a much better condition than themselves. The prophet, with regard to those circumstances, sets before their eyes that terrible scene of calamities which God would bring upon Judea and Jerusalem, which should end in the utter destruction of the city and temple. He recounts the heinous provocations of the Jews, which brought down these heavy judgments upon them, in strong and lively colours; his style exactly answering the character the Greek rhetoricians give of that part of oratory they call Δείνωσις, which Quinctilian defines to be "oratio quæ rebus asperis, indignis et invidiosis vim addit," (lib. vi. cap. 3.) its property being to aggravate things in themselves monstrous and odious, and represent them with great force and efficacy of expression. For the same reason Rapin, in his treatise of Eloquence, calls Ezekiel's style *le terrible*, as having something in it that strikes the reader with a holy dread and astonishment.

Josephus (lib. x. Antiq. cap. 6.) divides this prophecy into two books; but it is generally supposed, that he took that part of the prophecy which contains a description of the temple, beginning at the fortieth chapter, for a distinct book from the rest, as treating altogether of a different subject.

St. Jerome hath more than once observed (Præfat. in Ezek. et in Prolog. Galeato), that the beginning and latter part of this prophecy is more than ordinary difficult and obscure, and may justly be reckoned among the Δυσνοητὰ, or things in Scripture which are *hard to be understood*. To contribute what I could to the clearing of these difficulties, I have took the liberty of transferring into the following Commentary whatever I thought useful for that purpose in the elaborate work of Villalpandus, a book which is in very few hands; and in the later observations of Bernardus L'Amy, in his learned book de Tabernaculo Fœderis.

But I must not conceal the kind assistance I have received upon this and former occasions, from that great master of Divine and human learning, the Right Reverend Father in God, Edward, Lord Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield; and I gladly embrace the opportunity of making my grateful acknowledgments to his Lordship in this public manner, for his many and constant favours.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The first chapter contains a description of God's appearing in a glorious manner to Ezekiel, in order to the giving him a commission to execute the prophetical office.

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass.*] The Hebrew text reads, *And it came to pass;* but it is usual in that language to begin a discourse or book with the particle *vau*, or *and;* (see Jonah i. 1. and the beginning of most of the historical books of the Old Testament;) which particle is very properly translated in those places, *Now it came to pass:* so that there is no ground for the fancy of Spinosa, who would conclude from hence, that this book of Ezekiel is but a fragment of a larger book, and contained several prophecies now lost, which were in order of time before those set down in these and the following chapters.

In the thirtieth year.] It is a great question, from whence this computation of time commences. The most probable answers are, first, that of Scaliger, who supposes this thirtieth year to be meant of the years of Nabupolassar's reign; who, as he tells us from Berosus, quoted by Josephus, (lib. i. contr. App.) reigned twenty-nine years complete: so the thirtieth year, here mentioned, was the last year of his reign and life; and is likewise the thirteenth year current of his son Nebuchadnezzar's reign, who reigned so many years together with his father. (See Scaliger's Canon Isagog. p. 281. 294. his Prolegom. ad lib. de Emend. Temporum, and his notes on the Greek Fragments, at the end of those books.)

But there is one considerable objection against this opinion of Scaliger, that, according to Berosus's account, as his words are quoted in another place of Josephus, (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 2.) Nabupolassar reigned only twenty-one years: the Greek text reading, by a little variation, εἴκοσι ἓν for εἴκοσι ἐννέα. Which is the same number of years assigned to Nabupolassar in the æra Nabonassari, and agrees better with Berosus's own story; *viz.* that when he had committed the command of the army to his son, and sent him on an expedition to Syria and Phœnicia, he died in a short time after.

Villalpandus, in like manner, makes this computation to commence from the beginning of Nabupolassar's reign. (See his commentary upon Ezek. xl. 1.) He allows nineteen years for his reign, distinct from that of his son, and supposes Nebuchadnezzar to reign two years with his father; which, indeed, agrees with the Scripture computation. (See the note on Jer. xxv. 1.) But, according to that very account, the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity will be coincident with the thirteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign: for the nineteenth year of the same reign is assigned for the destruction of Jerusalem, Jer. lii. 12. which was about six years afterward. So this computation will make Jehoiachin's captivity to have happened not in the thirtieth, but in the thirty-second year, reckoning from the beginning of Nabupolassar's reign.

A more probable answer to this difficulty, is that which the Chaldee paraphrast, Archbishop Usher, A. M. 3409. Dr. Prideaux, ad an. A. C. 594. and other learned men, follow; *viz.* that these thirty years are to be reckoned from the time when Josiah and all the people of Judah entered into that solemn covenant mentioned 2 Kings xxii. 3. which was in the eighteenth year of Josiah; (ibid.) from which time the same learned writers compute the forty years of Judah's transgression, mentioned iv. 6.

As I was among the captives by the river Chebar.] Those which were carried away with Jehoiachin, king of Judah.

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(See the next verse.) These were placed in towns or villages that lay upon the river Chebar in Mesopotamia, called by Ptolemy and Strabo, Chaboras, or Aboras; and by Pliny, (lib. i. cap. 26.) Cobaris.

Ver. 2. *Which was in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity.*] This was coincident with the thirteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign: for Jehoiachin was carried captive in the eighth year of his reign. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 12.) The Hebrew writers use several computations of the beginning of the Babylonish captivity. (See the note upon Jer. xxv. 11.) That under Jehoiachin, wherein Ezekiel was made a captive, is the computation he always follows in the succeeding parts of his prophecy. (See viii. 1. xx. 1. xxix. 1. 17. xxxi. 1. xxxiii. 1. xl. 1.)

Ver. 3. *The word of the Lord came expressly,* &c.] The *word of the Lord* signifies any sort of revelation, whether by vision, such as is related in the following verses, or by a voice, as ii. 3.

And the hand of the Lord was there upon him.] He felt sensible impressions of God's power and Spirit. (Compare iii. 14. 22. viii. 1. xxviii. 1. xl. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 46. 2 Kings iii. 15.)

Ver. 4. *And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north.*] God's anger and judgments are often compared to a whirlwind. (See Isa. xxi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 19. xxv. 32. Psal. lviii. 9.) It is described here as coming out of the north, because of the northerly situation of Babylon with respect to Judea. (Compare Jer. i. 13. iv. 6. vi. 1. and xliii. 3. of this prophecy.)

A great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it.] The Divine presence is usually described in Scripture as a bright light, or flaming fire, breaking out of a thick cloud. (See Psal. xviii. 2. l. 3. xcviii. 2, 3.) God also is described as a *consuming fire,* when he comes to execute his judgment upon sinners, Deut. iv. 24. (Compare ver. 13. of this chapter.) *Fire infolding itself* is the same as appearing in folds, like one wreath within another.

And out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber.] Compare viii. 2. Fire resembles the colour of amber, especially the lower parts of it: so in that vision of Christ, described Rev. i. 13, &c. it is said, ver. 15. that *his feet,* or lower parts, *were like unto fine brass,* or rather unto *amber,* as Dr. Hammond rightly explains the word χαλκολίβανος.

Ver. 5. *Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures.*] Compare Rev. iv. 6. where our English translation improperly renders the word Ζῶα, *beasts;* whereas it should be rendered *living creatures,* the better to distinguish them from the *antichristian beast,* always expressed in that book by Θηρίον. These living creatures were four cherubims, that carried or supported God's throne in the following vision: it may be in allusion to the triumphal chariots of the eastern kings, which were drawn by several sorts of beasts; the cherubims, as they were placed in the temple, being called *God's chariot,* 1 Chron. xxviii. 18.

They had the likeness of a man.] Their shape was erect, like the form of a man.

Ver. 6. *And every one had four faces.*] Of a man, of a lion, of an ox, and of an eagle; (ver. 10.) each of them resembled the cherubims, which overshadowed the mercy-seat in the temple. (See x. 20.) The Jewish tabernacle was a *pattern of heavenly things,* (Heb. viii. 5. Wisd. ix. 8.) and the encampment of the twelve tribes about the tabernacle in the wilderness, was a representation of the angelical ministry about the throne of God in heaven. So there is an analogy between the cherubims, as they attended the Divine presence in the holiest of all, and as here described, in a figure of their heavenly ministry, and the body of the Jewish nation placed round about the tabernacle, and divided into four standards, and a several ensign allotted to each standard, as you may read Numb. ii. 2, 3. 10. 18. 25. What those ensigns were, that text does not express; but the Jewish writers unanimously maintain that they were a lion for the tribe of Judah, an ox for the tribe of Ephraim, a man for the tribe of Reuben, and an eagle for the tribe of Dan; under which variety each of these four cherubims is here represented. (Compare Rev. iv. 6.) And in that text the *four living creatures* denote some part of the Christian church, as appears by comparing that place with Rev. v. 8, 9. Here likewise may be an allusion to the four cherubims in Solomon's temple; for he placed two others of larger dimensions, one on each side of the ark; and of the two cherubims, which Moses had placed in the tabernacle. (Compare 1 Kings vi. 24. with Exod. xxv. 17. 20.)

And every one had four wings.] See ver. 11.

Ver. 7. *And their feet were straight feet.*] Like a man's, without such a middle joint as beasts have, the use of which is to secure them against weariness, to denote their steadiness and resolution in executing all God's commands.

The sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot.] A creature remarkable for its treading firm and sure. These living creatures are a sort of hieroglyphics, made up of several shapes, but yet they resembled most that of an ox or a calf; and therefore were called *cherubims,* that word signifying an ox; in which sense it is taken x. 14. of this prophecy, where the *face of a cherub* is equivalent to the *face of an ox,* at ver. 10. of this chapter.

And they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.] Compare Dan. x. 6. Rev. i. 15. The appearance of their feet was bright and flaming. (See ver. 13. and Psal. civ. 4.) The seraphims have that name from their bright and flaming colour.

Ver. 8. *And they had the hands of a man under their wings.*] Compare x. 8. Isa. vi. 6. This denotes the prudence and dexterity of their management: the hand being peculiar to mankind among all living creatures, and the chief instrument of all artificial operations.

They four had their faces and their wings.] They had all the same appearances and proportions; or had wings equal to their faces.

Their wings were joined one to another.] See ver. 11.

They turned not when they went.] They needed not to turn their bodies that their faces might stand the way they were to go; for go which way they would they had a face that looked that way. This signifies, that nothing ever diverted them from fulfilling God's commands; see the note on x. 11. where these living creatures are represented as coming near to a square figure, which is equal on all sides, the emblem of firmness and constancy.

Ver. 10. *They four had the face of a man, and of a lion*

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on the right side, &c.] See the note on ver. 6. Grotius and Villalpandus by the word *face* understand the shape or appearance, and explain the words to this sense: That these living creatures were like a man with respect to their visage, or their upper parts; they resembled a lion with respect to their back parts; their wings were like the wings of an eagle, and their feet like those of an ox. But this exposition does not well agree with what is said here, that the face of the lion was on the right side, and that of the ox on the left; or, as Castalio translates it, and I think to a better and clearer sense, *That the face of the man and the lion were on the right side, and the face of the ox and eagle on the left.* And by comparing the several parts of this description, their figure may be rather concluded to be quadruple; and as the wheels were made to turn every way, so the living creatures could move towards any point without turning about: to signify, as I observed before, the steadfastness of their motions and purposes. (Compare ver. 15. 19, 20. of this chapter with x. 11, &c.)

Ver. 11. *Their wings were stretched upwards.*] In a posture of flying, to shew their readiness to execute God's commands; (compare ver. 24. with x. 16.) or they were stretched to cover their faces, as the seraphims are represented Isa. vi. 2. (Compare ver. 23. of this chapter.) Some translate the former part of the verse thus: *Their faces and their wings were stretched upwards,* to denote a posture of attention, and as if *they were hearkening to the voice of God's word,* as the angels are represented, Psal. ciii. 20.

Two wings of every one were joined one to another.] Being thus stretched out, they touched one another, or the wings of one living creature touched those of another, as the wings of the cherubims did over the mercy-seat. (See 1 Kings vi. 27.)

And two covered their bodies.] See Isa. vi. 2. Grotius, upon ver. 6. of this chapter, assigns a reason why, in that text of Isaiah, and Rev. iv. 6. each seraphim hath six wings assigned him, whereas the living creatures here have but four; *viz.* the seraphims in these texts make use of two of their wings to cover their faces, out of reverence to the Divine presence, before which they stand; whereas here the living creatures are supposed to stand under the throne, as supporting it. (Compare x. 19.)

Ver. 12. *And they went every one straight forward.*] See ver. 9.

Whither the spirit was to go, there they went.] That is, that spiritual or angelical power, which was the principle of all their motions. (See ver. 20.)

And they turned not as they went.] See ver. 17.

Ver. 13. *Their appearance was like burning coals of fire,* &c.] The angels are always described of a bright and flaming colour. (See ver. 4. 7.) But here the coals of fire and the lightning, breaking forth out of the fire, denote God's vengeance coming in flaming fire to destroy the city and temple of Jerusalem. (Compare x. 2. Psal. xviii. Rev. iv. 5. 12.)

Ver. 14. *And the living creatures ran and returned, as the appearance of lightning.*] The swiftness of their motions every way resembled the flashes of lightning. (Compare Matt. xxiv. 27. Zech. iv. 10.)

Ver. 15. *And behold one wheel* [or the same sort of wheel] *upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces.*] Or, *on his four sides;* that is, on the four sides or faces of the square body as it stood: so that a wheel was before every one of the living creatures on the outside of the square. So Dr. Lightfoot expounds the words, in his Description of the Temple, (chap. 38.) The sentence may be translated thus: *Behold, one wheel upon earth by the living creatures to each of the creatures with the four faces;* so the word *learbang* is used, ver. 10. The word *wheel* is certainly used collectively for each wheel; as the *cherub* stands for cherubims, ix. 3. x. 4. and *living creature* signifies the four living creatures, ibid. ver. 15. 19. That there were four wheels, according to the number of the living creatures, is plain, by comparing this verse with the sixteenth and nineteenth, and with x. 9. The wheels are represented here as standing *upon the earth,* or near the earth: at other times they appeared as being lifted up above it. (See ver. 20, 21. and x. 17.)

Ver. 16. *The appearance of the wheels was like unto the colour of a beryl.*] Azure, the colour of the sky, mixed with a bright green. (Compare Dan. x. 6.)

Their appearance and their work was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel.] As it were one wheel put across within another, like two circles in a sphere, cutting one another at right angles, to signify the stability and uniformity of their motions, and the subserviency of one part of Providence to another. (See the following verse, and the note upon ver. 9.)

Ver. 17. *When they went, they went upon their four sides.*] Each wheel consisted of four semicircles, crossing one another, as appears by the foregoing verse; and each of them had its proper motion.

They returned not when they went.] They never went backward; (see x. 11.) to signify, that Providence doth nothing in vain, but always accomplishes its end. So God speaks of his word and decree, Isa. lv. 11. *It shall not return unto me void; but shall accomplish that which I please. To return by the way that he went,* is a proverbial speech, signifying a man's missing his aim, or not accomplishing his designs. (See 1 Kings xiii. 9. 2 Kings xix. 33.)

Ver. 18. *As for their rings* [or streaks], *they were so high that they were dreadful.*] Their circumference was so vast, as to cause a terror in the prophet that beheld them: to signify the vast compass of Providence, which *reacheth from one end to another mightily;* (Wisd. viii. 1.) or, as St. Paul expresseth it, the *height and depth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable his judgments are, and his ways past finding out!* (Rom. xi. 33.) Dr. Lightfoot translates it, *And they were reverend;* that is, they were observant of that presence and glory upon which they waited, and watchful to obey its commands.

And their rings were full of eyes about these four.] And so were also the living creatures themselves; (compare x. 12.) to signify, that all the motions of Providence are directed by a consummate wisdom and foresight. To the same sense the angels, who are the instruments of Providence, are called the *eyes of the Lord,* Zech. iv. 10. Rev. v. 6.

Ver. 19—21. *And when the living creatures went, the wheels by them,* &c.] Both the living creatures and the wheels were animated by the same principle of understanding and motion, to signify with what readiness and alacrity all the instruments of Providence concur in carrying on its great designs and purposes. (Compare x. 16, 17.)

Ver. 20. *The wheels were lifted up over against them.*] That is, the wheels, which were placed just by them: (see

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ver. 15. 19.) the word *leumatham* is rendered *besides them*, x. 19. xi. 22.

For the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.] That is, the spirit of each living creature, as the word is used in ver. 22.

Ver. 22. *And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creatures was as the colour of the terrible crystal.*] Over the heads of all the living creatures, or of this whole vision of living creatures, (compare x. 15. 20.) was the likeness of a clear sky or firmament, where the Divine glory appeared as upon a throne. (See ver. 26. x. 1. and compare Rev. iv. 2, 3.) By the *terrible crystal* is meant such as dazzles the eyes with its lustre.

Ver. 23. *And under the firmament were their wings straight.*] The sense is the same with that of ver. 11. denoting that two of the wings of each living creature were stretched upward, out of reverence to the Divine presence, or to express their readiness to obey his commands; (see ver. 11. 24.) and with the two other they covered their bodies.

Ver. 24. *And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of many waters,* &c.] To denote the terribleness of the judgments which they were to execute upon Jerusalem and the whole Jewish nation. (Compare xliii. 2. Dan. x. 6. Rev. i. 15.)

As the voice of the Almighty.] It resembled great and dreadful thunder. (Compare Job xxxvii. 4, 5. Psal. xxix. 3. lxviii. 33.) St. Jerome, in his note upon the place, tells us, that the LXX. translate these words, *φωνὴν τοῦ Λόγου, The voice of the Λόγος*, or second person in the blessed Trinity: which words are now in the Alexandrian copy. The Vatican copy is defective, but the Alexandrian copy runs thus: *ὡς φωνὴν ἱκανοῦ. ἐν τῷ πορεύεσθαι αὐτὰ φωνὴ τοῦ λόγου, ὡς φωνὴ τῆς παρεμβολῆς.* As the voice of the Almighty. *When they went* [there was] *the voice of speech, like the voice of a host.* This reading shews that the LXX. designed to translate the following words by *φωνὴ τοῦ λόγου*, where we read, *The voice of speech:* and then the word *λόγος* may probably be taken in its ordinary signification: though we may certainly conclude that this was the appearance of the second person of the blessed Trinity, both because he appears under the resemblance of a man, (ver. 26.) and from what hath been said upon this subject in the note upon Isa. vi. 1.

The voice of speech, like the noise of a host.] Like the confused murmur of an army; either to denote the army of the Babylonians that should besiege the city, or to signify the angels, who are called God's host.

And when they stood, they let down their wings.] They put themselves in a posture of hearkening to God's voice; and as it were quietly waiting to receive his commands. (See the next verse.)

Ver. 25. *And there was a voice from the firmament when they stood.*] The Vulgar Latin renders it, *When there was a voice they stood,* in an attentive posture. (Compare Psal. ciii. 20.)

Ver. 26. *And above the firmament was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone.*] God is described in Scripture as *dwelling in light,* and *clothing himself with it.* (Compare Exod. xxiv. 10. Psal. civ. 2. 1 Tim. vi. 16. Rev. iv. 2, 3.) So the throne of God here described was made up of light, resembling the colours and brightness of a sapphire.

And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as of the appearance of a man above upon it.] When Moses and the elders *saw the God of Israel,* (Exod. xxiv. 8.) or the *glory of God,* as the Targum explains it, they saw no determinate figure, but an inconceivably resplendent brightness, that they might not think God could be represented by any image. (Deut. iv. 16.) But in this vision the form and shape of a man is directly represented to Ezekiel, as a præludium, or figure, of the incarnation. (See the note on Jer. i. 4.)

Ver. 27. *And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it,* &c.] The upper part of this appearance was of an amber colour outwardly, but appeared more flaming inwardly; the lower part of a deeper red, encompassed with a bright flame, to represent God's coming to take vengeance of the Jews. (See the notes on ver. 4.)

In most of our English Bibles the stops are placed wrong in this verse; whereas the whole verse should be pointed thus: *And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upwards, and from the appearance of his loins even downwards, I saw as it were the appearance of fire,* &c. The words should be thus pointed, as appears by comparing them with viii. 2.

Ver. 28. *As the appearance of the cloud,* &c.] The light reflected from this vision had the appearance of a rainbow, a token of God's covenant of mercy, (Gen. ix. 11, &c.) to denote that God, in the midst of judgment, would remember mercy, and not utterly destroy his people. (Compare Rev. iv. 3.) Especially this vision being an evident representation of the Word *that was* to be *made flesh,* whose incarnation is the foundation of God's covenant of mercy with mankind: a rainbow, the symbol and token of mercy, was a very fit attendant upon that glorious vision. (Compare Rev. x. 1.)

This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.] This is a description of that glorious vision wherein God appeared, and whereby he made manifest his attributes and perfections.

And when I saw it, I fell upon my face.] As struck down with fear and astonishment. (Compare iii. 23. xi. 2. Dan. viii. 17. Rev. i. 17.) Prostration was also a posture of adoration used upon any token of the Divine presence. (See Gen. xvii. 3. Numb. xiv. 5. xvi. 4.)

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains Ezekiel's commission for executing his prophetical office, and instructions given him for the discharge of it.

Ver. 1. *AND he said unto me, Son of man.*] This expression is commonly understood to signify the same with a common and ordinary man, as it is usually expounded in that text, Psal. viii. 4. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?* So here most commentators understand it as applied to the prophet, to put him in mind of his frailty and mortality, and of the infinite distance between God and man. In which sense it is supposed to be taken when spoken of Christ in

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the New Testament, implying his great humility in assuming our nature, and appearing no otherwise than an ordinary man: and so the Hebrew phrase *Ben Adam* is plainly used, when it is opposed to *Ben Isch;* and is rightly translated *men of low degree,* or *mean men,* Psal. lxix. 2. Isa. ii. 9.

But some critics have observed, that the phrase *son of man,* is likewise taken for a man of dignity or character, as in Psal. lxxx. 17. *The man of thy right hand, and the son of man, whom thou madest so strong for thyself.* And Psal. cxlvi. 3. *Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.* And there is no incongruity in supposing that Christ himself may be called the *Son of man,* κατ' ἐξοχὴν, by way of eminence, as a title denoting him to be that great person whom God promised to raise up to be a *Prince and a Saviour* of his people. And so the title of *son of man* may be given to the prophet in the text, as one set apart for the prophetical office: in like manner as Daniel is called *son of man,* viii. 17. who in the next chapters hath the title of a *man greatly beloved,* (ix. 23. x. 11.)

Stand upon thy feet.] Put thyself into a posture of attending to what I say. (See ver. 2. and compare Dan. x. 11.)

Ver. 2. *And the Spirit entered into me,* &c.] God's Spirit revived me and gave me new life and vigour, that I could attend to what was said unto me. (See the note on iii. 24. and compare ver. 12. 14. of that chapter.)

Ver. 3. *To a rebellious nation.*] The Hebrew word is *goiim, nations,* the word which is commonly used to denote the heathens, intimating that the Jews had outdone the wickedness of the heathens. (See v. 6, 7.)

Ver. 4. *For they are impudent children, and stiff-hearted.*] The original might be more significantly rendered, *They are children impudent in their countenance, and hardened in their hearts.* They are so far hardened in wickedness as to have cast off all shame, and even the very outward show of modesty.

Ver. 5. *And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.*] Whether they will regard what is said by thee or not; (see iii. 27.) yet the event answering thy predictions shall render thy authority unquestionable, and them inexcusable for not hearkening to the warnings thou hast given them. (See xxxiii. 33.)

Ver. 6. *And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them.*] The prophets and messengers of God are often exhorted to take courage, and are promised a proportionable assistance in the discharge of their office, without fearing any man's person, or standing in awe of any man's greatness. (See iii. 8, 9. Jer. i. 8. 18. Matt. x. 28.) Such a presence of mind is expressed by παῤῥησία, *boldness,* in the New Testament; and is spoken of as a peculiar gift bestowed upon the first preachers of the gospel: (see Acts iv. 13. 29. Eph. vi. 19. Phil. i. 20.) called *the spirit of might,* or courage, Col. i. 11. 2 Tim. i. 7. And they had need of great presence of mind, who are to reprove men hardened in sin, who are always impatient of reproof, and become the enemies of those who tell them such truths as they have no mind to hear.

Though briers and thorns be with thee.] Such as study to vex and torment thee. (Compare Micah vii. 4.) The prophets often denote the wicked by briers and thorns. (See the note on Isa. ix. 18.)

And thou dost well among scorpions.] Who would sting thee to death, and are as venomous as the worst of serpents. (Compare Matt. iii. 7. xxiii. 33.)

Be not afraid of their words, neither be dismayed at their looks.] Be not afraid of their threats wherewith they would affright thee; neither be afraid of their looks wherewith they would browbeat thee.

Ver. 8. *Open thy mouth, and eat what I give thee.*] The knowledge of Divine truths is often expressed by the metaphors of bodily food and nourishment. (See Isa. lv. 1, 2. Josh. vi. 27.) So to eat the words of this prophecy, signifies to commit them to memory, to meditate upon them and digest them. (Compare Rev. x. 10.)

Ver. 9. *Behold, a hand was sent unto me,* &c.] I saw a hand stretched out towards me, as from that Divine person which appeared to me in the shape of a man, i. 26. (Compare viii. 3. Jer. i. 9. Dan. x. 10.)

And, lo, a roll of a book was therein.] Wherein was contained the contents of the following prophecy. (Compare Rev. v. 1.)

The ancient way of writing was upon long scrolls of parchment rolled upon sticks. (See Isa. viii. 1. Jer. xxxvi. 1.)

Ver. 10. *And he spread it before me.*] That I might understand the contents of it.

And it was written within and without.] It was written on both sides, both that which was innermost when it was rolled up, and on the outside also: to denote a large collection of prophecies. (Compare Rev. v. 1.)

And there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.] All the prophecies contained therein consisted of God's judgments and mournful events, without any mixture of mercy, at least with respect to the Jews of the present age.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet hath more particular instructions given him for the discharge of his office; and is encouraged to undertake it by a promise of God's especial assistance.

Ver. 1. *EAT this roll.*] See ii. 8, 9.

Ver. 2. *So I opened my mouth.*] I readily complied with God's command, which this vision figuratively expressed. (Compare Jer. xxv. 17.)

Ver. 3. *Cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll.*] The belly often signifies in Scripture the mind, or secret thoughts. (See Job xxxii. 18. Prov. xviii. 8. xx. 27. John vii. 38.) So here the expressions denote the laying up this prophecy in his memory. (See ver. 10. and the note on ii. 8.)

It was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.] I took delight in having God's secret counsels communicated to me, and in delivering his commands to my brethren; and was pleased with the hopes of being an instrument of their conversion, and the amendment of some of them: but yet this pleasure was afterward very much allayed by the heavy tidings I was to be the messenger of, and the ill

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treatment I was to expect. (See ver. 14. compare Jer. xv. 16, 17. Rev. x. 10.)

Ver. 5. *For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech.*] It would be a great addition to the burden of thy office, if thou wert sent as a prophet to a foreign nation, and to a people whose language thou couldest not understand, nor they thine, as Jonah was.

Ver. 6. *Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.*] And yet in all appearance those strangers would have hearkened to thy preaching sooner than the house of Israel will, as the Ninevites did to Jonah's. (Compare Matt. xii. 41. xi. 21.) The particles *im lo* are very well rendered *surely:* they are the form of an oath, the words, *As I live,* being understood. (Compare v. 11. xvii. 19. Numb. xiv. 28.)

Ver. 7. *For they will not hearken unto me.*] They have so long resisted the means of grace that I have offered them by the former prophets, (see Jer. xxv. 4.) that there is less hopes of their conversion, than if they were infidels. (Compare Matt. v. 13.)

Ver. 8. *Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces.*] I have given thee courage and assurance proportionable to the hardiness and impudence of those thou hast to deal with. (See ii. 6. Isa. l. 7.)

Ver. 10. *All the words that I shall speak unto thee, receive in thy heart.*] See the note on ii. 8.

Ver. 12. *Then the Spirit took me up.*] Carried me from the place where I was before, when I saw the vision mentioned i. 3, 4. (See the note on viii. 3.)

And I heard behind me the voice as of a great rushing.] I heard a voice so loud, that it shook the earth like thunder. (See John xii. 27, 28.)

Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place.] Whatever place God honours with his especial presence, is equivalent to his temple, and there the angels always attend upon the Divine Majesty, to give him the honour due unto his name. (Compare Gen. xxviii. 13. 16. 19.) The words imply, that though God should forsake his temple, (see the note on ix. 3.) and destroy the place that is called by his name, yet his presence will make a temple of every place, and multitudes of the heavenly host will always be ready to do him service.

Ver. 13. *I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures.*] See the note on i. 20.

The noise of the wheels over against them.] That is, *besides them,* as the Hebrew phrase is elsewhere rendered. (See the note on i. 20.)

Ver. 14. *So the Spirit lifted me up.*] See ver. 12. and the note on viii. 3. xxxvii. 1.

And I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit.] The joy that I first conceived in receiving the Divine message, was quickly turned into grief and anguish of mind. (See ver. 15.)

And the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.] I was unable to resist the impulses of God's Spirit. (See i. 4. viii. 1. Jer. xx. 9.)

Ver. 15. *Then I came to them of the captivity of Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar.*] These seem to be a distinct colony of captives from those that are mentioned i. 3. (See ver. 23. of this chapter.) The king of Babylon carried away the Jews by several captivities: some in the first year of his reign; (Dan. i. 1.) some in the seventh; (Jer. lii. 28.) then followed Jeconiah's captivity in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, (2 Kings xxiv. 12.) when Ezekiel himself was carried captive.

And I remained there among them astonished seven days.] Having my spirit wholly cast down and amazed under the apprehension of these terrible judgments which were to come upon my nation, and of which I was to be the messenger. (Compare Jer. xxiii. 9. Habak. iii. 16.) *Seven days* was the space of time appointed for mourning. (See Gen. l. 10. 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Job ii. 3. Ecclus. xxii. 12.)

Ver. 17. *I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel.*] Prophets have the title of watchmen given to them: (see Isa. lvi. 10. Jer. vi. 17.) like watchmen placed on the tower, (see Habak. ii. 1.) they by their prophetical spirit foresee the evils coming upon the ungodly, and are bound to give people timely notice to avoid them by a sincere repentance. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 18. *When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die.*] This is, unless he repent, a condition generally to be understood in such-like threatenings. (See xviii. 27.)

And thou givest him not warning, &c.] We are to distinguish a prophet's immediate commission to go to any particular person in God's name, from such a general charge to inform others of their duty, which is incumbent upon all pastors and teachers. These latter can only give men general warnings, unless where they have received such informations as are a sufficient ground for a particular reproof.

The same wicked man shall die in his iniquity.] He shall die in a state of sin, and be condemned to those punishments to which death translates sinners. (See John viii. 24. and the note upon xviii. 4.)

But his blood will I require at thy hand.] Thou shalt be accountable for the loss of his soul, just as a man's blood is laid to the charge of him that is any way accessory to his death. (Compare Gen. ix. 5.)

Ver. 19. *But thou hast delivered thy soul.*] Thou art clear from the guilt of his sin. (Compare Acts xx. 26.)

Ver. 20. *And I lay a stumbling-block before him.*] I caused his iniquity to become his ruin, as the word *micshol* is translated, xviii. 30.

Ver. 22. *And the hand of the Lord was there upon me.*] See ver. 14. i. 3.

Arise, Go into the plain.] As a place more retired and fitter for contemplation.

Ver. 23. *The glory of the Lord stood there.*] See i. 28.

As the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar.] This part of that river seems distant from that place where the former vision was shewed him. (Compare ver. 15. with i. 3.) *Then the Spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me.* The words are literally to be translated thus: *Then the Spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet; and he spake unto me:* for the last verb is in the masculine gender, and the two former in the feminine. In like manner the fifth verse of the eleventh chapter should be read, *And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and he said unto me.* The Spirit or power of God which the prophet felt within him, (called likewise *the hand of the Lord,* ver. 14. 22. of this chapter, and viii. 1.) being distinguished here from the Divine glory or Schechinah, which the prophet saw, as it is very plainly, ii. 2. *And the Spirit entered into me, when he spake unto me.*

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Go, shut thyself within thy house.] Hereby to represent the siege of Jerusalem. (See iv. 1, &c.)

Ver. 25. *They shall put bands upon thee,* &c.] Thou shalt be confined to lie so many days upon thy right side, and so many upon the left, as if thou wert bound and not able to stir. (See iv. 8.) The LXX. and the Vulgar Latin read, *Bands shall be put upon thee:* and it is very common in the Hebrew language to take the verb transitive in an impersonal sense. (See the notes on Isa. xliv. 18.)

Thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover.] Ezekiel's dumbness might proceed from two causes: excess of grief, as we read ver. 15. of this chapter, that he *remained astonished seven days:* wherein he was a type or figure of the condition of the Jews, when they were to be *astonied one with another,* (iv. 17.) Another cause of his silence might be by way of reproof to them for disbelieving what he had before delivered by the commands of God. (See the note on xxxii. 22. xxiv. 17.) And because they regarded not the words which God commanded him to speak to them, he was directed to instruct them only by signs, such as are those emblems of the siege contained in the next chapter.

Ver. 27. *But when I speak with thee* [or, to thee], *I will open thy mouth.*] But when I bid thee declare my commands by word of mouth, thou shalt have free liberty to speak. (See xi. 25.)

He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear.] The sum of what thou shalt say unto them is this: To let them know that this is the last warning God will give them; and therefore let them take it as such, and either give heed to what is said to them, or neglect it at their utmost peril. (Compare 1 Cor. xiv. 38. Rev. xxii. 11.)

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

Under the emblem of a siege, and of the straitness of provision during the siege, is shewed the miseries the Jews shall suffer when the city is besieged: and by the prophet's lying upon his right and left side a certain number of days, is declared of how long continuance those sins were which God did visit upon that people.

Ver. 1. *TAKE thee a tile, and lay it before thee.*] The prophets often foreshew impending judgments by significative emblems, being of greater force and efficacy than words. So Jeremy was commanded to go down to the potter's house, and see how frequently vessels were marred in his hands, (chap. xviii.) and to take one of those earthen vessels and break it in the sight of the elders of the Jews, (chap. xix.) that they might thereby be sensibly taught the greatness of God's power, and their own frailty. So here God commands the prophet to take a tile, or such a slate as the mathematicians draw lines or figures upon, and there make a portraiture of Jerusalem, thereby to represent it as under a siege. We may observe that God often suits prophetical types and figures to the genius and education of the prophets themselves. So the figures which Amos makes use of are generally taken from such observations as are proper to the employment of a shepherd or a husbandman. Ezekiel had a peculiar talent for architecture; so several of his representations are suitable to that profession. And they that suppose the emblem here made use of to be below the dignity of the prophetical office, may as well accuse Archimedes of folly for making lines in the dust.

Ver. 2. *And lay siege against it,* &c.] Make a portraiture of a siege, and of such warlike preparations as are necessary to it.

Ver. 3. *Moreover, take thou unto thee an iron pan.*] A plate or slice, as the margin reads. This may either represent the walls of Jerusalem, which were to be broken down, in order to the taking of it, as the following words may be thought to imply; or else some of those works which the besiegers cast up for their own defence: so this is another representation of the siege mentioned ver. 1.

This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.] Ezekiel often expressed God's purposes by signs. (See xii. 2. 12. xxiv. 24. 27. and the notes upon ver. 17. of this chapter.)

Ver. 4. *Lie also on thy left side.*] Lie on that side without stirring or moving thyself. (See ver. 8.)

According to the number of the days thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity.] By lying on one side thou shalt signify God's forbearing their punishment for so many years: so the words are commonly explained; but in my opinion not agreeably to the genuine sense of the phrase, *To bear one's iniquity.* [The word *nasa, to bear,* when it is joined with *sin,* or *iniquity,* doth sometimes signify to forgive, or forbear the punishment due to sin, particularly Psal. xxv. 18. and is sometimes rendered by ἀφίημι in the LXX. but it usually denotes bearing or suffering punishment; (see Lev. xvi. 22.) especially when it is joined with *laying on iniquity,* as it is here. (See ver. 4, 5.) And we find the circumstances under which Ezekiel was here placed, were all of them penal.] As also that other expression of *laying iniquity upon* any, imports the imputing the guilt of it, or inflicting the punishment due unto it. So here the prophet does in vision bear the punishment due to the idolatry of Israel and Judah, which had continued, the one for three hundred and ninety, the other for forty years.

The circumstances of this vision prove, that the prophet did really perform what is here related; or else it could not have been a *sign unto the house of Israel,* (ver. 3.) unless they themselves had been eye-witnesses of it. (Compare xii. 7. 11.) The chief objection against this opinion is, that there is not the distance of four hundred and thirty days between this vision and that which is next related; (viii. 1.) but that may be answered by supposing this to be an intercalary year, which may be supposed to have happened often in the Jewish computation of time, whose years consisted at most but of three hundred and sixty days, or, as some think, were lunar years, reduced by intercalations to the solar form. (See Dr. Prideaux, Script. Hist. par. i. p. 281.) [Concerning the form of the Jewish year, see many useful observations on Mr. Marshal's treatise upon the Seventy Weeks, par. ii. chap. 4.]

Ver. 5. *Three hundred and ninety days.*] The most probable computation of this time is, to date its beginning from Jeroboam's first setting up the idolatrous worship of the golden calves, to the last captivity of the Jews, in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. (See Jer. lii. 30.) This seems to have made an entire riddance of the natives of the land, and consequently to be the finishing stroke of the Jewish captivity. Both Judah and Israel

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being now entirely carried away, whereas before that time many of the ten tribes lived in their own habitation. (See 2 Chron. xxix. 14. xxxi. 11. 18. xxxii. 33. Ezra vi. 17.)

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days.*] This series of time may probably be computed from the eighteenth year of Josiah, at which time the king and people entered into a solemn covenant to serve and worship God, so that the idolatry they were afterward guilty of received a new aggravation, as being a breach of this solemn covenant, the greater part of the people being still idolatrous in their hearts. (See the notes on Jer. iii. 6. 10.) The *thirtieth year*, mentioned in the beginning of this prophecy, is supposed to take its date from the eighteenth year of Josiah, which makes it probable that the prophet refers to the same era in this place.

Scaliger and some others begin these forty years from Jeremiah's mission as a prophet, which was in the thirteenth year of Josiah, from which time till the last year of Zedekiah, when the city and temple were destroyed, is just forty years. [The learned bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, in his defence of Christianity, chap. 3. sect. 1. explains the *forty days* of Judah's transgression of the years wherein Judah had exceeded Israel in idolatry under the reign of Manasses. The sins committed at that time filled up the measure of Judah's transgressions. See 2 Kings xxi. 11—13. xxiii. 26. xxiv. 3. Jer. xv. 4.]

I have appointed each day for a year.] Days frequently stand for years in the prophetical accounts of time. See Numb. xiv. 34. *After the number of forty days (each day for a year), shall you bear your iniquities, even forty years.* Dan. ix. 24. The days of the *seventy weeks* must necessarily be understood in the same sense, so as to make up the sum of four hundred and ninety years. And the one thousand two hundred and sixty days mentioned Rev. xi. 3. are, according to the genius of the prophetical style, to be understood of so many years.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thou shalt set thy face towards the siege of Jerusalem.*] When thou liest in one posture, as is commanded thee, ver. 4. 6. thou shalt still have the portraiture of the siege of Jerusalem before thy face; (ver. 1.) or *setting thy face towards the siege of Jerusalem*, may signify looking earnestly, or with a threatening visage towards it; as the prophet is said to *set his face against* a place, when he prophesies against it. (See vi. 2.)

And thy arm shall be uncovered.] Or, *stretched out.* Their habits were anciently contrived, so that the right arm was disengaged from the upper garments, that they might be the more ready for action. So ancient statues and coins represent heroes with their right arm bare, and out of the sleeve of their garments. Thus God is said to *make bare his arm*, Isa. lii. 10. where he is represented as subduing his adversaries, and bringing salvation to his people.

And thou shalt prophesy against it.] By signs and not by words. (See the note on iii. 26.)

Ver. 8. *I will lay bands upon thee.*] See iii. 25.

Till thou hast ended the days of thy siege.] The three hundred and ninety days mentioned ver. 5. 9. were designed not only to signify the years of Israel's sin, but the continuance of the siege of Jerusalem. That siege lasted, from the beginning to the ending of it, seventeen months, as appears from 2 Kings xxv. 1—4. But the king of Egypt coming to relieve the city, was the occasion of raising the siege for some time, as appears from Jer. xxxvii. 3. So that it may reasonably be gathered from the authority of the text joined to the circumstances of the story, that the siege lasted about thirteen months, or three hundred and ninety days. (See Archbishop Usher's Annals, ad An. Mundi 3415.)

Ver. 9. *Take thou also unto thee wheat and barley*, &c.] In time of scarcity it is usual to mix a great deal of the coarse kinds of grain with a little of the better sort, to make their provisions last the longer. Thus Ezekiel was commanded to do, to signify the scarcity and coarse fare the inhabitants should endure in the siege of the city.

According to the number of the days thou shalt lie upon thy side, three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof.] During which time the siege lasted, (see ver. 8.) The forty days mentioned ver. 6. seem not to be reckoned into this account. These denoted Judah's sin of forty years' continuance, from the eighteenth year of Josiah, (ver. 6.) And as they were superadded to the three hundred and ninety days of the siege, they may signify the days spent in plundering the city, and burning the temple, and carrying away the remnant of the people: Jerusalem was taken on the *ninth day of the fourth month*, (Jer. lii. 6.) and on the *tenth day of the fifth month* the temple was burnt; (ver. 12.) and so we reasonably conjecture, by the eighteenth of that month, which was the fortieth from the taking of the place, the whole city was burnt, and the few Jews which were left were carried into captivity.

Ver. 10. *And the meat which thou shalt eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day.*] In sieges it is common to stint every one to a certain allowance, by which means they can guess how long their provisions will last; twenty shekels is but ten ounces, a short allowance for a day's sustenance. (See ver. 16. Jer. xxxvii. 21.)

From time to time shalt thou eat it.] This shall be thy daily allowance during the whole three hundred and ninety days.

Ver. 11. *The sixth part of a hin.*] Which is something above a pint and a half of our measure. (See Bishop Cumberland's account of Jewish Weights and Measures, placed at the end of many English Bibles.)

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt eat it as barley-cakes.*] Such as people make in haste, when they have not time for preparing a set meal. (See Exod. xii. 39.) This represents the hurry and disorder of a siege.

And thou shalt bake it with dung, &c.] To signify the scarcity of all sorts of fuel. (See ver. 15.)

Ver. 13. *Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the gentiles*, &c.] Their circumstances in their captivity shall not permit them to observe the rules of their law relating to unclean meats, and they will be constrained to partake of meats, part of which hath been offered unto idols. (Compare Dan. i. 8. Hos. ix. 1.) *Bread* is often used in the Hebrew for all sorts of food. (See Gen. xliii. 31.)

Ver. 14. *Behold, my soul had not been polluted*, &c.] I have always carefully observed the distinction between meats clean and unclean: I beseech thee, command me not now to eat any thing so contrary to my former practice.

Neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth.] The Hebrew word *piggul, abominable*, is properly used of such meats as are forbidden by the law. (See Lev. vii. 18. xix.

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7. Isa. lxv. 4.) Such as are those here mentioned. (See the texts quoted in the margin of our Bibles.)

Ver. 16. *I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem.*] The siege shall produce a scarcity of bread in Jerusalem, (2 Kings xxv. 3.) and deprive you of the chief support of man's life. (Compare Lev. xiv. 13. xxvi. 26. Isa. iii. 1.)

They shall eat their bread by weight, and with care, &c.] See ver. 10, 11. When they have consumed their last allowance, they shall be in great care where to get more for the next meal; and some of you be forced to eat the flesh of their nearest relation. (See v. 10.)

Ver. 17. *And be astonished one with another, and consume away in your iniquities.*] Look one upon another as persons under astonishment for the greatness of your calamities, and pining away or dying a lingering death through famine and other hardships. (See xxiv. 23.)

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet is commanded to shave his hair, and then consume it, to signify thereby God's judgment upon Jerusalem for her repeated provocations, by famine, sword, and dispersion.

Ver. 1. *TAKE thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor.*] The latter expression explains the former: hair being an ornament, and baldness a token of sorrow, thereupon shaving denotes a great calamity or desolation. (Compare Isa. vii. 20.) Maimonides (More Nevoch. lib. ii. cap. 46.) observes upon this place, that the priests were forbidden to shave their heads, (see xliv. 20.) and not allowed to do it in the time of mourning; (Lev. xxi. 5.) from whence that author concludes, that what the prophet has here commanded, was performed only in vision. But there is no need of such an evasion to answer that difficulty. For the immediate command of God to any prophet, is a sufficient discharge from any obligations of the ceremonial law. So Elijah offered sacrifice upon Mount Carmel, (1 Kings xviii. 20.) contrary to the rule of the law, Deut. xii. 5.

Then take the balances, &c.] To signify the exactness of the Divine justice.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt burn a third part in the midst of the city.*] Of that portraiture of the city which the prophet was commanded to make, vi. 1. this signifies the destruction of the inhabitants within the city by famine and pestilence. (See ver. 12. vii. 12.)

And thou shalt take a third part, and smite it about with a knife.] To shew that a third part of the inhabitants shall be slain with the sword, just after they have escaped out of the city. (See ver. 12.) This was remarkably fulfilled in the slaughter of Zedekiah's sons, and the rest of his retinue, Jer. lii. 10.

And a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind, and I will draw out a sword after them.] The rest shall be dispersed to all the four winds. (See vi. 8.) And even my vengeance shall pursue many of them in their dispersions. (See ver. 12. and compare Lev. xxvi. 33. Jer. xxiv. 10. xliv. 12. Amos ix. 4.)

Ver. 3. *And bind them in thy skirts.*] The Hebrew reads, *in thy wings;* to signify that they should be placed under the Divine protection. (See Psal. xci. 4.) This denotes those that should be left in the land under Gedaliah, Jer. xl. 5, 6.

Ver. 4. *Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire.*] This denotes the conspiracy which Ishmael formed against Gedaliah, and the calamities that followed thereupon.

For thereof shall come a fire forth into all the house of Israel.] This was the occasion of the utter ruin of that poor remainder of the Jews which were left in their native country. Thereupon some of them went down into Egypt, where they were all consumed, according to Jeremiah's prophecy against them: (see xliv. 11, &c.) and the rest that remained in the land were entirely carried away captive by Nebuzar-adan. (See Jer. lii. 30.)

Ver. 5. *This is Jerusalem, I have set it in the midst of the nations.*] This Jerusalem thou dost now prophesy against, was placed in the midst of the heathen nations; it made a figure among them for the sake of my temple, and the visible tokens of my presence there. (See xvi. 14. 1 Kings viii. 41, 42.) It was a *city set on a hill,* on purpose that it might be a pattern of religion and virtue to them. (Compare Matt. v. 14.)

Ver. 6. *And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness.*] Or, *She hath rebelled against my judgments, for the sake of wickedness;* that is, to fulfil her wicked desires: for so the verb *marah* is rightly translated xx. 8.

More than the nations.] She hath sinned against a clearer light and greater convictions. (Compare xvi. 48. Matt. xii. 41, 42.)

For they have refused my judgments.] The reason why the heathen have rejected my laws, is because they have kept constant to the religion of their forefathers: whereas the Jews have forsaken that religion which their forefathers received from me. (See the next verse.)

Ver. 7. *Because you have multiplied more than the nations.*] The French translation reads, *Because thou hast multiplied thy wickedness:* some such word ought to be added to supply the sense.

Neither have done according to the judgments of the nations round about you.] Or rather, *According to the manner of the nations round about you:* as the very same phrase is translated, xi. 12. You have not been so constant and zealous for the true religion as they are in a false one. (Compare xvi. 47. Jer. ii. 10, 11. Micah iv. 5.)

Ver. 9. *And I will do unto thee that which I have not done.*] As your sins have particular aggravations above those other nations, so your punishment shall be proportionably greater. (See Dan. ix. 12. Lam. iv. 6. Amos iii. 2.)

And I will not do any more the like.] The punishments you shall suffer shall be more remarkable for their greatness than those I shall at any time inflict upon other nations. The punishment due to the sins of Israel and Judah, which the prophet was to bear for four hundred and thirty days by way of type or vision, may probably signify a judgment to continue for such a length of time as is not yet expired; according to God's threatenings, that for their obstinacy and irreclaimableness, he would go on to *punish them seven times more for their sins;* (Lev. xxvi. 18. 28.) multiplying the length of their calamities by a sevenfold proportion. And taking the words in this large extent,

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so as to comprehend all the marks of God's indignation which have already lain upon that people for above sixteen hundred years, and how much longer they may continue we know not, it may truly be said, that none of God's judgments have been like it.

Ver. 10. *Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee.*] A terrible judgment threatened by Moses, Lev. xxvi. 29. Deut. xxviii. 53. and afterward by Jeremy, xix. 9. and actually fulfilled in the famine that attended the siege of Jerusalem. (See Lam. ii. 20. iv. 10.)

And the whole remnant of them will I scatter into all the winds.] This is another judgment threatened against them by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 56. and remarkably fulfilled in this their last dispersion, when every known part of the world hath some share of them, and yet they live every where like strangers, only upon sufferance.

Ver. 11. *Because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thy abominations.*] Thou hast profaned my temple, by placing idols in it. (See vii. 20. viii. 5. xxiii. 38. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14.) *Detestable things* and *abominations* are words of the same signification, denoting idols. (See xi. 21.)

Therefore will I also diminish thee, neither shall mine eye spare, &c.] Or, *I will destroy thee,* (for so this word is used, Numb. xxvii. 4.) *without shewing any pity or compassion.* (See vii. 4. 9. viii. 18. ix. 10. xxiv. 14.)

Ver. 12. *A third part of thee shall die by the pestilence,* (see xiv. 22.) *and with the famine,* &c.] See ver. 2. vi. 12. Jer. xv. 2. xxi. 9.

And I will draw out a sword after them.] And thereby fulfil that threatening denounced against them, Lev. xxvi. 33. Compare likewise Deut. xxviii. 65. Amos ix. 4. All which places import, that God's anger should still pursue them even into the countries whither they were banished and carried captive. This was particularly fulfilled in those that went into Egypt; (ser Jer. xliv. 7.) and it was remarkably verified in the several persecutions and massacres they have undergone at different times, in most of the countries of Europe, in latter ages: of which see an account in Basnage's continuation of Josephus.

Ver. 13. *I will cause my fury to rest upon them.*] See the note on viii. 18. The words may be rendered thus, *I will cause my fury towards them to rest,* as the phrase is translated, xvi. 42. that is, my anger shall be appeased towards them, after I have executed due punishment upon their sins.

And I will be comforted.] This and the former expression is borrowed from men's passions, who find some ease and rest in their minds upon their venting them, and bringing offenders to condign punishment. So God is here described as feeling ease and satisfaction in executing his justice upon obstinate and incorrigible sinners. (Compare xvi. 42. xxi. 17. Isa. i. 24.)

They shall know that I the Lord have spoken it in my zeal.] Out of a just concern for mine own honour and authority which they have slighted and despised. (See xxxvi. 5, 6. xxxviii. 17.) The word may likewise be taken here for that passion of jealousy that is proper to a husband when his wife proves false to him, and is applied to God, when his people forsake his worship and serve idols. (See xvi. 35. 42. xxiii. 25.)

The covenant between God and his people is often represented under the notion of a marriage-contract: (see xvi. 8.) whereupon idolatry is called *going a whoring after other gods,* and *committing adultery with sticks and stones.* (Jer. iii. 9.)

Ver. 14. *I will make them waste and a reproach among the nations,* &c.] See Deut. xxviii. 37. 1 Kings ix. 7. Psal. lxxix. 4. Jer. xxiv. 9. Lam. ii. 15.

Ver. 15. *So it shall be—an instruction to the nations.*] They shall learn from such an example of vengeance, to hear me and be afraid of my judgments.

In furious rebukes.] See xxv. 17.

Ver. 16. *When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine,* &c.] God's judgments are elsewhere expressed by arrows. (See Deut. xxxii. 23. Psal. vii. 13. lxiv. 7. xci. 5.)

And I will break the staff of your bread.] See iv. 16.

Ver. 17. *So I will send upon you famine and evil beasts.*] Wild beasts multiply in a land when it is become uninhabited, (Exod. xxiii. 29.) This is likewise a punishment threatened against the Jews among other desolations. (See Lev. xxvi. 22. Deut. xxxii. 24. and compare xiv. 21. xxxiii. 27. xxxiv. 25. of this prophecy.)

And pestilence and blood shall pass through thee.] Blood signifies any unusual sort of death, and denotes here such a pestilence as will destroy multitudes. (Compare xiv. 19.) Or it may be equivalent to the sword which is joined with the pestilence, ver. 12. (See xxxviii. 22.)

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet continues to denounce God's severe judgments upon the Jews for their idolatry: but tells them that a remnant shall be saved, and by their afflictions shall be brought to a sense of their evil doings.

Ver. 2. *SET thy face towards the mountains of Israel.*] Direct thy face and thy speech towards the mountains in the land of Judea. (Compare iv. 7. xiii. 17. xx. 46. xxi. 2. xxv. 2. xxxviii. 2.)

Towards the mountains of Israel.] Judea was a hilly country. (See Josh. xi. 21. xx. 7.) So the whole land of Judea is expressed here and elsewhere by the *mountains of Israel.* (See xix. 9. xxxiii. 18. xxxiv. 14. xxxv. 12. xxxvi. 1. xxxvii. 22. Isa. lxv. 9. Micah vi. 1.) The prophets sometimes direct their discourse to the inanimate parts of the creation, thereby to upbraid the stupidity of men. (See Isa. i. 2.)

And prophesy against them.] As the most conspicuous parts of the land: but the judgments denounced extend to all the other parts of the country, as appears in the following verse.

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains and to the hills, to the rivers and to the valleys.*] Every part of the country had been defiled with idolatry: the altars built for idol-worship were commonly placed upon mountains and hills. (See xvi. 16. 24. Jer. ii. 20. iii. 6.) The shady valleys and river-sides were likewise made use of for the same purpose; (ibid. ver. 23.) particularly for the sacrificing of children offered to Moloch. (See Isa. lvii. 5. Jer. vii. 31.) So the prophet denounces a general judgment against the whole country.

Ver. 4. *Your altars shall be desolate, and your images*

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shall be broken, &c.] The verse is plainly taken from Lev. xxvi. 30. where Moses denounces the same judgments against the Jews upon their provocations. The word *hamannim, images,* is generally supposed to signify such as were erected to the honour of the sun, and is accordingly translated sun-images in the margin. (Compare 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4. Isa. xvii. 8.)

I will cast down your slain men before your idols.] So that their sin may be read in the manner of their punishment. (See Lev. xxvi. 30.)

Ver. 7. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord.*] An epiphonema, or conclusion of a severe denunciation often repeated by this prophet; importing, that the judgments God intended to bring upon the Jews, would make the most hardened and stupid sinners sensible that this was God's hand.

Ver. 8. *I will leave a remnant,* &c.] A gracious exception that often occurs in the prophets, when they denounce general judgments against the Jews: implying, that God will still reserve a remnant of that people to whom he will fulfil the promises made to their fathers. (See xiv. 22. and the notes upon Isa. iv. 2. Jer. xliv. 14.)

Ver. 9. *And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations.*] Their afflictions shall bring them to the sense of themselves, and their duty to me. (See Hos. v. 15.)

Because I am broken with their whorish heart.] My patience is tired out with this people's idolatries, called in Scripture *spiritual whoredom.* (See the note on v. 13.)

God is here introduced as speaking after the manner of men, whose patience is tired out by the repeated provocations of others, especially when they see no hopes of amendment. (Compare Isa. xliii. 24.)

And with their eyes which go a whoring after their idols.] The eyes are the seat of lascivious inclinations. (See 2 Pet. ii. 14.) So in pursuance of the same metaphor, they are said to be enticed to idolatry; being often tempted to idolatrous worship, by the costliness of the images, and the fine show which they make. (See Jer. x. 4. 9. Dan. xi. 38.)

And they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed.] They shall *abhor themselves,* as Job speaks xlii. 6. when they reflect upon their manifold provocations. (See vii. 16. xii. 16. xx. 43. xxxvi. 32.)

Ver. 10. *And that I have not said in vain.*] Or, *without cause,* as the word *hinnam* is more significantly translated, xiv. 22.

Ver. 11. *Smite with thy hand, and stamp with thy foot,* &c.] Join to thy words the gestures which are proper to express grief and concern at the wickedness of thy people, and for their calamities that will ensue. (Compare xxi. 12. 14. Numb. xxiv. 10.)

For they shall fall by the sword, &c.] See v. 12.

Ver. 12. *He that is far off.*] He that is out of the reach of the siege.

Ver. 13. *When their slain men shall be round about their altars,* &c.] See ver. 4, 5.

Upon every high hill in all the tops of the mountains, &c.] These were the noted places for idolatrous worship. (See Jer. ii. 20. Hos. iv. 13. and the notes upon ver. 3. of this chapter.)

And under every green tree, and under every thick oak.] The offering sacrifice in groves and shady places was another ancient rite of idolatry; (see the note on Isa. i. 29.) upon which account groves and images are often joined together by the sacred writers.

Ver. 14. *Yea, more desolate than the wilderness towards Diblath.*] Diblath was part of the desert in the borders of Moab. (See Numb. xxxiii. 46. Jer. xlviii. 22.)

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet denounces the irreversible judgment of captivity, and final desolation upon the Jews, for their idolatry and other heinous sins.

Ver. 2. *UPON the land of Israel.*] This comprehends the whole country of Judea. (Compare xii. 22. xiii. 9. xviii. 2.) Israel is often put for Judah after the captivity of the ten tribes: (see Micah i. 14. iii. 9, 10. Mal. i. 1. ii. 11.) they that were left of the ten tribes, joining themselves to the tribe of Judah. (See 2 Chron. xxx. 11. 18.) Dr. Prideaux supposes, that Manasses and his successors in the kingdom of Judah had the dominion of the whole land of Canaan, formerly divided into the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel, as tributaries under the kings of Assyria. (See his Connexion of Scripture History, par. i. p. 34.)

The end is come upon the four corners of the land.] Upon the whole country. (Compare Numb. xxiv. 17.)

Ver. 4. *Mine eye shall not spare thee,* &c.] See v. 17.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord.] See vi. 17.

Ver. 5. *An only evil, behold, is come.*] Such an evil as shall comprehend all other calamities in it.

Ver. 6. *An end is come.*] A destruction which shall be fatal to a great part of those that go into captivity, as well as to those who are consumed in their own country. (See v. 12. vi. 8. Jer. xliv. 27.)

Ver. 7. *The morning is come upon thee.*] God's judgments shall overtake thee speedily and unexpectedly. (Compare Psal. xlvi. 9.) The expression alludes to the time when the magistrates use to give sentence against offenders, which was in the morning. (See the notes upon Jer. xxi. 12.)

Ver. 7. *The time is come.*] The time of God's vengeance, called elsewhere *the day of the Lord.* (Compare ver. 12. xxi. 25. xxx. 3. Jer. xvii. 7.)

And not the sounding again of the mountains.] The sound of war and tumults; not such a joyful sound as useth to echo from the mountains, by which the treaders of grapes express their satisfaction at the time of the vintage; which the Hebrew word *hed* or *heidad,* properly signifies. (See Isa. xvi. 9. Jer. xxv. 30. xlviii. 33.)

Ver. 10. *The rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded.*] Wickedness daily spreads and increases, till it becomes ripe for judgment.

Ver. 11. *Neither shall there be any wailing for them.*] In an utter destruction there shall none escape to bewail the calamities of their brethren; or they shall use no expressions of sorrow, as persons that are astonished under the greatness of their afflictions. (Compare xiv. 16. 22. Deut. xxviii. 28. 34.)

Ver. 12. *Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn.*] The buyer will have no reason to rejoice, because he will not enjoy what he hath bought; nor the seller cause to mourn for the loss of his possessions, which the approaching captivity will for ever deprive him of.

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Ver. 13. *For the sel'er shall not return to that which is sold, although they were yet alive.*] The year of jubilee shall be no advantage to the sellers, when once they are gone into captivity: for though they should live so long, yet they shall not enjoy the benefit of the law, (Lev. xxv. 13.) nor return any more to their possessions.

Neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life.] And though they harden themselves in sin, and shut their eyes against the judgments which hang over their heads, these will at last unavoidably overtake them.

Ver. 14. *They have blown the trumpet,* (see Jer. vi. 1.) *but none goeth to the battle.*] Men's hearts fail them, as looking upon themselves as given up to destruction. (See ver. 17.)

Ver. 15. *The sword is without, the pestilence and famine within.*] See v. 2. 12.

Ver. 16. *But they that are escaped of them shall escape.*] Some few of them shall have the favour of escaping the common calamity, called elsewhere the *escaped* or the *remnant,* from whence is derived the phrase οἱ Σωζόμενοι in the New Testament, *such as are or should be saved.* (See the note on Isa. i. 9. Jer. xliv. 14.)

And shall be upon the mountains like doves in the valleys, &c.] When they flee from the enemy to the mountains, [compare Psal. xi. 1. Matt. xxiv. 16.] and are escaped out of the imminent danger that threatened them, they will then reflect upon their former provocations, and bemoan themselves, and their calamities the effects of them. (See vi. 9. and compare Isa. xxxviii. 14. lix. 11.)

All of them mourning.] St. Jerome renders it, *All of them trembling:* an epithet ascribed to doves, Hos. xi. 11. who are by nature exceeding timorous: this interpretation implies, that their guilt should make them very apprehensive of God's judgments, and fearful what should befal them.

Ver. 17. *All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak as water.*] Weakness and failing of spirits doth cause feebleness in the hands and knees. (Compare xxi. 7. Isa. xxxv. 3. Job iv. 3, 4.)

Ver. 18. *Horror shall cover them.*] Or, *overwhelm them,* as the phrase is translated Psal. lv. 6.

Shame shall be upon all faces.] The marks of confusion and misery, covering the face, or shaving the head, and making it bald, as it follows. (See the note on Isa. xv. 2.)

Ver. 19. *They shall cast their silver into the streets, and their gold shall be removed.*] Or, *shall be accounted an unclean thing;* so the margin renders the word *leniddah,* in the following verse: it shall be valued no more than dung or filthiness, as being made a prey to the conquerors.

They shall not satisfy their souls, nor fill their bowels.] Their wealth will not procure them the necessaries of life under the straits of famine, or miseries of bondage.

Because it is the stumbling-block of their iniquity.] They laid out their silver and gold in making ornaments for their idols. (Compare xiv. 2. xvi. 17. xliv. 12.)

Ver. 20. *As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty,* &c.] The expressions may most probably be understood of the glory and magnificence of the temple, called elsewhere the beauty of holiness. (Compare ver. 22.) This very place they have defiled with idolatry; (see v. 11.) therefore I have given it into the hands of the gentiles to profane and pollute it. For to that sense the marginal reading rightly translates the following words. The preter-perfect tense is often used by the prophets for the future; who, to denote the certainty of the event, speak of what is to come, as if it were already done. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 9.) The same sense is expressed in the following, *I will give it into the hands of strangers,* &c.

Ver. 21. *To the wicked of the earth.*] See ver. 24.

Ver. 22. *My face also will I turn from them,* &c.] I will not hear them when they cry to me in their distress: (see viii. 18.) but will deliver up the holiest part of the temple, where none but the high-priest used to enter, into the hands of the Chaldeans, that shall profane and plunder it.

Ver. 23. *Make a chain.*] The prophets foretold things by actions as well as by words. So Jeremiah is commanded to make bonds and yokes; (Jer. xxviii. 2.) and Ezekiel here to make a chain, to foreshew the approaching captivity, when king and people should be carried in chains to Babylon. (See 2 Kings xxv. 7. Jer. xl. 1.)

For the land is full of bloody crimes.] The innocent blood that has been shed in it cries aloud for vengeance. (See ix. 9. xxiii. 27. xxvi. 18.)

Ver. 24. *Therefore will I bring the worst of the heathen.*] The Chaldeans, who were at that time the great oppressors of the world, and a terror to all the countries round about them. (See xxviii. 7. xxx. 11.)

I will make the pomp of the strong to cease.] All the state and magnificence of the mighty men shall be brought to nothing. (Compare xxxviii. 28.)

And their holy places shall be defiled.] The word *holy places* being in the plural number, denotes the temple and all its outward courts, where the people assembled for the worship of God, and thereupon were accounted holy. (Compare ix. 7. xxi. 2. Psal. lxviii. 35. lxxiii. 17. Jer. li. 51.)

Ver. 26. *Then shall they seek a vision from the prophet.*] Men are desirous to hear what the event shall be in times of perplexity. (See xiv. 9. xx. 1. xxxviii. 17.)

But the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.] Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel himself, shall go into captivity. So there shall either be no prophet left among you, or, if there be any left, they shall not be favoured with Divine revelations. (See Lam. ii. 8.)

And counsel from the ancients.] Or the *elders,* as the word is elsewhere translated, (viii. 1. xiv. 1. xx. 1.) men of authority, and famous for wisdom, whose advice they asked in all cases of difficulty. (See Psal. cxix. 100. Isa. iii. 2.) In like manner the *prophet,* the *priest,* and the *wise men,* are joined together, Jer. xviii. 18.

Ver. 27. *The king shall mourn, and the princes shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people shall be troubled.*] There shall be a general consternation of all ranks and degrees of men. They that are in authority shall want presence of mind to give counsel and directions, and the inferiors shall have no heart to put them in execution. The word *prince* is synonymous with the king, as may appear by comparing xii. 10. 12. xxi. 25.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet is carried in vision to Jerusalem, and there shewed the idolatries committed by the Jews within the precincts of the temple.

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Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, in the sixth year.*] Of Jehoiachin's captivity. (See i. 2.)

And the elders of Judah.] Men of note for their age or authority: perhaps such as had been members of the greater or lesser consistories before their captivity. These elders came to me to inquire of the Lord concerning their present state of affairs. (Compare xiv. 1. 4. xxxiii. 31.) It is probable that they, together with the priests of the captivity, often met together to consult about the public affairs, or to make orders and rules for the better government of the people. So when Sharezer and Regemmelech came to Jerusalem to ask counsel of the prophets and priests about observing the fasts relating to their former calamities, (Zech. vii. 2, 3.) it is highly probable that they were sent by the elders and priests that met in Babylon for this purpose. (See Dr. Prideaux, Connex. of Script. Hist. par. i. p. 272.)

Sat before me.] This was the posture of those that came to hear the instructions of any prophet or teacher. (Compare xiv. 1. xx. 1. xxxiii. 31. 2 Kings iv. 38.) In after-times the teachers sat in a chair or eminent seat, and the hearers sat on lower forms at the feet of their masters. (See Luke x. 39. Acts xxii. 3.)

That the hand of the Lord fell upon me.] See note on i. 3.

Ver. 2. *I beheld.*] A divine of great learning and character thinks the Hebrew words should be understood of the time past, and translated *I had beheld;* and that we are not to suppose the prophet began to see this vision while the elders were before him, but related to them by God's direction what he had formerly seen in the fourth month, the season set apart for the worship of the idol Tamuz. (See the note on ver. 14.) This sense is confirmed by comparing the place with xi. 25. *Then,* or *Thus I spake to them of the captivity, all the things that the Lord had shewed me.*

And lo a likeness as the appearance of fire, &c.] See the note on i. 27.

Ver. 3. *He put forth the form of a hand.*] Just as the form of a *hand* appeared *writing upon the wall,* Dan. v. 5.

And the spirit lifted me up, and brought me in the vision of God to Jerusalem.] This expression, in the *vision of God,* (which is likewise used again at the end of the recital of this prophecy, xi. 24. and xl. 2.) may import that all this representation was performed only in vision; that is, by a lively representation to the mind, as if the prophet had been personally present at Jerusalem. In the same manner, Elisha was present with Gehazi when he took Naaman's present, 2 Kings v. 26. and heard the words that were spoken in the king of Syria's bedchamber, 2 Kings vi. 12. And St. Paul, though he was *absent in body,* yet was *present in spirit* at the church of the Colossians, beholding their order, &c. (Colos. ii. 5.) But the words may also signify a local translation of the prophet from Chaldea to Jerusalem. (Compare iii. 14. xl. 1.)

This latter interpretation is confirmed *by the spirit's lifting him up between heaven and earth, and bringing him to Jerusalem,* and afterward *carrying him back into Chaldea,* (xi. 24.)

To the door of the inner gate.] The entrance that goes into the inner court, called the *court of the priests,* where the altar of burnt-offerings stood. (See ver. 5.) The prophet stood at the outside of this door, and viewed the image here mentioned, placed in some outward verge of the temple; which yet was all accounted holy ground, and called in Scripture the *mount of the Lord,* or the *holy mountain.* (See vii. 24.)

Where was the image of jealousy, that provoketh to jealousy.] An image set up within the precincts of the temple, to provoke God to jealousy, by setting up a rival against him in the place dedicated to his own worship. (See the note on v. 11.)

Ver. 4. *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there.*] To shew that that was the place of his peculiar residence.

Ver. 5. *Northward at the gate of the altar.*] Northward of the gate or entrance that was over against the altar.

Ver. 6. *That I should go far off from my sanctuary.*] That I should forsake it, and deliver it up to be polluted by the heathen, (vii. 21, 22.) which is significantly represented by the *departing of the Divine Glory from the threshold of the temple,* x. 18.

And thou shalt see greater abominations.] Because committed by persons of greater authority, and nearer the place of my immediate presence. (See ver. 11. 14. 16.)

Ver. 7. *And he brought me to the door of the court.*] This Dr. Lightfoot (of the Temple, chap. 28.) understands of the east gate of the inner court, called the *gate of Nicanor,* over which was the council-chamber where the Sanhedrin used to meet, and in some of the rooms near it they secretly practised idolatry, as God discovered to the prophet, (ver. 11.)

Behold a hole in the wall.] Through which I could look in, and see what abominations were committed there.

Ver. 8. *Then said he unto me, Dig now in the wall.*] This was done only by vision, to give the clearer proof and conviction of the idolatries there committed, by thus introducing him into the rooms where they were practised.

And, when I had digged in the wall, behold a door.] Which had been made up, and another more secret entrance contrived, that they might go in and out unobserved.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto me, Go in,* &c.] To give me the fullest conviction, I did not only peep through the hole, mentioned ver. 8. but went into the very room where these idolatries were committed.

Ver. 10. *So I went in and beheld—every form of creeping things and abominable beasts pourtrayed upon the walls round about.*] Pictures were as much prohibited by the law as carved images. (See Numb. xxxiii. 53.)

The worshipping serpents and other brute creatures were idolatries practised in Egypt, and upon that account particularly forbidden by Moses, Deut. iv. 17, 18.

Ver. 11. *And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel.*] Those probably were the members of the Sanhedrin, or great council of the Jews. (See the note on Jer. xxvi. 19.) The place of this idolatry was near the council-chamber where they used to sit. (See ver. 7.)

Ver. 12. *Hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark?*] See ver. 7, 8.

For they say, The Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth.] They either deny the being and providence of God, (see ix. 9.) or else they say in their hearts, God hath cast us off, and withdrawn his wonted protection from

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us. They seem to have been of the same mind with King Ahaz, who resolved to worship the gods of the Syrians, his conquerors. (2 Chron. xxviii. 23.) So these men worshipped the idols of their neighbours, whom they saw more prosperous than themselves.

Ver. 14. *Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house, which was towards the north.*] Which was over against the temple: Dr. Lightfoot *(ubi supra)* distinguishes this door from that mentioned ver. 5. that this was the upper north gate, and that the lower; this being just over against the temple itself, whereas that was opposite to the altar.

And, behold, there sat women weeping for Tamuz.] St. Jerome, by Tamuz, understands Adonis, which learned men suppose the same with Osiris. (See Vossius, de Idololatria, lib. ii. cap. 4. 10.) By Osiris is generally understood the *sun*. [We may rather understand by Osiris, the god that the Egyptians supposed to preside over the fruits of the earth, which were then cut and gathered in: this being called the death of Osiris, was celebrated with mourning and lamentations. (See Dr. Spencer, de Leg. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 24. sect. 1.) This gives a plain account why this solemnity was kept in the month of Tamuz, answering to part of our June and July, because the harvest was finished in those hot countries by or before that time.]

This idolatry was derived from the Egyptians, and afterward the Phœnicians and Greeks improved it by the addition of a new fable, *viz.* of Venus's mourning for the death of Adonis.

The fourth month of the Jews, which answered part of our June and July, was called Tamuz, from a feast dedicated to this idol in that month. The Egyptian year consisted but of three hundred and sixty-five days, without any bissextile, which was afterward added in the Julian year. By this means they lost a day every four years; which in process of time made a great change in the beginning of their year, and a variation in their festivals, which must consequently remove from one season of the year to another. It is therefore probable that under the idolatrous kings of Judah, who brought in the worship of Tamuz, this festival fell in the month that answered the fourth month of the Jews, and gave that month this name; in which month Ezekiel probably saw this vision. (See the note on ver. 2. and Selden, de Diis Syris, Syntagm. ii. cap. 11.)

Ver. 16. *At the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar.*] Near the entrance into the temple, where the brazen altar stood, in the middle of the court, before the house of the Lord. (See 2 Chron. viii. 7. 2 Kings xvi. 14.)

Were about five-and-twenty men with their backs towards the temple of the Lord, and their faces towards the east, &c.] So they turned their backs to God Almighty, and their faces towards the sun. Perhaps Hezekiah may allude to some such idolatrous practice, in that confession of his, 2 Chron. xxix. 6. *Our fathers have done evil in the sight of the Lord, and have forsaken him, and turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord, and turned their backs.*

They turned their back to God, and not their face; as Jeremy expresses their contempt towards him, ii. 27. xxxii. 33. (Compare xxiii. 35. of this prophecy.) For this reason the people were commanded to come in at the north or southern gates of the outward court of the temple, when they came to worship, that they might not, at their return, turn their backs upon God. (See xlvi. 9.) God ordered the holy of holies in his temple to be placed towards the west, in opposition to this species of heathen idolatry, which consisted in worshipping the rising sun. And the Jews always turned their faces towards the temple, when they worshipped. (See Dr. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 2. sect. 4.)

Ver. 17. *For they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger.*] Or, *again they provoke me to anger.* (See the note on Isa. vi. 13.) After their repeated acts of injustice and oppression (see xxii. 6, 7.) they add new aggravations to their wickedness, by committing these heinous provocations of idolatry.

And lo, they put the branch to their nose.] Those that translate the words to this sense, suppose them to relate to some custom among the idolaters, of dedicating a branch of laurel, or some other tree, to the honour of the sun, and carrying it in their hands at the time of their worship. But this text is one of those which the rabbins reckon among the *Tikkun Sopherim*, or such as have been corrected by their scribes and learned men; and the original reading, say they, was *appi, to my nose,* or *face,* instead of the present reading *appam.* According to which reading the sense will be, *and they put a stink to my nose;* that is, they put an open affront upon me, by turning their back parts to me in the place dedicated to my worship.

To this sense the LXX. render it, αὐτοὶ ὡς μυκτηρίζοντες, *They are as those that mock me,* or *publicly affront me.*

Dr. Lightfoot upon John xv. 6. renders the place, *They put the branch to my wrath,* or *to their wrath:* that is, they add more fuel to my wrath, which will burst out like a flame to consume them; just as if one should lay a heap of dry sticks upon a fire. (Compare xv. 6.)

[These religious rites were called among the Greeks, ὀσχοφόρια, θαλλοφόρια, δενδροφόρια. See Dr. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. lib. iv. cap. 5.]

Ver. 18. *Therefore will I also deal in fury.*] God's unalterable decree of executing vengeance upon them for their heinous iniquities, is described like the fury of an enraged person, which cannot be appeased but by bringing the offender to condign punishment. (See v. 13. xvi. 42. xxiv. 13.)

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

This part of the vision represents the destruction of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, beginning with those that were nearest the temple.

Ver. 1. *He also cried in mine ears with a loud voice.*] To denote the terribleness of God's judgments. (See i. 24. Rev. xiv. 7. 9. 15.)

Cause them who have a charge over the city to come near.] The angels who had the charge of executing God's judgment upon the city. (Compare 2 Kings x. 24.)

Ver. 2. *Six men came from the way of the upper gate, which lieth towards the north.*] See the note on viii. 14. There is mention of the higher or upper gate of the Lord's house which Jotham built or repaired, called the *new gate,* 2 Kings xv. 35. Jer. xxvi. 10. But that is generally thought to be at the east side of the temple, and the same

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with that which was afterward called the *gate of Nicanor;* whereas this is supposed to be on the north side of the temple and altar, because there the sacrifices were ordered to be slain. (See Lev. i. 11. and the note upon the following words.) Six slaughtermen came like so many Levites, expecting an order from the chief sacrificing priest which beast to slay, and at what time.

And one man among them was clothed with linen.] That is, an angel, (see ver. 4. and compare xl. 3. xliii. 6.) who was to supply the place of the chief sacrificing priest. Angels, as ministering spirits always attending upon God's service, are sometimes described in the habit of priests. (See Rev. xv. 5, 6.) As God's ministers for the same reason have the title of angels given them, Rev. i. 20.

With a writer's inkhorn by his side.] To set a mark on those that were to be saved from the common destruction. But the LXX. translate the words, *With a girdle of sapphire,* or *embroidery, upon his loins;* which agrees better with what goes before, as being part of the priest's habit, (Exod. xxviii. 8. and the abovecited place in the Revelation.) And this interpretation of the phrase Dr. Castel follows, in his Lexicon, in the word *keseth.*

And they went and stood by the brazen altar.] To denote that the men ordained to destruction were offered up as so many sacrifices, to make an atonement to God's justice. The destruction of the wicked is elsewhere expressed by the name of a sacrifice. (See xxxix. 17. Isa. xxix. 2. xxxiv. 6.)

Ver. 3. *And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house.*] Ezekiel saw the glory of God depart out of the inner sanctuary to the threshold, or door of the temple; to shew that God would shortly forsake this temple. (Compare x. 4. 18, 19. xi. 23.) The word *cherub* stands for *cherubims,* as x. 2. We are to distinguish this apparition of the Divine Glory, which had its constant residence in the temple, from that which was shewed particularly to Ezekiel, i. 26. iii. 23. viii. 24. x. 1.

And he called to the man, &c.] The Logos, or second person of the blessed Trinity, gave his commands to the angel, mentioned ver. 3.

Ver. 4. *Set a mark upon their foreheads.*] Compare Rev. vii. 31. The expression alludes to the custom of the eastern nations to mark their servants in the forehead. (See Grotius upon that place of the Revelation.) The Vulgar Latin renders the words, *Mark with the letter* thau *the foreheads;* and it is very probable the ancient reading in the LXX. was ταῦ Σημεῖον, though the present copies read τὸ Σημεῖον. (See Huetius, Demonst. Evang. prop. 9.)

It was the general opinion of the fathers that the ancient Samaritan letter *thau* was made in the form of a cross; and St. Jerome (a very competent judge in this matter) does attest the same in his commentary on this place.

This opinion Scaliger rejects in his notes upon Eusebius's Chronicon, p. 109. but Bishop Walton defends it at large in his third Prolegomenon, n. 36. and the Dissertation upon the ancient Hebrew Sicles, in his Apparatus to the Polyglot Bible, p. 36. The Ethiopic letter *tawi,* or *tau,* still retains the form of a cross; and the learned Ludolphus supposes, that the Ethiopic letters were borrowed from the Samaritans. The Coptic letter of that sound is in the same form. The modern antiquaries do all agree, that the Samaritan *thau* was in the form of a Greek X. But whether their authority be sufficient to outweigh that of St. Jerome, must be left to the learned to judge. It is observable that the high-priest was anointed upon the forehead, in the form of an X, as Selden assures us, lib. ii. de Success. in Pontif. cap. 9.

[The words of the learned Montfaucon (Palæograph. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 3.) decide this controversy in favour of the ancients: "In nummis Samaritanis, quæ in musæis occurrunt, thau forma crucis exaratum frequentissime visitur: in quos si incidisset Scaliger, Origenis et Hieronymi testimonio refragatus non esset." He tells us, *That in several Samaritan coins, to be found in the collections of medals, the letter thau is engraven in form of a cross, which, if Scaliger had seen, he would not have contradicted the testimony of Origen and Jerome upon this subject.*]

Of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof.] The irreclaimable temper of sinners that hate to be reformed, is just matter of grief to good men. (See Psal. cxix. 136. Isa. lvii. 18. Jer. xiii. 17. 2 Cor. xii. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 8.) And when the number of such mourners is not sufficient to divert God's judgments from a nation, they shall at least deliver their own souls. (See xiv. 14.)

Ver. 5. *Let not your eye spare,* &c.] See v. 11.

Ver. 6. *Slay utterly, old and young,* &c.] This denunciation was executed by the Chaldeans. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17.)

And began at my sanctuary.] *Judgment* often *begins at the house of God,* (1 Pet. iv. 17.) because such persons sin against greater light and clearer convictions. (See Amos iii. 2. Luke xii. 47.)

Then they began with the ancient men that were before the house.] Who committed idolatry in the several courts and apartments belonging to the temple. (See viii. 11, 12. 16.)

Ver. 7. *Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain.*] God declares he will own the temple no longer for his place of residence, (see ver. 3.) as having been polluted with idolatry; (viii. 10, &c.) and therefore delivers up both the inner and outer courts belonging to it, (compare x. 3. 5.) to be polluted by blood and slaughter.

Ver. 8. *And I was left.*] The prophet thought himself preserved alone out of the common destruction, the slaughter was so great; although those who had a mark set upon them were certainly preserved, as well as he.

I fell upon my face.] In a posture of supplication to deprecate God's anger, (see Numb. xii. 5. xvi. 4. 22. 45.) and to beseech him not to make an utter destruction of those small remains that were left of the nation: Jerusalem being almost the only place which was not in the enemies' power. (See xi. 13.)

Ver. 9. *The land is full of blood, and the city of perverseness.*] See viii. 23.

The Lord hath forsaken the earth, &c.] See viii. 12.

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The vision of the cherubims, which the prophet saw at the beginning of this prophecy, is here renewed; from whence coals are scattered over the city to denote its destruction by fire. At the end of the chapter the Divine

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Glory is described as still removing farther from the temple.

Ver. 1. *IN the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims,* &c.] See the note on i. 26.

As the appearance of the likeness of a throne.] And God sitting upon it. (Ibid.)

Ver. 2. *Go in between the wheels, even under the cherubims.*] Or, *between the cherubims,* as Noldius translates the phrase, numb. 3. 98. according to the explication given of it, ver. 7.

And fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city.] For the coals of fire sparkled and ran up and down between the living creatures. (See i. 13.) This part of the vision was to represent the burning of the city. *Coals of fire* do elsewhere denote the Divine vengeance. (See Psal. cxx. 4. cxl. 10. Rev. viii. 5.)

Ver. 3. *Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house.*] The cherubims which were part of the vision shewed to Ezekiel: (see ver. 1. and the note upon ix. 3.) they stood now in the inner court, on the *north side* of the house. (See ver. 18.) The Chaldee paraphrase understands it of the *south side* of the house; but then it is spoken with respect to those that came out of the temple. (See xlvii. 1.)

And the cloud filled the inner court.] This bright *cloud* seems to be an attendant upon that glory which was represented in this vision to Ezekiel: (viii. 4. x. 1.) or else the words may be understood of the cloud or Schechinah, removing from the inner sanctuary, and coming towards the door of the house. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 4. *The glory of the Lord went up from the cherub,* &c.] The words may better be translated thus, *Now* (or *for*) *the glory of the Lord was gone up,* &c. For the prophet repeats here what he had related before, ix. 3.

And the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.] A bright cloud was the sign of God's presence, which first filled the tabernacle, (Exod. xl. 35.) afterward the temple, (1 Kings viii. 10.) where it fixed itself upon the mercy-seat, (Lev. xvi. 2.) From whence God is said so often to *dwell between the cherubims.* This glory now removed from that its residence in the inner sanctuary, and came down towards the porch of the temple, and fixed itself partly in the temple, and partly in the inner court adjoining to it, to denote God's being just about to leave the temple, and disown any relation to it. (See the note on viii. 3.) The Schechinah, or Divine Glory, is represented as a bright flame breaking out of a thick cloud: (see the note on Isa. vi. 1.) so both together make up the description of it.

Ver. 5. *And the sound of the cherubims' wings was heard even to the utter court,* &c.] See i. 24. The cherubims in Ezekiel's vision seem to have moved to attend upon the Schechinah, which now had took its residence at the *threshold of the house.* (Compare ver. 18, 19. xi. 22.)

Ver. 7. *Who took it, and went out.*] To signify the putting the command in execution.

Ver. 8. *And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand.*] See i. 8.

Ver. 9—12.] The same, in substance, which was described i. 16—18.

Ver. 11. *To the place where the head looked they followed it.*] Each wheel consisted of four semicircles, (see the note on i. 16, 17.) in correspondence to the four heads of each animal.

Ver. 13. *It was cried to them in my hearing, O wheel!*] Or, *move round,* as some render the word. They are put in mind of continually attending upon their duty; for the wheels and living creatures were animated with the same principle of understanding and motion. (See i. 19—21.)

Ver. 14. *And every one had four faces,* &c.] See i. 6. 10.

The first had the face of a cherub.] That is, of an ox; as appears by comparing this verse with chap. i. 10. The word *cherub* does originally signify an ox. (See Dr. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 3. sect. 1.) The several faces are here represented in a different order from the description given of them i. 10. of which difference this reason may be assigned. In the first chapter the prophet saw this vision *coming out of the north,* and advancing southward, (ver. 4.) where the face of a man, being placed on the south side, was first in view. The lion, being on the east part, was towards his right hand; the ox, being placed towards the west, was on his left; and the eagle was towards the north. This interpretation is justified from the situation of the *standards* of the several tribes, Numb. ii. 2. 10. 18. 25. where Judah, whose standard was a lion, was placed on the east side: Reuben, whose standard was a man, was placed on the south side: Ephraim, whose standard was an ox, was placed on the west side: and Dan, whose standard was an eagle, was placed on the north side. (See the note upon i. 6.) Here the prophet is supposed to stand by the porch of the temple, (see viii. 16.) westward of the Schechinah, as that was moving out of the inner court eastward; (see ver. 18, 19.) so the ox was first in his view, as being nearest to him.

Ver. 15. *And the cherubims were lifted up.*] To attend upon the Divine glory wherever it went, and particularly at its removal from the temple. (See ver. 5. 19.)

Ver. 16, 17.] See i. 19—21.

Ver. 18. *Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims.*] The Divine presence here makes a farther remove from the temple. (See ver. 4.) It now quite leaves the house itself, and settles upon the cherubims which stood in the court adjoining it: (ver. 3.)

Ver. 19. *The cherubims lifted up their wings—the wheels also were beside them.*] See i. 19. 26.

And every one of them stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house.] This is still a farther remove of God's presence from the temple; for the east gate was just at the entrance into the inner court before the temple. (See the note on viii. 7. and compare xliii. 4.)

Ver. 20. *This is the likeness of the living creatures that I saw under the God of Israel,* &c.] See i. 22, 23. 26.

And I knew that they were the cherubims.] Having often seen that form, which was carved in several places upon the walls, and doors, and utensils, of the temple. (1 Kings vi. 29. 35. viii. 29. 36.)

Ver. 21, 22.] See i. 8. 10. 12.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

God denounces his judgments upon those wicked men who remained in the city, and made a mock of the judgment

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of the prophets: he promises to favour those who are gone into captivity, and truly turn to him: intimating, likewise, that there shall be a general restoration of the nation in aftertimes. Then the Divine Glory leaves the city, denoting God's putting it out of his protection.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, the spirit lifted me up.*] See iii. 12. 14. viii. 3.

And brought me unto the east gate of the Lord's house.] Where the Divine glory had then placed itself, (x. 19.)

Five-and-twenty men.] The same probably that came thither to worship the sun, viii. 16.

Princes of the people.] Members of the great Sanhedrin. (Compare viii. 11. and see the note on Jer. xxvi. 10.)

Ver. 3. *Which say, It is not near: let us build houses.*] They were such as put the *evil day far from them;* (Amos vi. 3.) were not willing to believe that the judgments threatened would soon overtake them: (compare xii. 27.) and so securely went on in building new houses, and making such-like improvements.

This city is the caldron, and we are the flesh.] Jeremiah had foretold the destruction of Jerusalem under the figure of a *seething caldron,* Jer. i. 13. and Ezekiel himself uses the same metaphor, xxiv. 3, 4, &c. So these infidels made use of the same expression on purpose to deride the menaces of the prophets; as if they had said, If this city be a caldron, we had rather take our chance of being consumed in it, than leave our fine houses and other accommodations, and run the risk of war or captivity. (Compare ver. 7, 8. 11.)

Ver. 5. *And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said unto me.*] See the note on iii. 24.

Ver. 6. *Ye have multiplied your slain in this city.*] See xxii. 3, 4.

Ver. 7. *Your slain, whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they are the flesh, and this city is the caldron.*] The comparing of the city to a caldron may fitly be applied to the slain, whom you have butchered in your streets, and cut in pieces in the midst of it, just as pieces of flesh prepared for the caldron. (See xxiv. 6. and compare Micah iii. 3.)

But I will bring you out of the midst of it.] You shall not die there, but I will reserve you for another punishment. (See ver. 9. 11.)

Ver. 9, 10. *I will bring you out of the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of strangers.*] Ye shall be carried out of the city by the Chaldeans, and afterward be slain by them in the land of Hamath. (See Jer. xxxix. 6. 2 Kings xxv. 19—21.) Which is called the *entrance of Hamath,* 1 Kings viii. 65. 2 Kings xiv. 25. because it was just upon the borders of Judea.

Ver. 12. *But have done after the manners of the heathen.*] Have defiled yourselves with their idolatries. (See viii. 10. 14. 16.)

Ver. 13. *Then I fell down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice,* &c.] The prophet thought this an earnest of the common destruction which was coming upon all the inhabitants of the city, and thereupon he earnestly deprecated so severe a judgment. (See ix. 8.)

Ver. 15. *Thy brethren, the men of thy kindred.*] Those of thy kindred and acquaintance who are carried away captive with thee.

To whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get ye far from the Lord, &c.] The Jews who were left in their own country, thought themselves more in God's favour, than those who were carried away captive; whom they looked upon as outcasts, and such as had no right either to the privileges of Jews, or the land of Judea. (See the note on Jer. xxiv. 5.)

Ver. 16. *Yet will I be to them a little sanctuary.*] The Jews were under God's immediate protection, expressed in Scripture by *dwelling under the shadow of his wings.* The phrase alluding to the wings of the cherubims covering the mercy-seat, and signifying God's presence among them, and protection over his people. Therefore, to comfort those who were under a state of exile and captivity, God tells them, that although they were deprived of the benefit of attending upon his sanctuary, and being placed under that protection, his presence there did import, yet he would supply that by being a constant refuge and defence to them in the countries where they were scattered. (Compare Psal. xxxi. 20. xci. 1. Isa. viii. 14.)

Ver. 17. *I will even gather them from the people.*] This may be in some degree fulfilled in those that returned from captivity, but the utmost completion of this and the following verses must be expected at the general restoration of the Jewish nation. (See the following notes, and compare xx. 4. xxviii. 25. xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 24.)

Ver. 18. *They shall take away all the detestable things thereof.*] They shall live pure from all the pollutions of idolatry, wherewith the land had been formerly defiled. (See xxxvii. 23.)

Ver. 19. *And I will give them one heart.*] They shall serve me *with one consent,* (Zeph. iii. 9.) and not be distracted by the several idolatrous worships which were set up in opposition to God's true worship, when the ten tribes separated themselves from Judah. (Compare Psal. lxxxvi. 11. Jer. xxxii. 39. Hos. x. 2.)

I will put a new spirit within them.] These promises chiefly relate to the general conversion of the Jews; when God shall pour out upon them the *spirit of grace,* in order to their conversion, Zech. xii. 10. (Compare xxxvi. 26, 27. and see the notes upon Jer. xxiv. 7. xxxi. 33, 34. xxxii. 39.) Conversion is commonly spoken of in Scripture as if it were a new creation, because of the new dispositions and powers which accompany it. (See Psal. li. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15. and the note upon xviii. 31.)

I will take the stony heart out of their flesh.] Men's insensibility as to religious matters, is often ascribed to the hardness of their hearts, being such as will receive no impression. Here God promises to give them teachable dispositions, and to take away the *veil from their heart,* as St. Paul expresses it, speaking of this subject, 2 Cor. iii. 16. The same temper being indifferently expressed, either by blindness, or hardness of heart.

Ver. 20. *They shall be my people.*] They shall never apostatize any more from me to serve idols, but shall constantly adhere to my worship; and I will own them as my people, those who are under my immediate protection. (Compare xiv. 11. xxxvi. 28. xxxviii. 27. Jer. xxx. 22.)

Ver. 21. *But as for them whose heart goeth after the heart of their detestable things,* &c.] The prophet speaketh of idols, called here their *detestable things,* as ver. 18. the prophet mentions the *heart of their detestable things,* as if their idols had an understanding and appetites, because

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their worshippers applied to them as such, and because evil spirits, who were worshipped in and by them, were pleased with the devotions in that manner paid to them.

I will recompense their way upon their own heads.] See ver. 9, 10. and the notes upon xx. 38.

Ver. 22.] See i. 19. 26. x. 19.

Ver. 23. *And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city.*] God's presence was before departed from the temple, (x. 19.) and now it quite left the city, to signify that he would acknowledge no longer his relation to either, but deliver them up to be profaned by heathens.

And stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.] That is, the Mount of Olives; from whence it is described returning, when God shall again make the city and temple the seat of his presence. (See xliii. 2. Zech. xiv. 4.)

Ver. 24. *Afterward the spirit took me up,* &c.] See the notes on viii. 3.

And brought me in vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea.] Returned me back into Chaldea, in the same manner as it carried me away from thence, being still under the power of a Divine ecstacy, and the immediate influences of God's Spirit.

Ver. 25. *Then I spake to them of the captivity,* &c.] See the note on viii. 2.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

Ezekiel being commanded to remove his household-stuff, and to take his sustenance with quaking and trembling, is a type of the captivity both of king and people, and of the consternation which their calamities will bring upon them; he afterward reproves the infidelity of those who disbelieved his prophecies.

Ver. 2. *SON of man.*] See ii. 1.

Thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house.] See ii. 3. 6, 7. The prophet applies himself to those of the captivity among whom he dwelt. They saw Jerusalem still inhabited, and under the government of its own king. And as they that were left at home insulted over the exiles; (see xi. 15.) so these repined at their own ill fortune, and thought those who dwelt at Jerusalem in a much better condition than themselves. Therefore the following parables are designed to shew, that they who are left behind to endure the miseries of a siege, and the insults of a conqueror, will be in the worse condition of the two.

St. Jerome, in his preface to Ezekiel, observes, this was the temper of those captives to whom Ezekiel prophesied; "Iis, qui cum eo captivi fuerant, prophetavit, pœnitentibus quod ad Jeremiæ vaticinium se ultro adversariis tradidissent, et viderent adhuc urbem Hierosolymam stare, quam ille casuram esse prædixerat."

Which have eyes, and see not, &c.] Who will not make use of that sense and understanding that God hath given them. (See Isa. vi. 9. Jer. v. 21.)

Ver. 3. *Prepare thee stuff for removing,* &c.] Get all thy goods together, and pack them up as those do that move from one house to another. Do this openly and at noonday, that they may all see and take notice of it. The prophets often prophesied by signs, as being of greater force and efficacy than words. (See iv. 1.)

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt go forth at even in their sight, as they that go forth into captivity.*] As men do that would go off by stealth: to signify also that Zedekiah and his retinue should escape out of the city by night, (2 Kings xxv. 4.)

Ver. 5. *Dig thou through the wall in their sight.*] To shew that the king shall make his escape by the same means. (See ver. 12.)

Ibid. and Ver. 6. *And carry out thereby. In their sight thou shalt bear it upon thy shoulders—in the twilight.*] This which the prophet was commanded to carry out in the twilight, was something different from the goods he removed in the day-time; (see ver. 4. 7.) and therefore must mean necessary provision for his present subsistence.

Thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground.] As Zedekiah shall do; that he might not be discovered.

I have set thee for a sign to the house of Israel.] See ver. 12. and iv. 3.

Ver. 9. *Hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to thee, What doest thou?*] They inquire, by way of derision and contempt, what these signs mean. (Compare ii. 5. xvii. 12. xx. 49. xxiv. 19.)

Ver. 10. *This burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem.*] King Zedekiah. (See vii. 27.)

Ver. 12. *And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight.*] He shall be glad to carry what he can with him in the dusk of the evening, and his retinue shall make a private way to get out of the city, that they may not be discovered. (See Jer. xxxix. 4.)

He shall cover his face, &c.] That nobody may know or discover him, till he is got beyond his enemies' camp.

Ver. 13. *My net also will I spread upon him,* &c.] Though he thinks to escape, yet I will bring his enemies upon him, who shall encompass him, and stop his flight, as when a wild beast is entangled in a net. (2 Kings xxv. 5—7. and compare xvii. 20. xix. 8. xxxii. 3. of this prophecy.)

Yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there.] Having his eyes put out before he came thither. (Ibid.) Josephus tells us, (Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 10.) that Zedekiah thought this prophecy inconsistent with that of Jeremiah, (xxxiv. 3.) *That Zedekiah's eyes should see the eyes of the king of Babylon;* and therefore believed neither. But they both actually came to pass, as the sacred story assures us: the king of Babylon passing sentence upon him at Riblah, as one that had broke the oath and covenant he had made with him, and then putting out his eyes, and carrying him to Babylon.

Ver. 14. *And I will scatter towards every wind all that are about him to help him.*] See 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5.

And I will draw out the sword after them.] See the note upon v. 12.

Ver. 16. *But I will leave a few men of them, that they may declare their abominations among the heathen.*] And there justify my proceedings against them. (See vi. 8—10.)

Ver. 18. *Eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and carefulness.*] Shew all the signs of anxiety and consternation whenever thou takest thy common sustenance.

Ver. 19. *Thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the land of Israel.*] This was designed to inform the captives, that they were not in a worse condi-

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tion than those that were left behind in Judea. (See the note on ver. 2.)

They shall eat their bread with carefulness, &c.] See iv. 16, 17.

Ver. 20. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord.*] See vi. 7.

Ver. 22. *In the land of Israel.*] See the note on vii. 2.

The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth.] Words of the same import with those at ver. 27. and xi. 3. Both of them the words of infidels, who turn the grace of God into wantonness, and take encouragement from his patience and long-suffering to despise his threatenings, as if they would never be fulfilled. (Compare Isa. v. 19. Amos vi. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.)

Ver. 23. *The days are at hand.*] The same is elsewhere expressed, by *the day of the Lord is at hand:* (see Joel ii. 1. Zeph. i. 14.) the time when God will *shew his wrath, and make his power and justice known to the world.* (See ver. 25.)

Ver. 25. *For there shall be no more any vain vision*, &c.] The false prophets, who foretold peace and safety, shall see their prophecies so confuted by the events quite contrary to what they foretold, that they will never pretend any more to publish new prophecies. (Compare xiii. 23.)

It shall be no more prolonged.] My threatenings shall come to pass in your own days, and ye shall have ocular demonstration of their truth.

Ver. 27, 28.] See ver. 22, 23. 25.

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet denounces God's judgments against false prophets who made a gain of their profession, and encouraged men to go on in their sins, by giving them false visions of peace and security; and at the same time disheartened the truly pious, and discouraged them from continuing in the ways of holiness.

Ver. 2. *SAY thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts.*] The true prophets often denounce God's judgments against the false ones; laying to their charge many misdemeanours in their private conversation, and upbraiding them for unfaithfulness in the office they undertook of guiding and directing men's consciences. (See xxii. 25. 28. Jer. vi. 14. xxiii. 11, &c. xxviii. 14. xxix. 8. 22, 23. Micah iii. 5.)

Ver. 4. *O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts.*] *Deceitful workers*, as the apostle styles such persons, 2 Cor. xi. 13. who craftily insinuate false doctrines into weak and unstable minds; and withal hungry and ravenous, and such as greedily catch at any appearance of advantage. (Compare xxii. 25.)

Ver. 5. *Ye have not gone up into the gaps.*] Or, *stood in the gap*, or *breach*, as it is expressed xxii. 30. Psal. cvi. 23. Which place alludes to the intercession which Moses made for the Israelites, whereby he withheld God's hand, as it were, when it was just stretched out to take vengeance upon the people for their heinous sin in making the golden calf. (See Exod. xxxii. 10, 11.)

The phrase is taken from those that put a stop to the enemy when he is just entering in at a breach. In like manner, it was the office and duty of those prophets, if they had truly been what they pretended, by their prayers and intercessions, to put a stop to God's vengeance when it was just ready to be poured out upon a sinful people.

Nor made up a fence for the house of Israel.] Or, *made up a wall*, as the Vulgar Latin translates it. Another expression taken from those that are besieged, and if a breach be made in a wall, presently make it up, or build up a new one within it; to prevent the enemy from entering, and becoming masters of the city. The word *geder*, *fence*, signifies any other sort of fortification. (See Psal. lxii. 3. lxxxix. 40.)

To stand in the battle, in the day of the Lord.] When God shall come like a leader, or general, at the head of his army, *i. e.* his judgments, to execute vengeance upon his enemies. (Compare Jer. xxv. 30. Joel ii. 11.)

Ver. 6. *They have seen vanity and lying divinations.*] Concerning peace and prosperity. (See ver. 10. and xii. 23, 24.)

And they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word.] Or, *that the word should be confirmed;* the transitive verb being often taken in an impersonal sense. (See the note on Isa. xliv. 18.) Their speaking with so much assurance made others confidently expect that the event should answer their predictions; and sometimes even imposed upon the true prophets for a time; as Hananiah did upon Jeremiah. (See Jer. xxviii. 6.)

Ver. 9. *They shall not be in the assembly of my people.*] They shall not be members of the church here, nor partake of the communion of saints in heaven. The Hebrew word *sod*, signifies a secret assembly or privy-council; such as are acquainted with the most inward thoughts and secret intent of a prince; and from thence it is applied to God's chosen people, those that are acquainted with the *whole counsel of God*, and whom he instructs by the secret directions of his Holy Spirit. (See Psal. xxv. 14. Jer. xxiii. 18.) So the prophet tells these men that pretended to know so much of the secrets of the Almighty, that they should never be of the number of those favourites of heaven, to whom God will reveal himself and his counsels.

Neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel.] The sense is much the same with that of the foregoing sentence; the expressions being an allusion to the registers that used to be kept of the members of any city or corporation, the privileges of which society none can pretend to, but they whose names are entered into such registers. (Compare Exod. xxxii. 32. Psal. xlix. 28. Ezra ii. 62. Luke v. 20. Phil. iv. 2. Heb. xii. 23.) It may be, these false prophets foretold a speedy return to the exiles; whereupon God tells them that they shall never live to see it, nor shall their names be entered into the register of those that return home. (See Nehem. vii. 5.)

Neither shall they enter into the land of Israel.] They shall never see their own country again, nor shall they have a share among the *true Israelites.* (See the note on xx. 38.)

Ver. 10. *They have seduced my people, saying, Peace, and there was no peace.*] They have deceived my people, by telling them that none of those judgments should overtake them, which Jeremy and the other true prophets threatened them with, and they have spoke peace to men's consciences

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upon false grounds and principles. (See Jer. iv. 10. vi. 14. xxxiii. 14. 17.)

And one built a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar.] Instead of providing such a fence and bulwark, as might secure the people against the judgments that threaten them, (see ver. 5.) they have made a slight wall without any mortar, or cement, to bind and strengthen it; that is, they have applied slight and palliating remedies to public calamities, which will never give true peace to men's consciences, nor stand them in any stead, when God visits for their iniquities. Just as if an unskilful builder should undertake to set up a wall, and his fellow-workmen should daub it with untempered mortar. (See ver. 11, 12. 16.)

Ver. 11. *There shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall,* &c.] God's judgments are often compared to storms and tempests, the artillery of heaven. (See xxxviii. 22. Job xxvii. 20. Psal. xi. 6. xviii. 13, 14.) Especially when he executes his judgments by a victorious army. (See Isa. xxix. 6. xxxviii. 2. Jer. iv. 13. compare Ecclus. xlix. 9.)

Ver. 13. *I will rend it with a stormy wind in my fury,* &c.] Under these metaphors is probably foretold the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldean army. Thus the Chaldee paraphrase expounds it: *I will bring a mighty king with the force of a whirlwind, and destroying people as it were an overflowing storm, and powerful princes like great hailstones.*

Ver. 14. *So will I break down the wall, and bring it down to the ground,* &c.] The Chaldee explains this verse to the same sense: *I will destroy the city wherein ye have uttered these false prophecies:* which exposition is confirmed by the following words, *And ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof;* that is, you shall be destroyed in the same common calamity.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord.] See vi. 7.

Ver. 15. *The wall is no more, nor they that daubed it.*] The Chaldee expounds it, *The city is no more, nor the false prophets.*

Ver. 16. *See visions of peace, and there is no peace.*] See Jer. vi. 10. viii. 11.

Ver. 17. *Set thy face against the daughters of thy people that prophesy.*] Direct thy discourse against those she-pretenders to prophecy. (Compare xx. 46. xxi. 2.) God did sometimes bestow the gift of prophecy upon women. (See Exod. xv. 20. Judg. iv. 4. 2 Kings xxii. 14.) This encouraged others of that sex to pretend to the same gift. (Compare Rev. ii. 20.)

Ver. 18. *Woe to the women that sow pillows to all armholes,* &c.] The learned Gataker, in his Cinnus, p. 200. thinks the words may more properly be rendered, *That put* (or fasten) *pillows to all armholes;* so he understands the same word, Job xvi. 15. *I have put sackcloth upon my skin.* As the prophet compares the deceitful practices of the false prophets to the daubing of a wall, so he represents the artifices of these female seducers, by sowing pillows under their hearers' elbows, that they might rest securely in their evil ways; and by covering their faces with veils, or kerchiefs, or ornaments proper to women, thereby to keep them in blindness and ignorance.

To the head of every stature.] *Of every age,* both great and small: so the Greek word Ἡλικία, used by the LXX. here, signifies age as well as stature. (See Dr. Hammond upon Matt. vi. 27.)

To hunt souls.] That they may drive them into those nets and snares that they have laid for them, and make them their prey. (Compare xxv. 25. Micah ii. 7. 2 Pet. ii. 14.)

Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come to you?] Or, *will ye promise life unto those that come to you?* (see ver. 19. 22.) that is, will ye make a prey of men's souls, by deluding them with fair hopes and promises?

Ver. 19. *And will ye pollute me among my people?*] Will ye profane my name, by making use of it to give credit to your own dreams and lies? (See ver. 7.)

For handfuls of barley, and for pieces of bread.] For the meanest reward. (See Prov. xxviii. 21.) So greedy are they of making gain to themselves. (Compare xxii. 25. Micah iii. 5.)

To slay the souls that should not die, &c.] Thus they threatened death to those that yielded themselves to the Chaldeans in Jeconiah's captivity; and yet God preserved them alive. (See Jer. xxix. 5, 6.) And they have encouraged those that remain at Jerusalem with promises of peace and safety, who shall all be destroyed. (See v. 12.) Or the words may be meant in general of discouraging the godly, and confirming the wicked in their evil ways. (See ver. 22. and compare Jer. xxiii. 14. 17.)

To *slay* and to *make alive,* signify here to promise men life, or threaten them with death. (See ver. 22.) So the prophet saith he *came to destroy the city,* xliii. 3. that is, to pronounce the sentence of destruction upon it. And the priest is said to make the leper unclean, Lev. xiii. 3. that is, to *pronounce him unclean,* as our translation rightly expresses the sense.

Ver. 20. *Wherewith ye hunt the souls to make them fly.*] To make them run into those nets and snares that you have laid for them. (See ver. 18.) The metaphor is continued from the manner of hunting and pursuing living creatures, by that means to drive them into the toils prepared for them.

I will tear them from your arms.] I will make your cheats and impostures appear so evidently, that nobody shall be in danger of being seduced by you any more. (See ver. 23.)

Ver. 22. *Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad,* &c.] As you have deluded the wicked with vain hopes, (see ver. 10.) so you have disheartened the righteous with groundless fears, (ver. 19. and compare xxii. 25.)

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet denounces God's judgments against those hypocrites who pretended to be his worshippers, and at the same time secretly practised idolatry. He afterward sets forth God's mercy towards the Jews, in sparing a few of that sinful nation, and those no better than the rest that were destroyed, when he might in justice have involved all of them in one common destruction.

Ver. 1. THEN *came certain of the elders of Israel,* &c.] See viii. 1.

Ver. 3. *These men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their*

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face.] They are not only idolaters in their heart, but they have actually set up idols and worshipped them; and thereby have fallen into that great sin of deserting me and my worship. (See vii. 19.)

Should I be inquired of at all by them?] Though they have the impudence to come to ask counsel of God, (see vii. 26.) they shall not receive a favourable answer, but such a one as their hypocrisy deserves. (See the following verse, and compare xxxvi. 37.)

Ver. 5. *That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart.*] That I may deal with them according to their deserts, and thereby convince them that I am a searcher of hearts, and know the inward and secret wickedness of their thoughts.

Ver. 6. *From all your abominations.*] Your idolatries. (See viii. 10. xvi. 2.)

Ver. 7. *Or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel.*] *The stranger within thy gates,* as it is expressed in the fourth commandment. These, though they were not all of them circumcised, yet devoted themselves to the service of the one true God, for which reason they are styled the *worshippers of God,* Acts xvi. 14. xviii. 7.

Who separates himself from me.] Who turns apostate from me and my service; for men cannot serve God and idols; he having declared himself a *jealous God,* that will not admit any rival in his worship. (See Josh. xxiv. 19.)

I, the Lord, will answer him by myself.] I will punish him immediately by my own hands. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 8. *And I will set my face against that man.*] I will make him a mark of mine indignation. (See xv. 7. Jer. xliv. 11.)

And I will make him a sign and a proverb.] I will make him a signal and remarkable instance of my vengeance. (Compare Numb. xxvi. 10. Deut. xxviii. 38.)

And will cut him off from the midst of my people.] By a sudden death, attended with extraordinary circumstances. (See Lev. xx. 6. 17, 18.)

Ver. 9. *And if a prophet be deceived.*] This is to be understood of the false prophets, whose practices are reproved throughout the whole foregoing chapter.

I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet.] I have suffered him to be deceived. (See the note on Isa. lxiii. 17.) I have given him up to *strong delusions,* as a just judgment upon him for going after idols, and setting up false pretences to inspiration. (See xiii. 2. 7. 23. 1 Kings xxii. 23. Jer. iv. 10. and compare 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.) Or the words may be explained to this sense: I will disappoint the hopes and expectations of those prophets, who seduce my people by speaking peace to them: (xiii. 10.) for I will bring upon them those evils, which they with great assurance have declared should never come to pass. To this purpose it follows, *I will stretch out my hand upon him,* &c. *i. e.* I will send such a judgment upon him, as I inflicted upon Hananiah the false prophet, Jer. xxviii. 16, 17.

Ver. 10. *The punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh to him.*] Because both parties are equally guilty of going astray from me, and seeking after idols, and other unlawful means of divination. (See ver. 11. and compare 2 Kings i. 3, 4.)

Ver. 11. *That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me.*] The judgments I inflict upon the false prophets, and those that consult them, shall be an instruction to my people to keep close to me and my worship, and not hanker after the idolatrous practices of the neighbouring nations.

But that they may be my people, &c.] See the note on xi. 20.

Ver. 13. *When the land trespasseth grievously,* &c.] Or, *When a land.* The design of this and the following verses is to shew, that when the inhabitants of a land have filled up the measure of their iniquities, and God ariseth to execute judgment upon them, the few righteous that are left among them shall not be able by their prayers and intercessions to deliver the nation from the judgments decreed against it. *They shall but deliver their own souls;* as we see in the case of Sodom, where there was no righteous but Lot and his family; those just persons saved themselves, but no intercession could avail to save the city. (See the following verse.)

And break the staff of the bread thereof.] See iv. 16.

Ver. 14. *Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it.*] All of them persons eminent for their piety: Noah and his family were saved out of the universal deluge, and obtained a promise from God that he would never destroy the world so again, Gen. viii. 21. Daniel interceded with God for the whole nation of the Jews, and obtained a promise of their restoration, Dan. ix. Job was appointed by God to make intercession for his three friends, Job xlii. 8. But when God's irreversible decree is gone out against a nation, even the prayers of such men will be ineffectual towards their deliverance. (Compare Jer. xv. 1.)

We may observe how early the fame of Daniel's piety was spread over Chaldea, who was at this time not above thirty years of age; it being but thirteen years ago since he was carried captive to Babylon, when he was very young. (See Dan. i. 1. 4, &c.)

Ver. 15. *If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land.*] See v. 17.

Ver. 17. *Or if I bring a sword upon the land.*] If I deliver it into the hands of a cruel and bloody enemy. (See v. 12. vii. 15. xxi. 9. 16.) The conqueror's sword is often called the *sword of the Lord,* in the prophets; because they are the executioners of God's judgments. (See Isa. x. 15. Jer. xxv. 9. xlvii. 6.)

And say, Sword, go through the land.] So God is said *to call for a sword upon Gog,* xxxviii. 21.

So that I cut off man and beast from it.] The men are destroyed by the sword, and the cattle are drove away by the enemy; or else consumed by pestilence arising from the air's being corrupted through the stench of dead bodies. (Compare xxv. 13. xxix. 8. xxxii. 13. Hos. iv. 3. Zeph. i. 3.)

Ver. 19. *Or if I send a pestilence upon that land.*] See v. 12.

And pour out my fury upon it in blood.] With great destruction of men's lives, as the Chaldee paraphrase explains it. (Compare xxxviii. 22.)

Ver. 21. *How much more* [should there be an utter destruction] *when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem,* &c.] See v. 12. vi. 12. xii. 16. Jer. xv. 2. The particles *aph ki,* are very properly translated here, *How much more;* in which sense they are plainly taken, 2 Sam. iv. 11. Prov. xi. 31. xxi. 15.

The noisome beast.] See v. 17. xxxiii. 27.

Ver. 22. *Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant*

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that shall be brought forth.] Notwithstanding these four sore judgments, some shall escape, and be brought into Chaldea, to be your companions in captivity. (Compare vi. 8. Jer. lii. 29, 30.)

Both sons and daughters.] See ver. 16. 18. 20. of this chapter.

And ye shall see their ways and their doings.] Their afflictions shall bring them to a due sense of their former iniquities, and they shall humbly confess their own sins, and the sins of those who were consumed in the destruction of the city; whereby it will appear that I have not punished them beyond what their sins have deserved. (See vi. 9. xx. 43. xxxvi. 31.)

And ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem.] This will compose your minds, and make you give glory to God, and acknowledge his judgments to be righteous, though they touch you very nearly in the destruction of your friends and country.

Ver. 23. *And ye shall know that I have not done without cause,* &c.] See the note on vi. 10.

CHAP. XV.

ARGUMENT.

Under the parable of a vine, which when it is barren, is unfit for any use, is shewed the utter rejection of Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *WHAT is the vine-tree more than any other tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest?*] The latter part of the verse may be better translated thus, *If it be as a branch which is among the trees of the forest; i. e.* if it prove unfruitful. (See Dr. Lightfoot upon John xv. 6.) The Jewish church is often compared to a vine in the sacred writers. (See Isa. v. 1. Psal. lxxx. 8, &c.)

Ver. 3. *Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work,* &c.] The wood of a vine is of no use for building, or making any utensil. The works of that kind which Pliny takes notice of, Nat. Hist. lib. xiv. cap. 1. are rather to be looked upon as rarities, than as things of common use.

Ver. 4. *Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel.*] The only use that dead vine-branches can be put to. (See John xv. 6.)

The fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burnt.] A fit representation of the present state of Judea, when both its extremities were consumed by the ravages of a foreign enemy, and the midst of it, where the capital city stood, is ready to be destroyed: just as the fire still spreads towards the middle part of a stick, when once both ends are lighted.

Ver. 7. *And they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them.*] Flying from one evil, another shall overtake them. Fire sometimes signifies any judgment or calamity inflicted by God. (See Amos i. 4, &c. and the note upon Jer. vii. 20.)

CHAP. XVI.

ARGUMENT.

God sets forth his free love towards the church and nation of the Jews, represented here by Jerusalem, under the emblem of a person that should take up an exposed infant, breed her up, and afterward marry her. He then upbraids their monstrous ingratitude in departing from his worship, and being polluted with heathenish idolatries; which the prophet illustrates by the resemblance of a lewd woman, that proves false to a kind and indulgent husband. For which God threatens to deal with her as abused husbands used to deal with wives convicted of adultery. Notwithstanding all these provocations, he promises in the end to shew them mercy. The metaphor of describing idolatry as spiritual adultery, often made use of in the prophets, is here, and in the twenty-third chapter, pursued with great force, and in a lively way of representation: both chapters being a remarkable instance of that vehemence of expression, which the rhetoricians call by the name of Δεινότης.

Ver. 2. *CAUSE Jerusalem to know her abominations.*] This might probably be done by way of letter, as Jeremiah signified the will of God to the captives at Babylon, (Jer. xxix. 1.) God particularly upbraids Jerusalem for her iniquities, because it was the place he had chosen for his peculiar residence, and yet the inhabitants had defiled that very place, nay, and the temple itself, with idolatry; the sin particularly denoted by the word abomination. (See viii. 10. xiv. 6.)

Ver. 3. *Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan.*] As your fathers sojourned in the land of Canaan, before they came to have any right or property in it; so you, their posterity, have all along resembled the manners of Canaan, more than those of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, your ancestors.

Thy father was a Hittite, and thy mother an Amorite.] Those are said to be our parents in the Scripture dialect, whose manners we resemble. (See ver. 45. of this chapter; Matt. iii. 7. John viii. 44.) There is an expression of the same import in the History of Susannah, ver. 56. that seems to be copied from this text, *O thou seed of Canaan, and not of Judah, beauty hath deceived thee, and lust hath perverted thy heart.*

Ver. 4, 5. *In the day when thou wast born,* &c.] The prophet describes the forlorn condition of the Israelites in Egypt under the similitude of a new-born infant, exposed in its native filthiness, without any friend to pity his condition, or take the least care of it.

Ver. 6. *I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live.*] Whilst as yet nobody took so much care of thee as to wash thee from thy native filthiness, (ver. 4.) I took pity on thee; as a traveller that passes by, and sees an infant lie exposed; and I provided all things necessary for thy support.

Ver. 7. *I have caused thee to multiply,* &c.] The prophet describes the people's increasing in Egypt under the metaphor of a child's growing to woman's estate. (Compare Exod. i. 7.)

Ver. 8. *Behold, thy time was the time of love,* &c.] I thought it now a proper time to betroth thee to myself: the Jews' deliverance out of Egypt is elsewhere described as the time of God's espousing them to himself. (See Jer. ii. 2, &c. Hos. ii. 15. 19.) And his entering into a covenant with them, is commonly represented by a marriage-contract. (See Isa. liv. 5. Jer. iii. 1. 14. and Bishop Patrick's Preface to his Commentary on the Canticles.)

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I spread my skirt over thee.] I took thee under my protection, as a husband doth the wife. (See Ruth iii. 9.)

And covered thy nakedness.] Enriched thee with the goods and possessions of the Egyptians and Canaanites. (See ver. 10, 11, &c.)

Ver. 9. *Then I washed thee with water—and anointed thee with oil.*] I added every thing that could contribute to thy beauty and ornament. The anointing with oil was reckoned a necessary ingredient in a festival dress. (See Ruth iii. 3. Isa. lxi. 3. Matt. vi. 17.)

Ver. 10. *I shod thee with badgers' skins,* &c.] Or, *with sandals of a purple colour,* as Bochart expounds the word *tahash.* This and the following verses allude to those parts of women's attire, which serve not only for use, but for ornament too; and import that God did not only provide the Jews with necessaries, but likewise with superfluities.

I girded thee with fine linen.] This manufacture Egypt was famous for: (see xxvii. 7.) it was one of the principal ornaments of women, (see Isa. iii. 16.) as well as of great men.

Ver. 11. *I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain about thy neck.*] These were ornaments that none but persons of better quality used to wear. (See Gen. xxiv. 47. Prov. i. 9.)

Ver. 12. *And I put a jewel on thy forehead.*] The same which is called a *nose-jewel,* Isa. iii. 21. where the words might as well be translated, *a jewel for the face or forehead.* (Compare likewise Gen. xxiv. 47.)

And a beautiful crown upon thy head.] Crowns or garlands were used in times of public rejoicing; from whence is derived that expression of St. Paul, *A crown of rejoicing;* 1 Thess. ii. 19. (Compare Isa. xxxv. 10.) Virgins were sometimes adorned with crowns: (see Baruch vi. 9.) and they were commonly put upon the heads of persons newly married. (See Cant. iii. 11.)

Ver. 13. *Thou didst eat fine flour, honey, and oil.*] Thy country afforded all manner of plenty and delicacies. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 13, 14.)

And didst prosper into a kingdom.] Thou wast advanced to be the seat of a kingdom, and the *city of the great King* of heaven and earth, Psal. xlviii. 2.

Ver. 14. *And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty.*] For the magnificence of the temple, called the *Beauty of Holiness,* and honoured with God's especial presence. (Compare Lam. ii. 15. Psal. xlviii. 2.)

Ver. 15. *But thou didst trust in thy own beauty, and playedst the harlot, because of thy renown.*] Women that are proud of their beauty are easily tempted to lewdness, if they have not a strict guard upon themselves: so you abused those honours and advantages which I had bestowed upon you, and made them an occasion of forsaking me your benefactor, and serving idols. You presumed upon that very favour which I had shewed to Jerusalem, in choosing it for the place of my residence; as if that would secure you from my vengeance, let your idolatries and other wickedness be never so great. (See Jer. vii. 4. Micah iii. 11.)

And playedst the harlot.] Idolatry is commonly described by the metaphor of spiritual adultery, as hath been already observed. (See the note on ver. 8. and compare xxiii. 3. 8. 11. Isa. lvii. 8. Jer. ii. 20. iii. 2. 6. 20.)

Ver. 16. *And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places,* &c.] This was a great aggravation of their ingratitude, that they applied those very blessings, which God had given them, to the worship of idols. (Compare Hos. ii. 8.)

And deckedst thy high places with divers colours.] Or, *madest high places,* or *images of divers colours;* as the LXX. explain the sense. Thou madest little shrines, chapels, or altars for idols, and deckedst them with hangings of divers colours, ver. 18. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 7.) The word *bamah* is sometimes used for an altar, because altars were commonly set upon eminent places. (See ver. 24, 25.) In that sense the Chaldee paraphrase understands it, Jer. xlviii. 35. and so it may be best understood, xx. 29. of this prophecy.

The like things shall not come, neither shall it be so.] I will utterly destroy those idolatries, and those that commit them.

Ver. 17. *Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold, and my silver—and madest to thyself images of men.*] The wealth I had bestowed upon thee thou hast laid out in doing honour to idols: (see vii. 19. Hos. ii. 8. 13.) and particularly in setting up images to deified heroes. (See xxiii. 14, 15.)

Ver. 18, 19. *And thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them; my meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey,* &c.] Thou offeredst these my creatures as a meat-offering unto idols. The meat-offering is called an offering *of a sweet savour,* because of the frankincense that was put upon it. (See Lev. ii. 2.) The oblation here mentioned differs from those offered to God in one particular; *viz.* that honey was mixed with it, which God had expressly forbidden to be used in his service, (Lev. ii. 11.)

Ver. 20. *Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters—and these thou hast sacrificed unto them to be devoured.*] These inhuman sacrifices were offered to the idol Moloch, in the valley of Hinnom. (See ver. 36. xx. 26. 31. xxiii. 37. Jer. vii. 31.)

Whom thou hast borne to me.] Being married to me by a spiritual contract, ver. 8. (Compare xxiii. 4.) The children whom I blessed thee with are mine, being entered into the same covenant with their parent, and devoted to my service. (See Deut. xxix. 11, 12.)

Ver. 21. *Thou hast slain my children to cause them to pass through the fire,* &c.] See the note on Jer. xxxii. 35. By *children* are meant here the first-born, who are set apart to be God's property in a peculiar manner, Exod. xiii. 2. and yet even these they sometimes sacrificed to their idols. (See Micah vi. 7.)

To cause them to pass through the fire.] The verb *henebir,* translated *to cause them to pass through the fire,* signifies also to *dedicate,* and denotes the first-born unto God, (Exod. xiii. 12.) So the words imply, that the Jews, instead of dedicating their first-born to God, as the law required, offered them up a sacrifice to the devil, that was worshipped in their idols.

Ver. 22. *Thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth,* &c.] That miserable condition from which I rescued thee, when I first took notice of thee, and set thee apart for my own people. (See ver. 3, &c. and compare ver. 43. 60.)

Ver. 24. *Thou hast also built to thee an eminent place in every street.*] Manasseh filled Jerusalem with idols, (see 2 Chron. xxxiii. 4, 5. 15.) many of which were worshipped

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upon high or eminent places. (Compare ver. 16. 31. and 2 Kings xxiii. 5. 12, 13.) The LXX. render the Hebrew word *gab*, a *brothel-house;* and it is certain that the worship of some of the heathen idols consisted in committing all manner of uncleanness. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 7. and the note upon ver. 26.)

Ver. 25. *Thou hast also built thy high place at the head of every way*, &c.] These and the following expressions allude to the practices of common harlots, who used to frequent the most public places, to allure passengers to them: (see Gen. xxxviii. 21. Prov. ix. 14, 15.) idolatry being in this chapter and elsewhere compared to the rage of lust. (See Isa. lvii. 5. Jer. ii. 23, 24. iii. 2.)

Ver. 26. *Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians, thy neighbours.*] While the Israelites sojourned in Egypt, they learned to practise their idolatries. (See xx. 7, 8. Lev. xx. 3. Deut. xxix. 16, 17. Josh. xxiv. 14.) From Josiah's time the Jews were in a strict confederacy with the Egyptians, and, to ingratiate themselves with them, practised their idolatries. (Compare xxiii. 19—21. 40, 41.) And the worship of Tamuz, the idolatry they are upbraided with, viii. 14. was derived from the same country.

Great of flesh, and hast increased thy whoredoms.] Compare xxxiii. 20. The expressions may allude to the whoredoms which were committed in the worship of some of their idols. (See xxii. 9. Numb. xxxi. 16. Hos. iv. 4. Baruch vi. 43.)

Ver. 27. *I have stretched out my hand over thee, and have diminished thine ordinary food.*] I have abridged thee of many necessaries and conveniences, by giving thy country into the hand of thine enemies, as it follows.

And delivered thee into the will of them that hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines.] As a punishment of the idolatries which king Ahaz introduced among you. (See ver. 57. and 2 Chron. xxviii. 18, 19.) The *daughters of the Philistines* are put here for the Philistines, as the daughters of Samaria, Sodom, and the Syrians, stand for the people of those places, ver. 46, 47. 57. to carry on the allegory and comparison between them and Jerusalem, being all of them described as so many lewd women prostituting themselves to idols. (See ver. 41.) By the same metaphor Samaria and Sodom are called *sisters* to Jerusalem, ver. 46.

Which are ashamed of thy lewd way.] Those have not forsaken the religion of their country, as you Jews have done, nor have been so fond of foreign idolatries. (Compare v. 7. and Jer. ii. 11.) The Chaldee paraphrase explains the words to this sense: *If I had sent my prophets to them, they would have been ashamed; but thou art not converted.* (See ver. 47, 48.)

Ver. 28. *Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians.*] The Jews courted the alliance of their two potent neighbours, the Egyptians and Assyrians, as it served their present turn; and to ingratiate themselves with them, served their idols. (See Jer. ii. 18. 36.) This is particularly recorded of Ahaz. (See 2 Kings xvi. 10. 2 Chron. xxviii. 23.)

Ver. 29. *Moreover, thou hast multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan unto Chaldea.*] Or, *with the land of Canaan*, as Noldius translates the particle *el*, in his Concordance, p. 59. The sense is, Thou hast defiled thyself with all the idolatries of the heathen, beginning with those which were practised by the former inhabitants of Canaan, and, by degrees, learning new species of idolatry derived from distant countries, such as Chaldea was reckoned. (See Jer. v. 15. and compare this verse with xxiii. 16, 17. 2 Kings xvii. 16, 17. xxi. 3, &c. xxiii. 5, &c.)

Ver. 30. *How weak is thine heart.*] Not only unstable as to good resolutions, but even restless and unsettled in evil practices; still hankering after some new kind of idolatry, and resolved to indulge a wandering appetite. (See ver. 28, 29.)

Ver. 31. *In that thou buildest thine eminent place.*] See ver. 16. 24.

And hast not been as a harlot, in that thou scornest hire.] Or, *to prostitute thyself for hire;* as some translate the words.

Ver. 33. *But thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers.*] The Jews are often upbraided for making leagues with idolaters, and courting their favours by presents, and by complying with their idolatries. (See Isa. xxx. 6. lvii. 5. 9. Jer. ii. 18. 25. 36. and the notes upon these texts.)

Ver. 36. *And by the blood of thy children.*] See ver. 20. Jer. ii. 34.

Ver. 37. *Behold, therefore, I will gather all thy lovers.*] Those allies whose friendship thou hast courted by complying with their idolatries. (See xxiii. 9. 22. Jer. ii. 25. iv. 30. xxii. 20. Lam. i. 8. Hos. ii. 10.)

With all them that thou hast hated.] Compare ver. 41. Such were Edom, Moab, and Ammon; who always bore a spite to the Jews, and insulted over their calamities. (See xxv. 3. 8. 12.)

And will discover thy nakedness unto them.] They shall see thee carried away captive, stripped and bare, (see ver. 39.) without any covering to thy nakedness, according to the barbarous custom of conquerors. (See the notes on Isa. iii. 17. xx. 4.) The words allude to the punishment that used to be inflicted upon common harlots and adulteresses, which was to strip them naked, and expose them to the world. (Compare xxiii. 29. Jer. xiii. 22. 26. Hos. ii. 3.)

Ver. 38. *And will judge thee as women that break wedlock.*] Whose punishment was death by the law, Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 22.

And shed blood.] See ver. 20, 21. 26. This was likewise a capital crime. (See Exod. xxi. 12.) In these two parts of Jerusalem's character, she was a type of the antichristian whore, who was likewise *drunk with the blood of the saints*, (Rev. xvii. 5, 6.)

And I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy.] I will make an utter destruction of thine inhabitants: (see xiv. 19.) or, I will *pour out the blood of thy slain like water*, (Psal. lxxix. 3.) Jealousy is the *rage of a man*, (Prov. vi. 34.) Such indignation will God shew against the idolatry of his own people, who hath declared himself a *jealous* God, and very tender of his honour, which is highly injured by the worship of idols, set up as his rivals. (See the note on v. 13.)

Ver. 39. *They shall throw down thine eminent places.*] They shall destroy all the high walls and fortifications; the expression alludes to the high places dedicated to idolatrous worship. (See ver. 24. 31.)

They shall strip thee of thy clothes, &c.] They shall first plunder thee before they carry thee away captive. (See ver. 37. and xxiii. 26.)

Ver. 40. *And they shall bring a company against thee,*

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and they shall stone thee with stones.] The Chaldean army shall beat down thy walls and houses with stones flung out of battering engines. (See Jer. xxxiii. 4.) The expression alludes to the punishment inflicted upon adulteresses, which was stoning. (See John viii. 5.) The particular sort of death which they were to suffer, is not expressed in the law; so the conjecture of Grotius upon that place of St. John is not improbable, that in the latter times, as wickedness increased, the Sanhedrin exchanged the milder punishment of strangling, used before, for the severer death of stoning.

And thrust thee through with their swords.] See v. 12. xxiii. 10. 47. xxiv. 21.

Ver. 41. *And they shall burn thy houses with fire.*] The punishment allotted to an idolatrous city, Deut. xiii. 16. The words may likewise allude to the punishment of burning, anciently inflicted upon harlots. (See Gen. xxxviii. 24.)

And execute judgment upon thee in the sight of many women.] The Syrians, Philistines, and other neighbouring nations. (See ver. 37. and the notes upon ver. 27.) The judgment I will execute upon thee shall be for an instruction to other nations, how they follow thine ill practices. (See xxiii. 48.)

And I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot.] See xxiii. 27.

Ver. 42. *So will I make my fury towards thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from thee,* &c.] See ver. 38. and the note upon v. 13.

Ver. 43. *Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth.*] See ver. 22.

And thou shalt not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations.] Thou shalt not add these manifold and shameless practices of idolatry to all thy other wickedness. But the words may be rendered, *Neither hast thou laid to heart all these thine abominations.*

Ver. 44. *Behold, every one that useth proverbs, shall use this proverb against thee,* &c.] They that love to apply the memorable sayings of former ages to the present times, shall apply that common saying to thee, That the daughter follows her mother's steps, and Jerusalem is no better than the Amorites, whose land they inhabit, and whose manners they imitate. (See ver. 3.)

Ver. 45. *Thou art thy mother's daughter, that loatheth her husband and her children.*] Both these qualities are the property of a harlot, and were verified in the Jews, who abhorred God their husband, (ver. 8.) and cast off all natural affection to their children, sacrificing them in the fire to the honour of their idols, (ver. 20.)

And thou art the sister of thy sisters.] Samaria and Sodom. (Ver. 46.) The worship of Moloch was generally practised by the ten tribes, whose metropolis was Samaria, (see 2 Kings xvii. 17.) as it was by the Ammonites, who derived their original from Lot, an inhabitant of Sodom. (See 1 Kings xi. 7.) Great and crying sins are compared to those of Sodom. (See Isa. i. 9. iii. 9. Matt. xi. 23. Rev. xi. 8.)

Your mother was a Hittite, &c.] See ver. 3.

Ver. 46. *And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand,* &c.] Samaria is called the elder sister to Jerusalem, as being the capital city of the kingdom of Israel, a more large and potent kingdom than that of Judah, of which Jerusalem was the metropolis. She likewise led the way to that idolatry which afterward infected the whole nation, forsaking the worship which God had appointed in his temple, and setting up the idolatry of the golden calves. Samaria lay northward of Jerusalem, and Sodom southward; which two quarters of the world are expressed by the right and left, in the Hebrew language, being placed in such a position to those that set their faces eastward. So the phrase is to be understood, Gen. xiii. 9. *If thou wilt go to the left hand, I will go to the right;* where the Targum expounds the words, *If thou wilt go to the north, I will go to the south.* The same way of speaking is still used in the ancient British or Welsh language, as Archbishop Usher observes in his Primord. Eccl. Britan. p. 306. edit. fol.

Samaria and Sodom are described as metropoles, or mother-cities: so their *daughters* may be expounded not only of the inhabitants of each city, but likewise of the lesser towns which were anciently under the jurisdiction of the greater. (Compare xxvi. 4. 6. Jer. xlix. 2.)

Ver. 47. *Yet thou hast not walked after their ways,* &c.] See v. 7.

Thou hast corrupted more than they, &c.] See ver. 48. 51.

Ver. 48. *Sodom thy sister hath not done as thou hast done.*] Their sins were not committed with such aggravations of ingratitude; nor did I use such powerful methods to convince them of their wickedness, as I have done towards you. (Compare v. 6. Matt. x. 15. xi. 24.)

Ver. 49. *Behold, this was the iniquity of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness.*] Sodom abused that plenty which God gave them to pride and idleness, which gave rise to those enormities which they afterward were guilty of. The Scripture takes notice of the fruitfulness of the soil where Sodom stood. (Gen. xiii. 10.)

Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.] Pride and luxury make men expensive in their own way of living, and regardless of the wants and miseries of others. (See Luke xvi. 20, 21.)

Ver. 51. *Neither hath Samaria committed half thy sins.*] The ingratitude of Jerusalem was greater than that of Samaria, because God had placed his name there, whose worship she forsook, and profaned the temple by placing idols in it; which was a degree of idolatry beyond any thing the ten tribes had been guilty of. (See v. 11. vii. 20. viii. 6. 15. xxiii. 38, 39. xliii. 8. 2 Kings xvi. 14. xxi. 7. 9.)

Thou hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations.] Thou hast made them appear less guilty. (See Jer. iii. 11.) Another aggravation of thy sin consists in this, that thou wouldest not take warning by the judgments God brought upon them. (See ibid. ver. 8.)

Ver. 52. *Thou also which hast judged thy sisters, bear thine own shame.*] Because *wherein thou hast judged them,* or declared them deservedly punished, *thou hast condemned thyself,* having been guilty of the same sins, and those accompanied with greater aggravations.

Ver. 53. *When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom, and her daughters,* &c.] When the *fulness of the gentiles* shall come into the church, some of whom may be compared with Sodom for wickedness, (see Isa. i. 9.) then will I also remember you, who are my ancient people. St. Paul tells us, that the Jews will be provoked to emulation by the gentiles coming into the church, and thereby induced to acknowledge the truth. (See Rom. xi.

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11, 12. 15. 25. 31.) The conversion of the gentiles is expressed in Jeremy, by returning the captivity of Moab, Ammon, and Elam, (xlviii. 47. xlix. 6. 39.) and by the Egyptians, Assyrians, Ethiopians, and Syrians, *bringing presents to God*, and acknowledging themselves his servants, in the prophecy of Isaiah, (xviii. 7. xix. 24, 25. xxiii. 18.) And by the same analogy we are to understand the *returning of the captivity of Sodom* here, of the gentiles coming into the church.

Ver. 54. *That thou mayest bear thine own shame*, &c.] In the mean time thou shalt bear the shame and punishment due to thy sins, and shalt be some sort of comfort to thy neighbours, in being a companion with them in punishment, as thou hast been in wickedness.

Ver. 55. *When Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.*] When the prophets foretell the general conversion and restoration of the Jewish nation, they always join Judah and Israel together, as equal sharers in that blessing. (See xxxvii. 16. 22. and the notes there.)

Ver. 56, 57. *For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride, before thy wickedness was discovered.*] These words should be joined together in the same verse or sentence: God saith to Jerusalem, that in the height of her prosperity, before her wickedness so fully appeared to the eyes of the world, by the extraordinary judgments brought upon her, she did not reflect upon the terrible vengeance which befel Sodom, and was designed for an *example* or *warning to those that should afterward live ungodly*, (2 Pet. ii. 6.)

Ibid. and Ver. 58. *As at the time of thy reproach of the daughters of Syria*, &c.] The words begin a new sentence, which may be translated more perspicuously thus, joining them to the following verse: *But when it was the time of thy becoming the reproach of the daughters of Syria*, &c. The particle *kemo* sometimes signifies *when*. (See Noldius, p. 431.) The words, with regard to what goes before, import thus much: In thy prosperity thou didst despise those who are no worse than thyself; but since thou hast been insulted and invaded by thy neighbours, both Syrians and Philistines, whom God hath made use of as executioners of his judgments upon thee, thou hast been a remarkable instance of his vengeance, and God's hand hath been heavy upon thee for all thine idolatries and abominations. The words relate to the frequent inroads the Syrians and Philistines made into Judea in the time of king Ahaz. (See 2 Kings xvi. 5. 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.)

Ver. 59. *I will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which hast despised the oath in breaking the covenant.*] That solemn oath and covenant you entered into with me to be my people, and serve no other God besides: see Deut. xxix. 12. 14. which is likewise represented in this chapter, and many other places, under the solemnity of a marriage-contract. Hereupon God threatens her, that since she had broken her oath and promise, he should not think himself obliged to make good any of the promises of favour and protection which he had made to her, but would give her up to ruin and desolation. (See Numb. xiv. 34.)

Ver. 60. *Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth.*] I will have some regard for you, because you were formerly my people, by virtue of the covenant I made with you at your coming out of Egypt: (compare ver. 4. 22. of this chapter, and Hos. ii. 15. xi. 1. Jer. ii. 2.) at which time God chose them to be his peculiar people. (See Exod. xix. 5, 6.)

And I will establish with thee an everlasting covenant.] Such a one as shall never be abolished, *viz.* that of the gospel. (See Jer. xxxii. 40. and the note upon that place.)

Ver. 61. *Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be ashamed.*] The Jews shall be touched with a deep sense and remorse for their former provocation, as a necessary preparation for their conversion. (Compare xx. 43. xxxvi. 21. Jer. xxxi. 9. l. 5. and see the notes upon those places.)

When thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger.] See ver. 53.

And I will give them to thee for daughters.] Jerusalem thus restored shall be a type of that heavenly Jerusalem, *which is the mother of us all*, (Gal. iv. 26.) And even in the times of the apostles there was a particular deference paid to the church of Jerusalem, as the mother-church of the Christian world. (See Rom. xv. 26, 27.) Accordingly she is styled the *mother of all churches*, by the Second General Council, in their Synodical Epistle: (see Theodoret. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. cap. 9.) a title which the church of Rome now assumes, without any pretence from Scripture or antiquity.

But not by thy covenant.] Not by virtue of that covenant mentioned ver. 60. you have forfeited all your title to its privileges, ver. 59. but by virtue of that new covenant which I will make with you, through the Messias. (See Jer. xxxi. 31.)

Ver. 62. *And thou shalt know that I am the Lord.*] I will be then as conspicuous in my mercies, as I was before in my judgments. (See the note on vi. 7.)

Ver. 63. *That thou mayest remember, and be confounded.*] Be confounded at the remembrance of thy former wickedness. (See ver. 61.)

And never open thy mouth more, because of thy shame.] The mercies of the gospel in *calling sinners to repentance*, and accepting them, notwithstanding their many imperfections, do unanswerably confute all claim or pretence to merit. (See Rom. iii. 19.)

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

Under the parable of two eagles and two vine-branches, the prophet figuratively expresses the carrying away Jehoiachin into captivity by the king of Babylon, who made Zedekiah king in his stead. He afterward revolted from the king of Babylon, whose vassal he was, and entered into an alliance with the king of Egypt. For this breach of his oath and fidelity, God threatens to make him captive to that very king from whom he had revolted.

Ver. 2. *PUT forth a riddle.*] *i. e.* A continued metaphor, or figurative speech, still pursuing the allegory of an eagle and vine in the several parts of the parable: this perhaps may make the hearers more attentive to what thou speakest.

Ver. 3. *An eagle with great wings.*] That is, the king of Babylon. (See ver. 12.) Conquerors are elsewhere repre-

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sented by eagles, who are birds of prey, and remarkable for their swiftness. (See Deut. xxviii. 49. Jer. iv. 13. Hos. viii. 1.)

Long winged.] The LXX. and other interpreters translate the word from the Chaldee sense of it, *of a great size;* to avoid the repetition of the same sense over again.

Came to Lebanon, and cropped off the highest branch of the cedar.] *i. e.* Invaded Judea, or invested Jerusalem, and took king Jehoiachin captive. (See ver. 12. and compare Jer. xxii. 23.)

Ver. 4. *And carried it into a land of traffic.*] Babylon and the country about it, being the seat of a universal monarchy, must needs have been a place of great trading. Strabo takes notice, that the merchants who travelled by land to Babylon, went through the country of the Arabians called *Scenitæ;* (lib. xvi. p. 747.) and vessels of great burden came up to the walls of it from the Persian Gulf up the Euphrates. (See Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 26.)

Ver. 5. *He took also of the seed of the land.*] Of the king's seed, as it is explained ver. 13. *i. e.* Zedekiah.

And planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow-tree.] Judea was a fruitful country, and well watered; (see Deut. viii. 7.) where Zedekiah flourished as a willow-tree, that thriveth best in a moist ground. (See Isa. xliv. 4.)

Ver. 6. *And it grew and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned towards him, and the roots thereof were under him.*] Though he flourished, yet he enjoyed but a tributary kingdom under the king of Babylon, and acknowledged him as his lord and sovereign. (See ver. 14.)

Ver. 7. *There was also another great eagle,* &c.] Pharaoh king of Egypt, with whom Zedekiah made an alliance; whereupon that king sent an army to raise the siege of Jerusalem. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Jer. xxxvii. 5. 7.)

This vine did bend her roots towards him, and shot forth her branches towards him, &c.] Zedekiah desired the king of Egypt's assistance and protection. Some render the words thus, *Shot forth her branches under him from the furrows where she was planted, that he might water it.*

Ver. 8. *It was planted in a good soil,* &c.] The words are to the same purpose with ver. 5. to shew that Zedekiah's condition was so good under the king of Babylon, that he needed not to have broke his oath, out of a desire to better it; whereby he involved himself and his country in ruin. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 20. and the note upon Jer. xvii. 25.)

Ver. 9. *Shall he not pull up the roots thereof?* &c.] Nebuchadnezzar, in return for this perfidiousness, shall destroy him and his family. (See 2 Kings xxv. 7.)

Even without great power.] God will appear visibly on the Chaldeans' side, so there will be no need of great force to subdue their enemies. (See Jer. xxi. 4. xxxvii. 10.)

Ver. 10. *Shall it not utterly wither when the east wind toucheth it?*] The prophet compares the Chaldean army to a parching wind, that blasts the fruits of the earth, withers the leaves of the trees, and makes every thing look naked and bare. (See xix. 12. Isa. xxvii. 8. Jer. iv. 11. Hos. xiii. 15.)

Ver. 12. *Say now to the rebellious house.*] See ii. 5. xii. 9.

Know ye not what these things mean?] Will ye not apply your minds to understand what God speaks to you? And that, whether he directs his speech to you in plain words, or delivers his mind in riddles and parables? (See xii. 2. 9. xx. 49.)

And hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof.] Jeconiah, and all his princes and offices. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 12.)

Ver. 13. *And hath taken of the king's seed—and hath taken an oath of him.*] Hath made Zedekiah swear an oath of fealty to him. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13.)

He hath also taken the mighty of the land.] As hostages for the performance of the covenants agreed between him and Zedekiah.

Ver. 14. *That the kingdom might be base,* &c.] Zedekiah by this means became only a tributary king, (compare xxix. 14.) and consequently not in so honourable a condition as his predecessors had been; but yet this was the only means under the present circumstances to support himself and his government.

Ver. 15. *But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people.*] See the note on ver. 7. Egypt was a country that abounded in horses, of which there was great scarcity in Judea. (See 1 Kings ix. 28. Isa. xxxi. 1. xxxvi. 9.)

Shall he prosper? &c.] This was not only a violation of his oath and covenant, but likewise a breach of that part of the Jewish law, (Deut. xvii. 16.) which expressly forbade their king to *fetch horses out of Egypt,* or strengthen himself with the alliance of that people.

Ver. 16. *In the midst of Babylon he shall die.*] Whither he shall be carried prisoner. (See xii. 13.)

Ver. 17. *Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army make for him.*] See Jer. xxxvii. 7.

By casting up mounts.] See Jer. xxxii. 7.

Ver. 18. *When, lo, he hath given his hand.*] In token of entering into a mutual league and covenant. (See Isa. xli. 13.) Particularly it was a ceremony used when an inferior made profession of his subjection to his superior: see 1 Chron. xxix. 24. Jer. l. 15. Lam. v. 6. where we read that the *princes and mighty men submitted themselves to Solomon the king;* but in the original it is, *they gave the hand under Solomon.*

Ver. 20. *And I will spread my net upon him.*] See xii. 13.

And will plead with him there for his trespass.] God is said to *plead with men,* when he places their sins before their eyes, and convinces them of their disobedience by manifest tokens of his vengeance. (See xx. 36. xxxviii. 22.)

Ver. 21. *And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword.*] See xii. 14.

Ver. 22. *I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it.*] The prophet, pursuing the same metaphor, foretells the restoration of the royal family of David, in such terms as might in some degree be fulfilled at the return from the captivity, when Zerubbabel, of the lineage of David, had a shadow of kingly authority among the Jews, and by his means their church and constitution was again restored. But the words do more properly belong to Christ and his kingdom, which shall be extended over all the world.

I will crop off from the young twigs a tender one.] This description may fitly be applied to our Saviour, in respect to the low estate to which the family of David was then reduced, with great humility acknowledged by his mother, Luke i. 48. The meanness of his outward condition and

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appearance is represented by the prophet Isaiah, under the same expressions, (liii. 2.)

Ver. 23. *In the mount of the height of Israel will I plant it.*] The temple stood upon Mount Moriah, (2 Chron. iii. 1.) thence styled *God's holy mountain;* which expression is often used in the prophets to denote the Christian church; which is described as a *city set on a hill,* and conspicuous to all the world. (See xx. 40. and the note upon Isa. ii. 2.)

And it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit.] The living members of the church are compared to fruitful trees, and flourishing branches. (See Psal. i. 3. xcii. 2. John xv. 5. 8.)

And under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing.] *i. e.* Of every kind. A powerful, especially if it be an easy government, is a shelter and security to all its subjects. (Compare xxxi. 6. Dan. iv. 12.) Such shall be the kingdom of Christ to all that submit themselves to his laws.

Ver. 24. *And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree,* &c.] Christ's kingdom shall by degrees exalt itself above all the kingdoms of the world; and shall at length put an end to them, and itself continue unto all eternity. (See Dan. iv. 35. 44. vii. 27. Luke i. 33. 1 Cor. xv. 24.)

I the Lord have spoken it, and have done it.] The prophets often speak of future events as if they were already accomplished, to assure us that they shall certainly come to pass. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 9.)

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

The calamities which ushered in and attended the captivity of the Jews, were expressly threatened as punishments of the idolatries and other sins of their ancestors. (See Jer. xv. 4.) This made the Jews of the present age complain of God's dealing hardly with them, in punishing them for the sins of their forefathers. This chapter contains an answer to the objection, importing that even under their captivity they should find their condition better or worse, according as they behaved themselves; and withal laying before them God's eternal rules of justice, with regard to the rewards and punishments of the next life, when he will *judge every man according to his works, and every man shall bear his own burden.*

Ver. 2. *WHAT mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel?*] With respect to the desolations made in it by sword, famine, and pestilence. (See vi, 2, 3, &c. vii. 2.)

The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.] *i. e.* The present generation is punished for the offences committed by their forefathers, particularly for the sins committed in the time of Manasseh, king of Judah. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 26. Jer. xv. 4. xxxi. 29. Lam. v. 7.) This proverb had likewise a profane sense implied in it, and insinuated that the present age was not remarkably worse than those that had gone before it, and so did not deserve to be made an extraordinary example of God's vengeance.

Ver. 3. *As I live, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion to use this proverb any more in Israel.*] I will make such a visible discrimination between the righteous and the wicked, between those that tread in the steps of their forefathers, and those who take warning by their examples, that you shall not have any farther occasion to use this proverb among you. God expressly threatens to *visit the sins of the fathers upon the children,* both in the Old and New Testament; (see Exod. xx. 5. Matt. xxiii. 35.) but this is to be understood only with respect to the temporal punishments of this world (and these he doth not always inflict in an exact proportion to the demerits of those that suffer), not with respect to the eternal punishments of the next. See Bishop Sanderson's third Sermon upon 1 Kings xxi. 29. "The Scripture takes notice of a certain *measure of iniquity,* which is filling up from one generation to another, till at last it makes a nation or family ripe for destruction. And although those persons on whom this vengeance falls, suffer no more than their own personal sins deserved; yet, because the sins of former generations, which they equal or outdo, make it time for God utterly to destroy them, the punishments due to the sins of many ages and generations are said to fall upon them." (See Matt. xxiii. 35, 36. Dr. Sherlock, of Providence, chap. 8.)

Ver. 4. *Behold, all souls are mine.*] As they are all equally my creatures, so my dealings with them shall be without prejudice or partiality.

The soul that sinneth, it shall die.] *Death is the wages of sin,* and all men being sinners, the sentence of temporal death passes equally upon them all. But as *life* signifies in general all that happiness which attends God's favour, so *death* denotes all those punishments which are the effects of the Divine displeasure: (see 2 Sam. xii. 13.) under which are comprehended the miseries of the next world; and these shall be allotted to men according to their deserts, without any regard to the faults of their ancestors, which shall not then be laid to their charge, or taken into account to aggravate their guilt. The words *dying,* and *death,* are often used in the New Testament for the punishments of the next world: (see particularly Rom. viii. 13.) and they are expressed by the *second death,* Rev. xx. 14. an expression used among the Jews, and found in the Targum upon Deut. xxxiii. 6.

As the prophets instruct men in the practice of inward and evangelical righteousness, and in order to it speak slightingly of the mere external duties of religion; (see Isa. i. 11, &c. Jer. vii. 22, 23.) so they raise men's minds to look beyond the temporal promises and threatenings of the law, to the eternal rewards and punishments of another life. (See Isa. lxvi. 24. Dan. xii. 2.) In both which respects they prepared men's minds for the reception of the gospel when it should be revealed.

Ver. 6. *And hath not eaten upon the mountains.*] Idolatrous worship was commonly performed upon mountains or high places: (see vi. 13. xvi. 16. 44. xx. 28.) and eating part of the sacrifice, was properly maintaining communion with the idol to whom it was offered. (See Exod. xxxiv. 15. 1 Cor. x. 20, 21.)

Neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel.] Lifting up the eyes, is a posture of religious worship or adoration. (See Deut. iv. 19. Psal. cxxi. 1. cxxiii. 1.)

Ver. 7. *Hath restored to the debtor his pledge.*] God commanded the Jews not to detain any pledge they took

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from a poor man all night; which was, in effect, to enjoin them to lend to the poor without either pawn or usury. (See Exod. xxii. 25, 26. Deut. xxiv. 12, 13.)

Ver. 8. *He that hath not given upon usury, neither hath taken any increase.*] Usury, when it is exacted from the poor, hath been generally cried out upon as no better than oppression, and is particularly forbidden by the law. (See Exod. xxii. 15. Lev. xxv. 35, 36. Nehem. v. 1. 7. Jer. xv. 10.) It is probable that this sort of usury is chiefly here meant, because it is joined with oppression, violence, and want of charity.

Ver. 9. *He shall surely live.*] See the note on xx. 11.

Ver. 13. *His blood shall be upon him.*] His destruction is owing wholly to himself. (See xxxiii. 4.)

Ver. 19. *Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?*] The Jews still appealed to their own experience, as the ground of their complaint mentioned ver. 2.

When the son hath done that which is lawful and right —he shall surely live.] In like manner, if ye had forsaken your fathers' sins, you might have escaped those judgments I denounced against your fathers. (See the note upon Jer. xvii. 25.) But since ye have continued in their abominations, the punishments due to them justly come upon you.

Ver. 20. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*] See the notes upon ver. 3, 4.

Ver. 22. *They shall not be mentioned to him.*] Or, *remembered against him:* God is said in Scripture to remember men's sins, when he punishes them; (see Jer. xiv. 10. Hos. viii. 13.) and to forget them when he pardons them, (Jer. xxxi. 34. Amos viii. 7.)

Ver. 23. *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?* &c.] In conformity to this doctrine, the New Testament instructs us, that *God would have all men to be saved, and is not willing that any should perish,* (1 Tim. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9.)

Ver. 24. *All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.*] For, *Better had it been for him not to have known the way of righteousness, than after he hath known it, to turn aside from the holy commandment,* (2 Pet. ii. 21.) Such a one sins against a clearer light and greater convictions, and withal is guilty of the greatest ingratitude, in doing despite unto the Spirit of grace.

Ver. 25. *Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal,* &c.] The declarations I have so often repeated concerning the eternal rewards and punishments allotted to the righteous and the wicked, are sufficient to vindicate the justice of my proceedings against all your objections.

Ver. 26, 27. *When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness,* &c.] It is an opinion that prevails among the Jews even till this day, that at the day of judgment a considerable number of good actions shall overbalance men's evil ones. (See xxxiii. 13.) So they thought it a hard case for a man, who had been righteous the far greatest part of his life, if he did at last commit iniquity, that his former righteousness should avail him nothing. In opposition to this doctrine, God here declares, that a righteous man sinning, and not repenting, should die in his sins; and that a wicked man, upon his repentance, should save his soul alive.

Ver. 30. *Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways.*] You complain of the injustice of my ways or proceedings; but if I judge you according to the desert of your ways, you will certainly be all found guilty, and nothing but repentance and true contrition can avert that ruin your sins threaten you with.

Ver. 31. *And make you a new heart, and a new spirit.*] The prophets often exhort the Jews to an inward purity and holiness, thereby to take them off from relying upon an outward legal righteousness, and an exactness in the observance of the ritual parts of the law. (See the note upon ver. 4.) By thus instructing them in a more excellent way of serving God, than the ceremonial law did directly prescribe, they prepared their minds for receiving those truths which the gospel would more fully discover. God promises, xxxvi. 26. *to give them a new heart, and to put within them a new spirit;* here he exhorts them to *make themselves a new heart, and a new spirit.* Which difference of expression is thus to be reconciled, that although God *works in us to will and to do,* and is the first mover in our regeneration, yet we must *work together* with his grace, at least willingly receive it, and not *quench* or *resist* its motions. (See the note upon Jer. xxxi. 18.)

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

Under the parable of a lion's whelps, the prophet describes the sad catastrophe of the two kings of Judah, Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim; and under the figure of a vine, he represents the desolation and captivity of the whole people.

Ver. 1. *TAKE thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel.*] The expression alludes to the mournful ditties used at funerals. (Compare xxvi. 17. xxvii. 2.) Such a lamentation the prophet is directed to apply to the mournful estate of the royal family of Judah; particularly with respect to Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim.

Ver. 2. *What is thy mother?*] The prophet proposes a question that may be applied to each prince distinctly.

What is thy mother? a lioness, &c.] The land of Judea, thy native country, (see ver. 10.) is become cruel and bloody; (compare Psal. xxxiv. 10. Nahum ii. 11, 12.) and hath taught her princes and rulers to govern by cruelty and oppressions. (See vii. 23. xxii. 27. Jer. xxii. 17. Zeph. iii. 3.)

Ver. 3. *She brought up one of her whelps: it became a young lion.*] Compare ver. 6. This is meant of Jehoahaz, who followed not the good example of his father Josiah, but the evil practices of the wicked kings his predecessors. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 32.)

Ver. 4. *The nations also heard of him,* &c.] Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt, hearing his ill character, deposed him, and made him a prisoner. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 33. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 4.)

He was taken in their pit.] The expression alludes to those pitfalls and snares which are made to take wild beasts.

Ver. 5. *Then she took another of her whelps.*] Jehoiakim was set up king in his brother's stead, by the king of Egypt, who, by his victory over Josiah, had made himself master of Judea: (2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34.) but yet Pharaoh seems to have done this by the joint consent of the people, who had

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before set up Jehoiakim's younger brother, without asking the king of Egypt's consent.

Ver. 6. *He went up and down among the lions,* &c.] He learned and practised all the methods of tyranny and oppression. (See Jer. xxii. 13. 17. xxxvii. 2.)

Ver. 7. *And he knew their desolate places.*] Or, *He knew their palaces,* as the word *armenoth* is translated, Amos i. 7. And the word *almenoth* here used is equivalent to *armenoth.* (See Isa. xiii. 22.) Jehoiakim made himself master of the riches and pleasant seats of the great men of the land.

Ver. 8, 9. *Then the nations set against him on every side,* &c.] The Chaldeans, and their neighbours and allies, invaded Judea, and afterward besieged Jerusalem, and took Jehoiakim prisoner. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 2. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6.)

And spread their net over him: he was taken in their pit.] See ver. 4. and compare xii. 13.

Ver. 9. *That his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of Israel.*] The words allude to a lion's seeking his prey upon the mountains. Ezekiel often expresses the land of Israel by the *mountains of Israel.* (See the note upon vi. 2.)

Ver. 10. *Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood,* &c.] The country of Judea, from whence the royal family have their original, was like a fruitful vine in a flourishing condition. (See xvii. 5, 6.)

Ver. 11. *And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule.*] From her sprung sovereign princes, who were themselves very powerful, and made their people appear considerable among their neighbours. A rod or sceptre is an emblem of authority. (See Isa. ix. 4. x. 5. Jer. xlviii. 17.)

Her stature was exalted among the thick branches.] Compare xxxi. 3. Dan. iv. 11.

Ver. 12. *But she was plucked up in fury.*] God in his anger removed her out of her land. (Compare Psal. iii. 5. Jer. xii. 14.)

The east wind dried up her fruits.] See xvii. 10.

Her strong rods are broken and withered.] Her kings and princes were subdued and made captives.

The fire consumed them.] God's anger destroyed them, as fire consumeth the branches of a tree when it is withered. (See xv. 4.) God's wrath is often compared to fire. (See xxx. 8.)

Ver. 13. *And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land.*] A great part of her people are carried captive, where their condition is as much different from what it was formerly, as the condition of a tree is when it is removed out of a rich soil into a dry and barren ground. The Jews suffered several captivities before that final one which ended in the destruction of their temple and government. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 12. Jer. lii. 28. Dan. i. 3.)

Ver. 14. *And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit,* &c.] Zedekiah's breaking his oath of fealty to the king of Babylon, hath been the occasion of the utter destruction of the royal family, and the entire ruin of the government. (See xvii. 18, 19. 2 Kings xxiv. 20.)

This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.] This is matter of present lamentation, and shall be so to aftertimes.

CHAP. XX.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a rehearsal of the rebellions and idolatries of the Jews, from their going out of Egypt to that very day. The prophet afterward foretells their conversion and restoration. The last five verses contain a prophecy against Jerusalem.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass in the seventh year,* &c.] Of Jehoiachin's captivity. (Compare i. 2. viii. 1.) All the prophecies recorded from the eighth chapter to this probably belong to the sixth year of that captivity.

Certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord, &c.] See the note on viii. 1.

Ver. 3. *I will not be inquired of by you.*] You shall not receive such an answer as you expect, but such as your hypocrisy deserves. (See ver. 31. xiv. 3, 4.)

Ver. 4. *Wilt thou judge them?*] *Wilt thou plead for them?* as our margin reads, or defend their cause? But the words may perhaps be more significantly translated, *Wilt thou not judge them? i. e.* Wilt thou not reprove or condemn them? Noldius observes in his Concordance, p. 233. that *he,* the particle of interrogation, which answers the Latin particle *an,* is often equivalent to the negative *annon,* and is to be translated, *Is it not?* (See ver. 30. of this chapter, and xxxviii. 17.) In which sense it is understood by our translators, 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. and so it should be rendered 1 Sam. ii. 27. *Did I not plainly appear to the house of thy father?* &c.

Son of man.] See ii. 1.

Ver. 5. *In the day when I lifted up my hand to the seed of the house of Jacob.*] When I entered into a solemn covenant with them, pursuant to the oath which I had sworn to their fathers. (See Exod. vi. 8.) *Lifting up the hand* was a ceremony used in taking an oath, (see Gen. xiv. 22.) and thereupon applied to God himself, Deut. xxxii. 40. The same expression is used ver. 6. 15. 23. 42. of this chapter. The same ceremony in taking an oath is mentioned by Homer, Εὔχετο χεῖρας ἀνασχών.

And made myself known unto them.] By appearing unto Moses, and shewing myself present among them by the wonders I wrought for their deliverance.

Saying, I am the Lord your God.] I am the God whom you ought to serve, and none else. (See Exod. xx. 2, 3.)

Ver. 6. *Into a land which I had espied for them.*] I performed the office of a spy, before those that were sent to search out the land, Numb. xiii. 16. and chose it out of all others to bestow it upon them. So God is said *to go before them to search out a place to pitch their tents in,* Deut. i. 33. Numb. x. 33. The expressions in both places import, that every step the people took, till their settlement in the land of Canaan, was under the immediate care and conduct of Providence.

Flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands.] Judea is often called a land *flowing with milk and honey,* both upon account of its own fruitfulness, the seed sown frequently bringing forth a hundred-fold; (see Gen. xxvi. 12. Matt. xiii. 8.) and also from God's particular blessing upon it. (See Deut. xi. 12.) The great numbers of inhabitants which it nourished is an evident proof of its fertility.

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(See the note on Jer. xxxiii. 22.) It might justly be called the *glory of all lands*, because it was the place of God's especial residence. (See Psal. xlviii. 2. Dan. xi. 16. 41. 45.)

Ver. 7. *Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes.*] Lift not up your eyes to idols. (See xviii. 6.) One of the chief allurements to the worship of images is, that, by way of indulgence to men's imaginations, they exhibit a visible object of adoration. This was what the Israelites were so fond of, when they said to Aaron, "Make us gods to go before us," Exod. xxxii. 1.

And defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt.] The Israelites, while they dwelt in Egypt, learned the idolatries of that country. (See xxiii. 3. 8. Lev. xvii. 7. xviii. 3. Deut. xxix. 16. Josh. xxiv. 14.) Some learned men suppose that the *golden calf* was copied from the Egyptian idolatry. (See Selden, de Diis Syris, Syntagm. lib. i. cap. 4.)

Ver. 8. *Then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, —in the midst of the land of Egypt.*] Such a threatening as this is no where recorded in Scripture, no more than that which follows, ver. 23. of this chapter. Without question God might have justly cut them off in Egypt, for the idolatries and other sins they had there committed, and never exerted his power for their deliverance.

Ver. 9. *But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted*, &c.] This is elsewhere assigned as the reason why God did not punish the Israelites according to their deserts: *viz.* because it would turn to God's dishonour in the judgment of the heathen world, as if he were not able to make good those gracious promises he had given them. (See xxxvi. 21, 22. Exod. xxxii. 12. Numb. xiv. 13, &c. Deut. ix. 28.) This was a proper consideration to check the vain presumption of the Jews, who imagined that God's gracious dealings with them were owing to their own deserts. (See ver. 44. of this chapter, and xxxvi. 22.)

Ver. 11. *And I gave them my statutes.*] A favour not afforded to other nations. (See Deut. iv. 8. Psal. cxlvii. 20.) Such a treasure as David prizes above *thousands of gold and silver*, Psal. cxix. 72.

Which if a man do, he shall even live in them.] By *life* is meant, in the Old Testament, all that happiness which is contained in the literal sense of the promises belonging to that covenant. (Compare ver. 25. Deut. xxx. 15, &c. Psal. lxix. 32. Amos v. 4.) Under these were mystically comprehended the promises of a better life, wherein God will bestow upon his servants the peculiar marks of his favour. (See Psal. xvi. 11.) These promises were made over to the Jews, upon condition of their punctual obedience to the whole law: (Lev. xviii. 5. xxvi. 3, &c. Deut. xxvii. 26.) and several persons, under that dispensation, are styled blameless, by reason of the sincerity of their obedience, though it was not perfect or unsinning. (See Luke i. 6. Philip. iii. 6.) But if we understand the forementioned condition in its rigorous sense, as implying an exact and unsinning obedience, and as the word *life* contains the promise of eternal life under it, which promise the Jews expected and hoped to obtain: (see Matt. xix. 16, 17. Acts xxxvi. 6, 7.) I say, the condition of the old covenant thus expounded, as it was impossible to be performed, so no person could lay claim to eternal life by virtue of any promise therein contained. From whence St. Paul infers the necessity of seeking to Christ, and laying hold of the promises of his gospel, for the obtaining justification and eternal life. (Gal. iii. 12. 21.)

Ver. 12. *Moreover I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them*, &c.] The setting apart the seventh day for God's worship, was a sign of his setting apart the Jews to be his peculiar people, and the worshippers of the true God, who *in six days made heaven and earth, and rested the seventh day.* (See Exod. xxxi. 13. 17. Nehem. ix. 14.) The sabbath likewise was instituted as a memorial of their deliverance out of Egypt, and the rest they enjoyed afterward. (See Deut. v. 15.)

Ver. 13. *But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness.*] See Numb. xiv. 22. Psal. lxxviii. 40. xcv. 8—10.

And my sabbaths they greatly polluted.] Particularly in their going to gather manna on that day, against my express command, confirmed by an extraordinary descent of the manna on the day foregoing, (Exod. xvi. 25, &c.)

Ver. 14. *But I wrought for my name's sake*, &c.] See ver. 9.

Ver. 15. *Yet also I lifted up my hand to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them.*] I solemnly swore (see ver. 5.) they should not enter into that rest which I had designed for them. (See Numb. xiv. 28. Psal. xcv. 11. cvi. 26.)

Ver. 16. *For their heart went after their idols.*] They still had a hankering after the idolatries they had learned in Egypt, to which they added new idols, which they had seen in the countries through which they travelled; *viz.* the idols of the Midianites, Amorites, &c. (See Numb. xv. 39. xxv. 2. Deut. xxix. 16, 17. Amos v. 25, 26. compared with Acts vii. 42.)

Ver. 17. *Nevertheless mine eyes spared them*, &c.] See Psal. lxxviii. 38.

Ver. 18. *But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers*, &c.] This refers to the many pathetical exhortations contained in the book of Deuteronomy, particularly those in the twenty-ninth, thirtieth, thirty-first, and thirty-second chapters, which were uttered after that rebellious generation were all consumed, according as God had threatened them: (see Numb. xiv. 32, 33. xxvi. 64, 65.) and were designed as warnings to succeeding generations. (See Deut. xxxi. 16. 21.)

Ver. 21. *Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me.*] See Numb. xxi. 5. xxv. 2. Deut. ix. 24. xxix. 18, 19. xxxi. 27. Psal. lxxviii. 32.

They polluted my sabbaths.] Profaning the sabbath and committing idolatry are often joined together: (see ver. 16. 24. xxii. 8, 9. xxiii. 37, 38. 1 Maccab. i. 45.) one great end of instituting the sabbath being to preserve the Jews from falling into idolatry. (See ver. 12.)

Then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, &c.] God did punish the posterity of that rebellious generation very severely for their sins, particularly for their idolatry and fornication in the matter of Peor, Numb. xxv. 5. 9.

Ver. 23. *I lifted up my hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen*, &c.] St. Jerome observes upon the place, that we do not read of any particular threatening denounced against the children of that rebellious generation. But the words may relate to those general denunciations against their disobe-

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dience, which we find recorded, Lev. xxvi. Deut. xxviii. xxix. 20, &c. xxxi. 17. xxxii. 22, &c.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore I gave them also statutes, that were not good,* &c.] This some understand of the ceremonial law, as if it were given purely to be a check and restraint to that perverse people, consisting of numerous rites and observances, many of which had no intrinsic goodness in them. But I conceive the statutes here spoken of to be of a different nature from those mentioned ver. 11. because they have a quite contrary character given them; therefore I take the words to import, that God, in a just judgment for their disobedience to his own laws, gave them up to a reprobate mind, and suffered them to walk after the idolatrous and impious customs of the heathens round about them. And whereas, by obeying the laws and ordinances which he had given them, they might have lived happily, (ver. 11.) they became slaves to the vile and cruel practices of the heathen idolatries, so as to offer up their very children in sacrifice to idols, to the utter destruction of themselves and their posterity, (ver. 26.) This will appear to be the sense of the text, if we compare it with ver. 39. and with Deut. iv. 28. xxviii. 36. Jer. xvi. 13. in which texts God threatens them as a punishment for their neglect of his worship, to disperse them into the heathen countries, and thereby deprive them of an opportunity of serving him in public, and expose them to the peril of being seduced to idols. Just as David complains to Saul of the hardship of his exile, that it did lay him open to the temptation of serving the heathen gods, (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.)

Ver. 26. *And I polluted them in their own gifts.*] I suffered them to pollute themselves (so the form *hiphil* is elsewhere used in the sense of permission: see the note on Isa. lxiii. 17.) in those very gifts which by the law they were to dedicate to my service. (See ver. 31. and xvi. 20, 21.)

In that they caused to pass through the fire all that opens the womb.] In offering their first-born sons in sacrifice to Moloch; the expression of *passing through the fire* is explained in the note upon Jer. xxxii. 35.

That I might make them desolate.] Their sin brought its own punishment along with it, destroying the hopes of families, and bringing them to utter desolation.

To the end that they might know that I am the Lord.] See the note upon vi. 7.

Ver. 27, 28. *Yet in this your fathers have blasphemed me,* &c.] Or, *Moreover in this,* &c. The prophet proceeds to speak of other instances of idolatry which their fathers were guilty of after their settlement in the land of Canaan; and in which their posterity imitated them.

Then they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees, &c.] Offering sacrifice upon mountains or high places was a piece of service at first performed by the Jews to the true God, before the temple was built: (see 1 Kings iii. 2.) and afterward was permitted for that purpose by godly kings, who were zealous in putting down all sorts of idolatry. (See 1 Kings xv. 14. xxii. 43. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 17.) But by degrees those places became appropriated to idolatrous worship, and upon that score are severely condemned. (See vi. 13. xviii. 6. 2 Kings xxiii. 5. Isa. lvii. 5.)

There they presented the provocation of their offering; there also they made their sweet savour.] This is to be understood of their meat-offerings, being distinguished from their sacrifices already mentioned. The word in the Hebrew is *mincha,* which might more properly be rendered *bread-offering,* as appears by the several kinds of it reckoned up Lev. ii. and answers to the *mola* or *fartum* of the Romans. The meat-offering was particularly styled an *offering of a sweet savour;* (see xvi. 19.) but being offered to idols, it became abominable, and was turned into a provocation.

Ver. 29. *What is the high place whereunto ye go?* &c.] The word *Bamah* signifies an altar as well as a high place: (see the note on xvi. 16.) so the sense seems to be, What name is this altar called by, which you frequent? meaning, it is likely, the very altar belonging to the temple; is it not called *Bamah* at this very time? which word properly denotes a high place. An evident token that idolatry is so much practised among you, that it hath occasioned the changing the very names of the places and things dedicated to God's worship. So that instead of the word *Mizbeach,* the name which God appropriated to his own altar, the place is usually called *Bamah,* a name taken from an idolatrous custom. Or the words may be expounded of some noted high place, which the Jews frequented to perform their idolatrous worship: and then the sense will be to this purpose: What is this high place, or *Bamah,* which you frequent? Who bid you call it so? I named my altar *Mizbeach;* but this place had its name from the heathen idolatry, and it still retains it.

Ver. 30. *Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers?* &c.] The reproof would be more vehement if the words were rendered thus, *Are ye not polluted after the manner of your fathers, and do ye not commit whoredom?* &c. *i. e.* Do ye not walk in your fathers' sins and idolatries? notwithstanding all the warnings I have given you, and the severe instances of my displeasure against their practices, which ought to have terrified you from following their ill example. The particle of interrogation often implies a negative in it, as hath been observed upon the fourth verse of this chapter; to which sense the Vulgar Latin renders this verse, *Certe in viis patrum vestrorum polluimini,* &c.

Ver. 31. *For when you offer your gifts,* &c.] See ver. 26.

And shall I be inquired of by you?] See ver. 3.

Ver. 32. *And that which comes into your mind shall not be at all,* &c.] We find by the Scripture history that the Jews had all along a fond desire of worshipping the gods of their neighbours, and could not bear that imputation of singularity which their peculiar way of worship exposed them to. They thought likewise by this means to live more undisturbedly among the heathens, whither they were led captive. God tells them here, that he will prevent this purpose of theirs from taking effect. And we find, from the very time of their return from the Babylonish captivity, they have been very cautious of committing idolatry, and scrupulous of making the least approaches towards it.

Ver. 33. *Surely with a mighty hand, and stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you.*] I will no longer try to reclaim you by the gentle methods of patience and forbearance, but will govern you as masters do ill servants, by stripes and corrections, and by this means cure you of your hankering after the heathen customs and idolatries.

Ver. 34. *And I will bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered with*

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a mighty hand, &c.] This some understand of God's bringing his people out of the countries of the Moabites, Ammonites, and other neighbouring nations, whither many of them were carried captive, or went as voluntary exiles before the general captivity, by the Chaldeans. (See Jer. xii. 14. xl. 11.) But I conceive it is rather to be understood of the general restoration of the Jewish nation from the several parts of the world where they are dispersed; an event often spoken of in the prophets. (See ver. 38. 41. and compare this and the following verses with several passages in the thirty-fourth, thirty-sixth, and thirty-seventh chapters of this prophecy.)

Ver. 35. *And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people.*] The *wilderness of the people* may be equivalent to *the country where they sojourn;* (ver. 38.) so as to signify either the several dispersions of the Jewish nation, or rather some particular place or country through which they are to pass, in order to their return into their own land. The dissolution of a government is expressed in Scripture by a wilderness state. (See xix. 13.) The Jews going into captivity, are said to *go out of the city, and dwell in the field:* (Micah iv. 10.) and the church under persecution is represented as *flying into the wilderness,* (Rev. xii. 14.) The phrase does likewise allude to the wilderness through which the Jews passed to the land of Canaan, in order to the trial of the obedient, and the destruction of the rebellious. (Compare ver. 36. 38. xxxviii. 8. and Hos. ii. 14.)

And there will I plead with you face to face.] I will convict you of your crimes, so that you shall not be able to deny your guilt, but shall humbly acknowledge that you have deserved those punishments I have, or shall bring upon you. (Compare xvii. 20. xxxviii. 22. and see the note upon Jer. ii. 9.)

Ver. 36. *Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt.*] This relates to that solemn sentence, confirmed by an oath, whereby God irreversibly doomed the rebellious Israelites to perish in the wilderness, and never to enter into the land of promise. (Numb. xiv. 28. &c.)

Ver. 37. *And I will cause you to pass under the rod.*] I will take an exact account of you, as a shepherd does of his flock, and will sever between the good and the bad, between the sheep and the goats. (See xxxiv. 17.) The expression alludes to the custom of the shepherds, who number their cattle by striking every one of them with a rod. (See Lev. xxvii. 32. Jer. xxxiii. 13.)

And I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.] I will make you sensible that I have not forgotten my promises to your fathers, though you have forgotten your obligations to me, and the engagements implied in your entering into covenant with me. The words may be rendered, *I will bring you into the discipline of the covenant;* the Hebrew verbs *yasar* and *asar* being of promiscuous signification; and then the sense will be, I will revenge upon you the *quarrel of my covenant,* (Lev. xxvi. 25.) and assert my authority over you, by bringing you under chastisement, in order to your correction. (See Amos iii. 2.)

Ver. 38. *And I will purge out from among you the rebels.*] I will separate the righteous from the wicked, (see ver. 37.) in order to destroy the latter, as I did the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness. (Numb. xiv. 29, 30.) Compare Ezek. xi. 21. xxxiv. 17. 20. Dan. xii. 1. Amos ix. 9, 10. where it is expressly said, that only those *shall be delivered, who are written in the book* of the living.

I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn; and they shall not enter into the land of Israel.] See the note on ver. 35. The word *country* in the singular number may be equivalent to *countries* in the plural, ver. 41. The sentence alludes, as the former does, to the judgment denounced upon the rebellious Israelites, that their carcasses should fall in the wilderness, and themselves never enter into the land of Canaan; which shall be only a portion for the righteous among them. This text, among many others, favours the opinion maintained by several authors, both ancient and modern, that the Jews, upon their conversion, shall return into their own land. (Compare xi. 14. xxviii. 25. see the note there, xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 24.)

Ver. 39. *As for you, O house of Israel.*] You of the present generation.

Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, &c.] An ironical permission, full of indignation and rebuke, sharply upbraiding them for despising those many warnings God had given them: and implying, that he was now resolved to forsake them, and give them up to *strong delusions,* as a just judgment for their abuse of the means of grace so long offered to them, and still rejected by them. (Compare Amos iv. 4. Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12. Rom. i. 28. 2 Thess. ii. 11. and see the note upon ver. 25. of this chapter.)

But pollute ye my name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.] Whilst you offer your gifts, and make a present of your children to idols, (see ver. 26. 31.) do not call yourselves any longer my servants, nor pretend to pay your devotions in my temple, and thereby bring a reproach upon my name and worship. (See xxiii. 37—39.)

Ver. 40. *For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel.*] In the Christian church, called God's holy mountain, in allusion to the temple at Jerusalem, built upon Mount Moriah. (See the notes upon xvii. 23. Isa. ii. 2.) The prophet speaks here of the Jews as converted and united to the Christian church; though some learned men are willing to believe, that, upon their conversion and return to their own country, certain privileges shall belong to the earthly Jerusalem, as the metropolis of that nation. (See Isa. lxv. 18, 19. lxvi. 20. Jer. iii. 17. Joel iii. 17, &c.)

There shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me.] There shall be no more any such separation among you, as was when the ten tribes forsook the worship of God at Jerusalem. (See xxxvii. 22, 23.)

There will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings and the first-fruits of your oblations, &c.] *Requiring* signifies the same with *accepting,* by a metonymy of the cause for the effect; just as *seeking* is sometimes used for *finding.* (See Isa. lxv. 1.) In the same sense God is said not to *require* such instances of worship, in which he takes no delight, (Isa. i. 11.) *Offerings* signify in general every thing devoted to God's service, so as to comprehend tithes under it, (Numb. xviii. 21. 26.) The first-fruits were offered out of the fruits of the earth which were first ripe: of this kind was a sheaf of the corn, which was first reaped, (Lev. xxiii. 10.) part of the dough which was first baked, (Numb. xv. 20.) and, in general, the first of all the ripe fruits, Numb. xviii. 12, 13. (Compare xliv. 30. with this text.) This was computed to amount to the sixtieth part

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of the whole produce, (see Ezek. xlv. 13.) The prophet here expresses the Christian worship by those religious oblations, which were proper to his own time; as the other prophets frequently describe the state of the Christian church by representations taken from the Jewish temple and service. (See Isa. xix. 19. lvi. 7. lx. 7. lxvi. 23.) And even the primitive Christians brought oblations out of the first-fruits of their increase, for the support of God's ministers and service, out of which the elements of the eucharist, and the love-feast which followed it, were provided; as appears from several testimonies of the ancient fathers, particularly of Irenæus, (lib. iv. cap. 32. 34.) who generally interpret those words of Christ, (Matt. v. 23.) *If thou bring thy gift to the altar,* &c. of the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

Ver. 41. *I will accept you with your sweet savour.*] This is mentioned in opposition to the sweet savour of their offerings to idols: (ver. 28.)

When I bring you out of the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered.] Or, as it may better be translated, *When I have brought you out of the people,* &c. (Compare xi. 17. xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 24. xxxviii. 8.)

And I will be sanctified in you before the heathen.] I will procure honour to my name by the wonderful works, whether of justice or mercy, which I will shew towards you. (Compare xxviii. 22. 25. xxxvi. 23. xxxviii. 23. xxxix. 27.)

Ver. 42. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord.*] An epiphonema often used in this prophet by way of conclusion of some severe denunciation: (see vi. 7.) but in this and the forty-fourth verse, and some other places, added after the promises of grace and favour, by which God makes his power known unto the world, as well as by his judgments. (See xxxvi. 23. xxxviii. 23.)

When I shall bring you [or, *shall have brought you*] *into the country for which I lifted up my hand.*] See ver. 5.

Ver. 43. *And there shall ye remember your ways and your doings.*] The prophets suppose that the conversion and restoration of the Jews shall be accompanied with a general repentance, and a deep remorse for their former misdoings. (See xvi. 61. and the note there.)

And ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight.] See vi. 7. xvi. 63. xxxvi. 31.

Ver. 44. *When I have wrought with you for my name's sake,* &c.] When I have exerted my power in your deliverance, moved thereto not by any deserts of yours, but purely out of regard to my own honour, and the promises made to your fathers. (See xxxvi. 22.)

Ver. 46. *Set thy face towards the south.*] Direct thy looks and thy speech (see iv. 7. vi. 2.) towards the land of Israel, and particularly towards Jerusalem, which lay southward of Chaldea. (See i. 4. xxi. 2.)

Drop thy word towards the south.] The gift of prophecy is compared to rain, or the dew of heaven, which makes every thing fruitful. (See Deut. xxxii. 2.) Such is the benefit of sound doctrine wherever it is received. (Compare Job xxix. 22, 23. Micah ii. 6.)

And prophesy against the forest of the south field.] By the *forest of the south field* is meant Jerusalem; the word *forest* being taken metaphorically in the prophets for a city; because its stately buildings resemble tall cedars standing in their several ranks. (Compare Jer. xxi. 14. xxii. 7. Zech. xi. 1.)

Ver. 47. *I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree.*] Fire is often taken in a general sense for God's severe judgments: (compare xix. 13. xxii. 21. 31. xxx. 8.) but it may here particularly denote the destruction of Jerusalem by fire; which the text saith shall devour both the *green trees* and *the dry; i. e.* the righteous as well as the wicked. (See xxi. 3.) The righteous are elsewhere compared to green and flourishing trees, and the wicked to dry and withered ones, such as are only fit for the fire. (See Psal. i. 3. Luke xxiii. 31. John xv. 5, 6.)

And all faces from the south to the north shall be burnt therein.] The destruction shall reach from one end of the land to the other. (See xxi. 2. 4.)

Ver. 49. *Ah Lord God! they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?*] They make this an argument for disregarding what I say, that I use so many similitudes and metaphorical expressions, that they cannot discover my meaning. (Compare xii. 9.) Whereupon God commands him in the next chapter to speak the same thing in plain terms.

CHAP. XXI.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet, under the emblem of a sharp sword, foretells the destruction of Judea, and particularly of Jerusalem, and the country of the Ammonites, by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 2. *SET thy face towards Jerusalem.*] See xx. 46.

Drop thy word towards the holy places.] *i. e.* Towards the sanctuary or temple, and the several courts belonging thereto. (See the note on vii. 24.)

Ver. 3. *I will draw forth my sword out of his sheath.*] The sword of the king of Babylon, the instrument of my vengeance. (See ver. 19. and xiv. 17.)

And will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.] The command given by God, (ix. 6.) is to *slay young and old, both maids, little children, and women; i. e.* those that have not been guilty of idolatry and the other national sins, as well as those that have. Only the few mourners mentioned ix. 4. have a promise to escape. God's absolute dominion will justify any temporal calamity he thinks fit to bring upon men; and every man is so much a sinner, that no evil which befals him in this world, can be thought unjust with respect to God that inflicts it. But yet, when God punisheth men immediately by himself, as he did in the destruction of the *old world,* and of Sodom, it may be expected he should put a difference between the righteous and the wicked; as Abraham argues with him upon this subject, Gen. xviii. 23. 25.

Ver. 4. *Against all flesh from the south to the north.*] See xx. 47.

Ver. 5. *It shall not return any more.*] *Into its sheath,* as the sense is more fully expressed, ver. 30. till it has executed my commands.

Ver. 6. *Sigh therefore with the breaking of thy loins,* &c.] Shew all the tokens of grief and concern; (compare ver. 13. 17.) and let the sense of these impending judgments so deeply affect thee, as to make thee stoop, like one that is perfectly bowed down under the weight of them. (Compare Psal. xxxv. 14. xxxviii. 5. Isa. xxi. 3.) God's judg-

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ments, as they were represented to the minds of the prophets, did very often affect them with dreadful apprehensions; especially when they concerned their own people. (See Jer. xxiii. 9. Dan. viii. 28. Habak. iii. 16.)

Before their eyes.] Before the eyes of the elders of Israel, (mentioned xx. 1.) or of the Jewish captives, who could not but be touched with a tender sense of the calamities ready to befal their brethren in Judea.

Ver. 7. *Every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble,* &c.] Men's hearts and strength shall fail them for fear. (See vii. 17.)

Ver. 10. *Should we then make mirth?*] Men that are hardened in sin are apt to laugh at God's judgments, and at those who give warning of them. This may be applied to those who spake *peace* unto the people, *when there was no peace,* (xiii. 10.)

It contemneth the rod of my son, as every tree.] It makes no distinction between the sceptre and common wood; between the branches of the royal family, descended from David and Solomon, whom I honoured with the title of being my sons, (2 Sam. vii. 14. Psal. lxxxix. 26.) and the meanest of the people. (See ver. 12. 25—27. xix. 11. 14.)

Ver. 11. *It is furbished, to give it into the hand of the slayer.*] Of the king of Babylon, the executioner of God's judgments upon Judea. (Ver. 19.)

Ver. 12. *It shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel.*] Both princes and people shall be involved in one common destruction. Concerning the princes of Israel, see the note upon xxii. 6.

Smite therefore upon thy thigh.] Use all the outward expressions of grief and mourning. (Compare ver. 6. 14. 17. vi. 11. xxxi. 19.)

Ver. 13. *Because it is a trial.*] As all great calamities are styled, (Job ix. 23. 2 Cor. viii. 2. Heb. xi. 36.)

And what if the sword contemn even the rod?] The sceptre and royal family. (See ver. 10.)

It shall be no more, saith the Lord.] See ver. 27.

Ver. 14. *Smite thy hands together.*] See Numb. xxiv. 10. and ver. 12. of this chapter.

And let the sword be doubled the third time.] The expression may import, first, the slaughter made at the siege; then those that were slain at the taking of the city; in which number may be reckoned the sons of Zedekiah, as also the chief priests and principal officers of state, who were taken and put to death immediately afterward: (see ver. 14. and 2 Kings xxv. 7. 18—21.) to these may be added, in the third place, those who were slain with Gedaliah, (Jer. xli. 2, 3.) But perhaps the expression, *Let the sword be doubled a third time,* may mean no more than if the prophet had said, *Let the stroke be repeated twice and thrice, i. e.* oftentimes. So that phrase is used Job xxxiii. 29. *All these things worketh God twice and thrice with man,* where our translation very fitly expresses the sense *oftentimes.* A form of speech much like those elsewhere used, *For three transgressions and for four,* Amos i. 3. *Give a portion to seven, yea also to eight,* Eccles. xi. 2.

It is the sword of the great men that are slain, which entereth into their privy chambers.] Whither they went to hide themselves. (See 1 Kings xxii. 25.)

Ver. 15. *I have set the point of the sword against all their gates.*] The word *ibchath,* translated the *point;* is to be found but in this one place of the Bible, and so is variously rendered by interpreters. Dr. Castell understands it of the destruction made by the sword, from the use of the word in the Ethiopic language.

It is made bright.] The Hebrew reads here and ver. 10. *It is made like lightning;* the same metaphor which we read in Virgil, Æn. iv.

——"Vaginaque eripit ensem
Fulmineum."

He drew his sword, which did like lightning blaze.

It is wrapped up for the slaughter.] Or rather, *It is sharpened for the slaughter,* as the Chaldee translates *menuttah,* which is derived from the noun *net,* signifying an iron pen or stiletto.

Ver. 16. *Go thee one way or other.*] The words are directed to the sword, implying that God hath given it a large commission to go through the land without any restraint. (See xiv. 17.)

On the right hand, or on the left.] Either to the south, or to the north, (ver. 4.) Those two quarters of the world being expressed in the Hebrew language by the *right* and *left.* (See the note on xvi. 46.)

Ver. 17. *I will also smite my hands together.*] To express my just indignation at their provocations. (See ver. 14. xxii. 13.)

And I will cause my fury to rest.] See the note on v. 13.

Ver. 19. *Appoint thee two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come.*] God foreshews his prophet that the king of Babylon, coming with his army into Syria, and finding that the Ammonites had entered into a confederacy with Egypt, as well as Zedekiah, he was in doubt against which of the two people he should first make war, and committed the decision of this matter to his arts of divination, described ver. 21.

Ver. 20. *That the sword may come to Rabbath of the Ammonites.*] *Rabbath,* otherwise called *Rabbah,* (xxv. 5.) was the chief city of the Ammonites. (See 2 Sam. xii. 26. Jer. xlix. 2.)

In Jerusalem the defenced.] Which had been strongly fortified, first by David, (2 Sam. v. 9.) then by Solomon, (1 Kings ix. 24.) afterward by Hezekiah, (2 Chron. xxxii. 5.) and then by Manasseh, (ibid. xxxiii. 14.)

Ver. 21. *For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way—to use divination; he made his arrows bright.*] This way of divining by arrows is thus described by St. Jerome in his commentary upon this place: "They wrote on several arrows the names of the cities they intended to assault; and then putting them altogether promiscuously in a quiver, they drew them out thence as lots are drawn; and that city whose name was writ on the arrow first drawn, was the city they first made war upon." Perhaps from this custom the verb *hatsah,* or *hatsats,* from whence *hets,* an *arrow,* is derived, comes to signify the parting or dividing any thing by lot, in which sense it is used Job xli. 6. Prov. xxx. 27.

He made his arrows bright.] Or rather, *he mingled his arrows,* as the Vulgar Latin translates it; which sense of the verb *kilkal* agrees better with the description of this kind of divination already given; and therefore is preferred by Dr. Pocock, who confirms this exposition from the Arabic use of the word. See his notes in Specim. Hist.

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Arab. p. 329. where he treats at large of this manner of divination.

He consulted with images.] The Hebrew reads *seraphim*, which word, as it signifies some image or visible representation of a deity, so consequently it must be taken in an ill sense for an idolatrous worship, in which sense it is certainly used 1 Sam. xv. 23. 2 Kings xxiii. 24. Zech. x. 2. Dr. Spencer takes a great deal of pains to prove that the word is sometimes taken for a sort of Divine oracle, and is equivalent to the *urim*, by which the high-priest received an answer when he consulted God upon emergent occasions. (See his third book De Legibus Hebr. Dissert. ult. de Urim et Thummim.)

He looked in the liver.] This was another noted sort of divination, which was taken from lucky or unlucky tokens which appeared in the entrails of the sacrifices when they were slain, called *aruspicina* by the Romans.

Ver. 22. *At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem.*] When the king of Babylon stood at the head of two ways, (ver. 21.) to consult which of the two he should take, the tokens that were shewed him, persuaded him to march with his army to the right, *i. e.* towards Jerusalem.

To appoint captains, to open the mouth in slaughter, to lift up the voice with shouting.] Whose office it was to encourage the army to fall upon their enemies, and destroy them. (See Jer. l. 15.)

To cast a mount.] See Jer. xxxii. 24.

Ver. 23. *And it shall be unto them as a false divination in their sight, to them that have sworn oaths.*] The king of Judea and his courtiers will despise all these preparations of war, though directed against them, as if they were grounded upon the false arts of divination; whereas it is indeed God himself that directs the march of the Chaldean army, to revenge the perjury which Zedekiah and his counsellors were guilty of, in breaking that solemn oath of fealty which he made to the king of Babylon. (See xvii. 13. 15.)

But he will call to remembrance iniquity, that they may be taken.] Nebuchadnezzar will remember Zedekiah's breach of his oath, and revenge himself by taking the city, and making him and his subjects prisoners of war.

Ver. 24. *Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered—ye shall be taken with the hand.*] Because your sins cry to heaven for vengeance, ye shall fall into the hands and power of the king of Babylon.

Ver. 25. *And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel.*] The words are directed to Zedekiah, whom the prophet calls *profane* and *wicked*, chiefly with respect to his breaking that solemn oath uttered in the name of God, whereby he had engaged himself to be tributary to the king of Babylon. (See xvii. 19.) *With God is no respect of persons;* in like manner, when the prophets speak to kings in the name of God, they lay aside those titles and expressions of respect which are otherwise due to the regal dignity. (See 1 Sam. xiii. 13. 1 Kings xviii. 18. 2 Kings iii. 13, 14.)

Whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end.] The day of whose calamity is near at hand, when his and his people's iniquity shall receive their just doom. (Compare vii. 6. xxx. 3. xxxv. 5.)

Ver. 26. *Remove the diadem, and take off the crown.*] The words *crown* and *diadem* are equivalent, and put to signify the kingly ornaments of dignity. (See Isa. lxii. 3.) Indeed the crown is elsewhere taken for the emblem of sovereignty, and the diadem or mitre for the proper ornament of the priesthood, and so the Chaldee paraphrase expresses the sense of the verse in these words, *Remove the mitre from Seraiah the chief priest, and I will take away the crown from Zedekiah the king.* But I conceive this sense does not so well agree with the design of the place, where the judgment threatened is spoken only of Zedekiah.

This shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high.] Things shall not continue in their present state; as Zedekiah shall be brought down from his kingly dignity, so another branch of that family (*viz.* Christ, see ver. 27.) shall be advanced, from an obscure original and low condition, to the supreme degree of sovereignty. (Compare xvii. 24.)

Ver. 27. *I will overturn—it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.*] After that Zedekiah is deprived of his regal authority, there shall be no more kings of that family till Christ come, the King so often foretold and promised, who in due time shall *reign upon the throne of his father David,* and *of whose kingdom there shall be no end,* (Luke i. 32, 33.) After the captivity, some of the priests of the Assamonean race did assume the style and title of kings; but they not being of the tribe of Judah, could have no just right to that honour.

Until he come whose right it is.] In this sense the LXX. understand the word *Shiloh,* Gen. xlix. 10. translating it there, Ὡι ἀπόκειται, *To whom it is reserved:* as if that Hebrew word were equivalent to *sheloh, whose it is,* as the learned P. Fagius hath observed in his notes upon the Targum of that text.

Ver. 28. *Thus saith the Lord God concerning the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach.*] They insulted over the calamities of their brethren the Jews, for which they are often reproved very severely by the prophets, and threatened with the like judgments. (See xxv. 2. 6. Zeph. ii. 8. 10.)

Ver. 29. *Whiles they see vanity unto thee, whiles they divine a lie unto thee.*] While the soothsayers and pretenders to divination foretell nothing but happy events. (See xiii. 23. xxii. 28.)

To bring thee upon the necks of them that are slain.] To add thee to the number of those who are slain in Judea: (ver. 14, 15.) and make thy condition like theirs.

Of the wicked, whose day is come.] See ver. 25.

Ver. 30. *Shall I cause it to return into his sheath?*] See ver. 4, 5.

I will judge thee in the place where thou wast created.] Thou shalt not be carried captive, but shalt be destroyed in thine own land. (See ver. 32.)

Ver. 31. *I will blow against thee in the fire of my wrath.*] Compare xxii. 20—22.

Ver. 32. *Thou shalt be no more remembered.*] See xxv. 10.

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a catalogue or recital of the sins of Jerusalem, and of all orders and degrees of men in it; for which God threatens to inflict his severest judgments upon it.

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Ver. 2. *WILT thou judge the bloody city?*] See the note upon xx. 4.

The bloody city.] See xxiii. 37. 45. xxiv. 6. 9. 2 Kings xxi. 16.

Ver. 3. *That her time may come.*] See vii. 7.

Ver. 4. *Thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years.*] Thou hast filled up the measure of thine iniquities, and brought the time of vengeance upon thyself. (See vii. 10.)

Therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, &c.] See v. 14. xxi. 28. Deut. xxviii. 37. 1 Kings ix. 7.)

Ver. 5. *Those that be near, and those that be far off, mock thee.*] See xvi. 57.

Ver. 6. *Behold, the princes of Israel,* &c.] These were probably the members of the great Sanhedrin; or the king's counsellors and chief officers of state. (See Jer. xxvi. 10. xxxvi. 12.)

Ver. 7. *In thee have they set light by father and mother.*] Against which sin there is a solemn curse pronounced, Deut. xxvii. 16.

Ver. 8. *Thou hast despised my holy things, and profaned my sabbaths.*] Thou hast profaned the things dedicated to my service, and the times and places set apart for the same purpose. (Compare ver. 26. xxiii. 38. and Lev. xix. 30.)

Ver. 9. *In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood.*] That bear false witness against men in capital cases. (See Lev. xix. 16.)

And in thee they eat upon the mountains.] See xviii. 6.

Ver. 10. *In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness.*] Took their mother-in-law to wife, which St. Paul calls *such fornication as is not named among the gentiles,* 1 Cor. v. 1.

Ver. 12. *In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood.*] The judges have taken bribes, not only to pervert justice, but even to take away the lives of the innocent.

Ver. 13. *Therefore I have smitten my hand at thy dishonest gain.*] I have expressed mine indignation at these unjust practices. (See xxi. 14. 17.)

Ver. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee?*] On the contrary, *All hearts shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble* at the approach of God's judgments, xxi. 7.

I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it.] See xxiv. 14.

Ver. 15. *And will consume thy filthiness out of thee.*] I will purge thee *in the furnace of afflictions,* and take that method to consume thy dross, and put an end to thy idolatrous practices. (Compare ver. 18, 19, &c. xxiii. 27.)

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the heathen.*] Instead of being mine inheritance, and under my peculiar care and protection, thou shalt be cast out among the heathen, and there eat the fruit of thine own ways, and receive the just reward of thy wickedness. The margin of our Bibles reads, *Thou shalt be profaned in thyself,* &c. Which I think expresses the sense much better; taking the verb *nihal* in the same sense, wherein it is used vii. 24. and xxv. 3. of this prophecy; *i. e.* Thou shalt no longer enjoy the privileges of a city called by my name, and set apart for my residence, but shalt be laid open as common ground, to be profaned by infidels. (Compare Isa. xlvii. 6.)

Ver. 18—20. *The house of Israel to me is become dross,* &c.] Their filthiness may fitly be compared to the mixture of dross and baser metals with the pure silver; and as that is purified by being melted in a furnace or crucible, so Jerusalem, when it is set on fire, shall be the furnace wherein I will cast them and their wickedness to be consumed. (Compare Jer. vi. 28. 30.) God's severe judgments are expressed by the *furnace of affliction,* Isa. xlviii. 10. and compared to *a refiner's fire,* Isa. i. 25. Mal. iii. 2. because they are designed to purge men from that dross and corruption, which is too often the effect of ease and prosperity.

Ver. 21. *I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath.*] God's vengeance is often compared to fire. (See xx. 47.) But here it was so in a literal sense, when both city and temple were consumed by fire, (2 Kings xxv. 9.)

Ver. 24. *Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.*] God had, in the foregoing verses, compared his anger to fire: in pursuance of which metaphor he adds, That if the wholesome advice and admonition of the prophets (compared to the dew or rain coming from heaven, xx. 46.) had been but duly received, they would have supplied the place of rain, and washed away the filth of the land: so that it needed not to have been purged or cleansed by fire. The Chaldee paraphrase expounds the sense thus, *Thou art the land in which there have been no good works done to protect it in the day of God's curse or indignation.*

Ver. 25. *There is a conspiracy of the prophets in the midst of her.*] *i. e.* Of the false prophets. (See the note upon Jer. xxix. 1.) These are often reproved for making a gain of their profession. (See Jer. vi. 13. Micah iii. 5. 11.)

They have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things, &c.] They make merchandise of men's souls; or else they take away their lives by false accusations, and then seize upon their substance. (Compare ver. 27. and Matt. xxiii. 14.)

Ver. 26. *Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things.*] The gifts and sacrifices offered in my service; either by offering them in an undue manner, as the sons of Eli did, (1 Sam. ii. 15.) or without due purification of themselves; or else eating them as common meats, without regard to the rules prescribed in the law, (Lev. xxi. xxii.)

They have put no difference between the holy and profane, &c.] They have not shewed any regard to the rules the Levitical laws lay down, whereby to distinguish betwixt what is holy or unholy, clean or unclean, and that both with respect to persons and things. And they are guilty of this neglect, in contradiction to an express charge given them concerning this matter, (Lev. x. 10.)

And have hid their eyes from my sabbaths.] They have not attended upon my public worship on the sabbath-days, (see 2 Chron. xxix. 7.) and thereby have encouraged my people in the neglect and profanation of that day. (See ver. 8.)

Ver. 27. *Her princes in the midst of her are like wolves ravening the prey,* &c.] The chief officers of state under the king: (see Jer. xxxvi. 12. xxxviii. 4.) not excluding the kings themselves, whose oppressions of their subjects the prophet elsewhere severely reproves. (See xix. 3. 6. xlv. 9.) All those, the text saith, stick at no method of injustice and oppression, whereby they may increase their substance, though it be by taking away the lives and estates

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of the innocent. (Compare Isa. i. 23. Micah iii. 1, &c. Zech. iii. 3.)

Ver. 28. *And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar,* &c.] Have daubed over the evil practices of the great men by palliating devices. (See xiii. 6. 10.)

Ver. 29. *The people of the land have used oppression.*] See Jer. v. 26. vi. 13.

Yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.] Contrary to an express prohibition of God's law, frequently repeated and urged upon them from the consideration that they themselves were strangers in Egypt. (See Exod. xxii. 21. xxiii. 9. Lev. xix. 33, 34.)

Ver. 30. *And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge—but I found none.*] This general complaint may be expounded with some restriction (such as is commonly understood in unlimited expressions). For we read ix. 4. that there were some that did *sigh and cry to God,* by way of deprecating his wrath, *for the abominations done in Jerusalem.* (See the like expression Jer. v. 1. and the note upon that place.)

That should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap, &c.] See xiii. 5.

Ver. 31. *Their own way have I recompensed upon their heads.*] See ix. 10. xi. 21. xvi. 43.

CHAP. XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

The idolatries of Samaria and Jerusalem are here represented under the metaphor of the lewd practices of two common harlots: for which crimes God denounces severe judgments against them both. The same metaphor is here made use of, which was pursued at large in the sixteenth chapter. (See the Argument there.)

Ver. 2. *THERE were two women, the daughters of one mother.*] Countries are commonly represented as mothers of their people, and the inhabitants as their children: so the *daughters of Syria* signify the inhabitants of that country, (xvi. 57.) Thus Samaria and Jerusalem are described in this chapter as sisters, the offspring of the same land or country. (Compare xvi. 46. Jer. iii. 7, 8. 10.)

Ver. 3. *And they committed whoredoms in Egypt.*] They learned to commit idolatry there. (See xx. 7, 8.) It has been already observed, that idolatry is often represented as spiritual adultery. (See xvi. 15, &c. and see the note upon xx. 8.)

They committed whoredoms in their youth.] The time when the Israelites were in Egypt, or were lately departed out of it, is called their *youth* in the prophets, because that was the time when God first owned them for his people. (See ver. 8. 19. xvi. 8. 22. 60. Jer. ii. 2. Hos. ii. 15.)

There were their breasts pressed, &c.] *There they served idols, and there they corrupted their ways,* as the Chaldee paraphrase expresses the sense. The Scripture commonly calls idolatrous churches and nations by the name of *harlots;* and, in like manner, honours those who preserve their allegiance to God pure and undefiled, with the title of *chaste wives* or *virgins.* (See 2 Cor. xi. 2. Rev. xiv. 4. xix. 7. xxi. 2.)

Ver. 4. *And the names of them were Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister—Samaria is Aholah, and Jerusalem Aholibah.*] The word *Aholah* signifies, *Her tent* or *tabernacle; Aholibah* denotes, *My tent* or *tabernacle is in her.* These two different appellations imply, that Samaria had indeed a tabernacle or place for public worship, but of her own devising, *viz.* the cities of Dan and Beth-el, where the golden calves were set up; whereas God's tabernacle first, and afterward his temple, was placed in Jerusalem. He *placed his name there,* or chose it for the place of his peculiar residence, (1 Kings viii. 29.) Why *Aholah* is called the *elder sister,* see the note on xvi. 46.

Ver. 5. *And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine.*] After she had lived in covenant with me, and attended upon my service and worship all the time of the judges, and of David and Solomon, she fell off from my service, and was the first that established idolatry by a law, and consented to Jeroboam's wicked device of setting up the golden calves.

And she doted on her lovers.] *i. e.* Her foreign allies, whose idolatries she was fond of, and hoped by that means to procure their friendship and assistance. (See the note on xvi. 33. 37.)

On the Assyrians her neighbours.] The king of Assyria was a very potent prince, and thereupon his alliance was courted both by the kings of Israel and Judah. (See 2 Kings xv. 29. xvi. 7. and ver. 12. of this chapter.)

Ver. 6. *Which were clothed with blue, captains and rulers.*] As women are apt to fall in love with comely young men well mounted and richly clothed; so the Israelites were enamoured with the state and bravery of the Assyrians, and thought themselves secure if they could but procure their alliance and friendship; and in order to it embraced their idolatries.

Horsemen riding upon horses.] Horses were scarce in Judea, which made the Jews apply themselves to the neighbouring countries for troops of horse in the time of any hostile invasion. (See Isa. xxx. 16. xxxi. 2. xxxvi. 8.)

Ver. 7. *Thus she committed her whoredoms with them.*] *She defiled herself with her idols,* as the sense is more plainly expressed at the end of the verse.

Ver. 8. *Neither left she her whoredoms brought from Egypt.*] She added new idolatries to those she had formerly committed. (See ver. 3.)

Ver. 9. *Wherefore I delivered her into the hand of her lovers.*] God made these very Assyrians the executioners of his judgments upon the ten tribes: many of them being carried away captive by Pul, king of Assyria, (1 Chron. v. 25, 26.) afterward by Tiglath-pileser, (2 Kings xv. 29.) and at length the whole country was subdued and depopulated by Shalmaneser, (2 Kings xvii. 6.) The kings of Babylon were likewise styled kings of Assyria. (See 2 Kings xxii. 29. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.) *Lovers* mean the same with allies, those whose friendship and assistance the Jews courted, by complying with them in their idolatries. (See xvi. 37.)

Ver. 10. *These discovered her nakedness; they took her sons and her daughters.*] They carried her and her children away captive, stripped and bare. (Compare ver. 29. and xvi. 37. 39.)

And slew her with the sword.] Compare ver. 47. and xvi. 40. Those that were not led captive were slain in the field of battle, or in the siege of Samaria, 2 Kings xvii. 5.

And she became famous among women.] The Hebrew

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reads, *She became a name among women:* as she had been formerly *renowned among the heathen for her beauty;* (xvi. 14.) so now she was every where talked of as a remarkable instance of God's vengeance, and set forth for an example to other cities and nations, to deter them from the like abominations. (See ver. 48. and xvi. 41.)

For they had executed judgment upon her.] See ver. 24.

Ver. 11. *And when her sister Aholibah saw this, she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she.*] Jerusalem was so far from taking warning by the judgments inflicted upon Samaria, that she advanced to greater degrees of idolatry. (See ver. 14. xvi. 47. 51. Jer. iii. 8. and the notes upon those places.)

Ver. 12. *She doted upon the Assyrians her neighbours,* &c.] Compare ver. 1. The king of Judah, Ahaz, entered into a confederacy with the king of Assyria, hoping for relief from his power and the bravery of his army, and serving his idols to that end. (See 2 Kings xvi. 7. 11. 2 Chron. xxviii. 16. 23.)

Ver. 13. *They took both one way.*] Both of them were like common harlots, impudent in their idolatries, and irreclaimable. (Compare Jer. iii. 13.)

Ver. 14. *When she saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans,* &c.] These were probably the pictures of those deified heroes whom the Chaldeans worshipped as gods: such were Bel, Nebo, and Merodach, mentioned Isa. xlvi. 1. Jer. l. 2.

Ver. 15. *Girded with girdles upon their loins.*] A girdle was a mark of dignity, and worn as such by princes and men in authority. (See 1 Sam. xviii. 4. Isa. xxii. 21.)

In died attire upon their heads.] The Chaldeans, and afterward the Persians, wore a sort of turbans upon their heads, with different degrees of ornaments, according to their different qualities.

Ver. 16. *And as soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted upon them, and sent messengers unto them into Chaldea.*] These images pleased her so much, that she sent to Babylon to learn the manner how their idols were to be worshipped. (See ver. 40, 41. and xvi. 17.) This probably relates to those times when a correspondence was maintained between the cities of Babylon and Jerusalem, after that Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Judea, and made it a tributary kingdom, in the beginning of the fourth year of Jehoiakim. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 1. Dan. i. 1, 2. and the notes upon Jer. xxii. 19.)

Ver. 17. *And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love,* &c.] The metaphor of representing idolatry by the inordinate lust of adultery is still carried on.

And her mind was alienated from them.] She quickly grew weary of these too, as lewd women are of their former gallants, and look out for new ones. She broke her league and covenant with them, as St. Jerome very well expresses the sense; meaning that covenant which Jehoiakim made with Nebuchadnezzar, to be his tributary: (compare ver. 16. 22. 28.) and was afterward renewed by Zedekiah. (See xvii. 15.)

Ver. 18. *So she discovered her whoredoms,* &c.] The sense might better be expressed, *After she had discovered,* &c. the sense being still continued with the foregoing verse.

Then my mind was alienated from her, &c.] As she, by her idolatries, had broken all the bonds of duty and allegiance whereby she was engaged to me, a sin often compared to a wife's disloyalty towards her husband: so I withdrew my love and affection from her, and resolved to give her *a bill of divorce,* as the prophet Jeremy expresses it, and not own her any more as mine, as I had cast off her sister Samaria. (Compare Jer. iii. 8. vi. 8. Hos. ii. 2.)

Ver. 19. *Yet she multiplied her whoredoms, in calling to remembrance the days of her youth,* &c.] Though she was fond of new idolatries, she did not forget her old ones, even those which she had learned in Egypt. (See ver. 3.)

Ver. 20. *For she doted upon their paramours,* &c.] Upon the idols of Egypt, and the impure rites which accompany their idolatrous worship. (See the notes upon xvi. 26.) This may relate to the time when Zedekiah entered into a new confederacy with Egypt; (see ver. 21. and xvii. 15.) which made the people fond of admitting the Egyptian idolatries.

Ver. 22. *I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated.*] I will execute my judgments upon thee by those very Babylonians, whose alliance and idolatries thou hast been so fond of: (see ver. 9.) but since hast broken the league thou madest with them, contracting a new one with Egypt, and thereby hast provoked them to revenge thy perfidiousness. (See ver. 17.)

Ver. 23. *The Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them.*] The inhabitants of the several provinces of the Babylonish monarchy. Pekod is mentioned as a province of Babylon, Jer. l. 21. St. Jerome upon the place understands these three words, Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, in an appellative sense, to denote so many titles or degrees of honour, as much as to say, governors, princes, and great men. In which sense the two former words, Pekod (or Pakud) and Shoa, are confessedly taken in Scripture; and *Koa* is supposed to be derived from the verb *kaâng,* which signifies printing marks in the flesh, (Lev. xix. 28.) and it was the custom of great men to distinguish themselves from their inferiors by such marks or prints. (See Dr. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 14. sect. 1.)

All of them desirable young men, &c.] As their riches and bravery made them appear amiable in your eyes, when you first courted their alliance, (ver. 12.) so they shall appear in the same splendid equipage, when they come to invade your country, and to besiege your city; but then their gallant appearance shall strike a terror and consternation into you.

Ver. 24. *And they shall come against thee with chariots, waggons, and wheels,* &c.] A like description of warlike preparations may be seen xxvi. 10. Jer. xlvii. 3. Nahum iii. 2, 3. Chariots are mentioned, both in sacred and profane writers, as of principal use in the ancient way of fighting.

And I will set judgment before them; and they shall judge thee according to their judgments.] I will deliver thee into their power, as the ministers of my justice, who shall make thy punishments bear a correspondence with thy guilt. (See ver. 45.)

Ver. 25. *And I will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal furiously with thee.*] They shall punish thee with that fury, with which a man in the rage of jealousy shall treat a wife that hath been unfaithful to him. (Compare xvi. 38.)

They shall take away thy nose, and thine ears, &c.] As

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husbands, in that case, render those women deformed, whose beauty hath been too pleasing to strangers; so shall the Chaldeans deface all the glories and ornaments of Jerusalem, and after they have slain and carried captive its inhabitants, shall set the city on fire, and reduce it to a heap of ashes. (Compare xvi. 41.)

Ver. 26. *They shall also strip thee out of thy clothes,* &c.] See ibid. ver. 37. 39.

Ver. 27. *Thus will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee.*] These severe judgments shall effectually deter thee from idolatry, and make thee abhor the least approaches towards it. (See xxii. 15.) Accordingly we find, that, after the captivity, the Jews never returned to their former idolatrous practices.

And thy whoredoms brought from the land of Egypt.] Where thou didst first learn idolatry, and ever since hast had an inclination towards it. (See ver. 3. 19.)

So that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them.] See xviii. 6.

Ver. 28. *I will deliver thee into the hand of them whom thou hatest,* &c.] The Chaldeans, that were thy lovers formerly; (ver. 22.) but since thou hast broken thy league and friendship with them, thy love is turned to hatred. (See ver. 17.)

Ver. 29. *And they shall deal with thee hatefully, and shall take away all thy labour.*] As thou hast requited their love with hatred, so shall they deal with thee; their hatred against thee shall be greater than their former love towards thee, which was the conclusion of Amnon's unlawful love to his sister, (2 Sam. xiii. 15.) This shall prompt them to take a full revenge upon thy perfidiousness, to consume all the fruits of thy labours, and to take away all the wealth thou hast gathered by thine industry.

And shall leave thee naked and bare.] See the note on xvi. 37.

Ver. 31—33. *Therefore will I give her cup into thine hand—thou shalt be laughed to scorn, and had in derision. Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow,* &c.] God's judgments are often compared to a cup of intoxicating liquors, because they astonish men, and bereave them of common judgment and discretion, and likewise expose them to the scorn and contempt of their enemies. (See Jer. xxv. 15, &c. xlviii. 26. Habak. ii. 16.)

Ver. 34. *Thou shalt even drink it, and suck it out.*] The sorest and heaviest of God's judgments shall fall to thy share; like those that drink a potion off to the bottom, where the most nauseous part of it is settled. (See Psal. lxxv. 8. Jer. li. 17.)

Thou shalt break the sherds thereof, and pluck off thine own breasts.] Thou shalt behave thyself as drunken people do, who first throw away, or break in pieces, the cup, and then are angry with themselves as the cause of their own misfortunes. The text mentions her *breasts,* as the parts which had a principal share in her guilt, according to the allegorical description here given of her idolatries. (See ver. 3. 21.)

Ver. 35. *Because thou hast forgotten me, and cast me behind thy back.*] Because thou hast not only forsaken my worship, but hast shewed the utmost contempt and aversion towards me, (see the note upon viii. 16.) thou shalt deservedly bear the punishment due to thine idolatries. (Compare ver. 17. 19. 30. 49.)

Ver. 36. *Wilt thou judge Aholah and Aholibah?*] See the note on xx. 4.

Ver. 37. *That they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands,* &c.] They have committed adultery with their idols, as it follows, and have slain their children in sacrifice to them. (See xvi. 20, 21.)

Ver. 38. *They have defiled my sanctuary in the same day,* &c.] By coming within the precincts of it polluted with idolatry. (See the following verse, and xxii. 8.)

Ver. 39. *And, lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house.*] The words may be expounded of their setting up idols in the very temple, and worshipping them there. (See 2 Kings xxi. 4.)

Ver. 40. *And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far, to whom a messenger was sent,* &c.] See ver. 16. Their courting the alliances of foreign nations, by complying with their idolatries, is set forth under the representation of the several arts which harlots use to recommend themselves to new lovers. (Compare Isa. lvii. 7. 9. Hos. ii. 13.)

For whom thou didst wash thyself.] A custom generally practised by women before the time of their nuptials. (See Ruth iii. 3.)

And paintedst thy eyes.] Or *thy face,* as the phrase is translated 2 Kings ix. 30. (See the note upon Jer. iv. 30.)

Ver. 41. *And sattest upon a stately bed, and a table prepared before it.*] The expressions denote their sitting down with idolaters, and partaking of their sacrifices: the words *altar* and *table* are used promiscuously in the prophets, (see Mal. i. 7.) because all sacrifices were feasts made of offerings dedicated to God's service; so that he was properly the entertainer, and those that did partake of the sacrifices were his guests, that did eat at his table, in token of their being in covenant and friendship with him. What was consumed upon the altar was God's mess or portion, and is therefore called the *bread of God,* (see xliv. 7. Lev. xxi. 6.) and the *food of the Lord,* (Lev. iii. 11.) The remainder of the sacrifices his guests were entertained with, either by themselves, as in peace-offerings, or else by their proxies the priests, as in sin-offerings. (See Mr. Mede's Discourse of the Christian Sacrifice, chap. 7.) The Jews, as well as the Romans, lying upon beds or couches at their meals. (See Isa. lvii. 7.) So did other eastern nations. (See Esther i. 6.)

Whereupon thou hast set mine incense, and mine oil.] See xvi. 18.

Ver. 42. *And the voice of a multitude being at ease was with her.*] All sorts of expressions of joy were heard at these her meetings: such as music and dancing, which usually accompanied idolatrous festivals. (See Exod. xxxii. 6. 18, 19.)

And with the men of the common sort were brought the Sabeans from the wilderness.] The *Sabeans.* The word is translated *drunkards* in the margin: the word *saba* in the Hebrew, signifies to *drink to excess,* from whence comes the participle *sebaim, drunkards,* which comes very near in sound to the word *Sabaim* in the text. Strabo, in his tenth book of Geography, p. 471. speaking of the rites of Bacchus, mentions the word Σαβοῖ as used among others in the Bacchanal processions: which he supposes may have been derived, as well as several of their musical instruments, from the Barbarians, by which the Greeks denote the

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eastern countries. To the same purpose we find in Hesychius, Σάβος, Βακχεία. The prophet persists in comparing the idolatries of the Jews to the practices of lewd women, who prostitute themselves to all comers, even those of the meanest condition. Such were the Sabeans that came *from the wilderness: i. e.* from Arabia, called the Desert, where dwelt the posterity of Seba, mentioned Gen. x. 7. These were probably some of those idolatrous people dwelling in the wilderness, whom Jeremiah mentions, ix. 26. who polled the corners of their heads in honour of some idol whom they worshipped. (See the note upon that place.)

Which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful crowns upon their heads.] *i. e.* Upon the hands and heads of these two lewd women, Aholah and Aholibah. (See ver. 45.) Bracelets and crowns were ornaments proper to brides; (see xvi. 11, 12.) and were likewise presented by lovers to their mistresses. Crowns were likewise worn at public festivals, and times of rejoicing: (see Isa. xxxv. 10.) whereupon the Hebrew phrase is translated here and chap. xvi. by the LXX. Στέφανον καυχήσεως, *a crown of rejoicing;* an expression probably taken from hence by St. Paul, 1 Thess. ii. 19.

Ver. 43. *Then said I unto her that was grown old in adulteries,* &c.] The words import, that it was time for her to leave off her ill courses, that age and experience might sufficiently convince her of the follies of them; but withal they imply, that age and time seldom correct ill habits. The word *her* is taken collectively in this and the following verse, so as to include both the sisters. So the singular number is used, Psal. xii. 7. *Thou shalt preserve him from this generation for ever;* where our interpreters rightly observe in the margin, that the word *him* signifies *every one of them.*

Ver. 44. *Yet they went in unto her,* &c.] Both Samaria and Jerusalem defiled themselves with the idolatries of all the heathen round about them. (Compare ver. 7. 17.)

Ver. 45. *And the righteous men, they shall judge them.*] By *righteous* or just *men* some understand the Babylonians, who, though a wicked and idolatrous people, were the executioners of God's justice upon a nation that had sinned against a clearer light and greater convictions. So Nebuchadnezzar and other heathen princes are called God's servants, as being instruments of his providence. But the expression may in a more proper sense be understood of the prophets who foretold the judgments God would inflict upon Samaria and Jerusalem; such as Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah, &c. The prophets are said to execute those judgments which they foretell: so Ezekiel saith of himself, that *he was sent to destroy the city;* (xliii. 3.) *i. e.* to prophesy its destruction. To the same sense we read, Hos. vi. 5. *I have hewed them by my prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth.* (See the notes upon Isa. vi. 10. Jer. i. 10. v. 14.)

After the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of them that shed blood.] See ver. 37. and xvi. 38.

Ver. 46. *I will bring a company upon them, and give them to be removed and spoiled.*] This is meant chiefly of the Babylonians, who should plunder and carry away captive a great part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Ver. 47. *And the company shall stone them with stones, and despatch them with their sword.*] See xvi. 40.

They shall slay their sons and their daughters, &c.] See ver. 25.

Ver. 48. *Thus will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land.*] See ver. 27.

That all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness.] See the notes upon ver. 10. and xvi. 41.

Ver. 49. *And ye shall bear the sins of your idols.*] Ye shall bear the punishment due to your sins of idolatry. *To bear sin,* or *iniquity,* is a noted expression in Scripture, signifying the undergoing the punishment due to it. (Compare ver. 35.)

CHAP. XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

By the figure of a boiling pot is shewed the destruction of Jerusalem and its inhabitants; and by Ezekiel's being forbidden to mourn for his wife is signified, that the calamities of the Jews shall be so astonishing, as to be beyond all expressions of sorrow.

Ver. 1. *AGAIN, in the ninth year.*] Of Jehoiachin's captivity. (See i. 2.)

Ver. 2. *The king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.*] See Jer. lii. 4. 2 Kings xxv. 1.

Ver. 3. *And utter a parable unto the rebellious house.*] Add this emblem or parable concerning a boiling pot to the rest thou hast delivered to them: though they seem resolved not to give heed to what thou deliverest, either in plain words or figurative expressions. (Compare xvii. 12. xx. 49.)

Set on a pot, set it on, &c.] The destruction of Jerusalem is represented by a boiling pot or caldron, both by Jeremiah, i. 13. and by Ezekiel, xi. 3.

Ver. 4. *Gather the pieces into it, even every good piece,* &c.] Meaning the chief of the citizens, who should be destroyed together with the city. (See xi. 3.)

Ver. 5. *Take the choice of the flock.*] This belongs in sense to the former verse; so the LXX. translate the words, joining them with the foregoing sentence; *With the choice bones taken out of the flock.*

Burn also the bones under it.] The bones of those who have been unjustly slain in the midst of the city; (see xi. 7.) whose blood cries for vengeance against it, and kindles God's anger like fire.

And make it boil well.] To denote the city's being set on fire. (See ver. 10, 11.)

Ver. 6. *Woe to the bloody city.*] See xi. 6. xvi. 30. xxii. 3. xxiii. 37.

Even to the pot whose scum is therein.] Whose filthiness is not purged out of it. (See ver. 13.)

Bring it out piece by piece.] The principal men of the city (see ver. 4.) shall be carried out of the city by the Chaldeans, and afterward slain. (See xi. 7. 9.)

Let no lot fall upon it.] Conquerors used to cast lots what share of the vanquished they would save. (See 2 Sam. viii. 2. Joel iii. 3. Nahum iii. 10.) Here there will be no use of lots, for all the principal inhabitants shall be slain. (See Jer. xxxix. 6.)

Ver. 7. *She set it upon the top of a rock,* &c.] In a presumptuous manner, and with a high hand she shed it, as the Chaldee paraphrase expresses the sense; she was im-

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pudent and barefaced in her cruelties: she did not seek to cover or excuse them.

She poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust.] The words allude to the command of the law, Lev. xvii. 13. that they cover the blood of any beast or other living creature which was slain with dust; which precept was not only intended to prevent their eating of blood, but also to give men a sort of horror or aversion to the sight of bloodshed.

Ver. 8. *I have set her blood on the top of a rock.*] Her punishment shall be as notorious in the sight of the world as her sin was.

Ver. 9, 10. *I will even make the pile for the fire great,* &c.] The inhabitants shall be the materials prepared by their sins to be consumed like fuel in the fire.

Ver. 10. *Spice it well.*] The expression imports, that the Chaldeans shall be as much set upon destroying the city and inhabitants, as hungry people are greedy of devouring meat well spiced and dressed.

And let the bones be burnt.] The words denote an utter destruction, that the fire shall be so fierce as to consume the very bones as well as the flesh put into the caldron.

Ver. 11. *Then set it empty upon the coals thereof,* &c.] After an entire riddance of the inhabitants, the city itself shall be set on fire, and the place and its wickedness be consumed together in the flames.

Ver. 12. *She hath wearied herself with lies.*] The word *teunim,* never met with but in this place, is commonly derived from *aven,* which signifies trouble or vanity, and is a word frequently applied to idols, as particularly when Beth-el is styled Beth-aven, upon the account of the golden calf there set up, Hos. iv. 15. For these reasons I understand the expression here, *She hath wearied herself with lies,* of the people's multiplying their idolatries; idols being elsewhere called lies, and seeking relief sometimes from one idol, sometimes from another, but all in vain. (See xvi. 29, 30. xxiii. 16. 19. 40.)

And her great scum went not forth out of her, &c.] All the admonitions I gave her by my prophets, availed nothing to the purging her from her idolatries and other wickedness; so that now the fire must purge and consume her and her sins.

Ver. 13. *In thy filthiness is lewdness.*] Thou hast shewed thyself shameless and incorrigible in thine idolatries. (Compare xxiii. 29. 35.)

Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, &c.] I did what was requisite on my part towards thy conversion, but thou refusedst to comply with those frequent calls and exhortations I gave thee; (see the note on Jer. xxxi. 18.) and therefore my Spirit shall not strive with thee any longer, but I will proceed to execute my judgments upon thee.

Till I cause my fury to rest upon thee.] See the note on v. 13. viii. 18.

Ver. 14. *According to thy doings shall they judge thee.*] See xxiii. 24.

Ver. 16. *Behold, I take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke.*] Thy wife, the object of thy love and thy affection. (See ver. 18.)

Ver. 17. *Bind the tire of thine head upon thee.*] Use the ordinary dress upon thine head; whereas in the time of mourning it was customary sometimes to shave the head: (see Lev. xiii. 45. Jer. vii. 29. xvi. 6.) sometimes to cast dust upon it. (See Josh. vii. 6. 1 Sam. iv. 12.) The priests were particularly forbid to uncover their heads in the time of mourning. (See Lev. x. 6.)

And put on thy shoes upon thy feet.] Going barefoot was another expression of sorrow. (See 2 Sam. xv. 30.)

And cover not thy lips.] Covering the lips or face was another token of mourning. (See Lev. xiii. 45. Micah iii. 7. 2 Sam. xv. 30. Jer. xiv. 4.)

And eat not the bread of men.] Partake not of the mourning feasts that relations use to prepare for the funerals of their friends. (See the note on Jer. xvi. 5. 7.) Such were the Περίδειπνα and *parentalia* among the Greeks and Romans.

Ver. 18. *So I spake to the people in the morning, and at even my wife died.*] My wife died in the evening, and the next morning I declared what commands God had laid upon me, not to make any outward show or sign of mourning upon that occasion. (Compare xxxiii. 22.) The evening was the beginning of the day according to the Jews' reckoning. (See Gen. i. 5. Lev. xxiii. 32.)

Ver. 19. *Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us?*] They inquire by way of derision and contempt what these signs mean. (Compare xii. 9. xvii. 12. xx. 49.)

Ver. 21. *Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength.*] I will deliver my temple into the hands of the heathen, and they shall profane and destroy it. (See vii. 19, 20.) That temple wherein you placed your glory, and thought my residence there your greatest protection. (Compare ver. 25. and see Psal. lxxviii. 61. xcvi. 6. cv. 4. cxxxii. 8.)

The desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth.] *The beauty of holiness,* as the temple is often called, whose destruction will affect you with a most tender compassion.

And your sons and your daughters whom ye have left, shall fall by the sword.] Whom ye left behind you in the city, when ye were carried captives: or who were left by the famine and pestilence. (See v. 12. xxiii. 47.)

Ver. 23. *Ye shall not mourn nor weep.*] These terrible judgments shall strike you with astonishment, and such a grief as is too great to be expressed by words or actions; according to the verse of the poet,

" Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent."

Small evils we complain of, greater strike us dumb.

But ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one towards another.] Ye shall waste away by a lingering grief, and by a silent lamentation over each other's calamities. (See iv. 2. 17. Lev. xxvi. 39.)

Ver. 24. *Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign.*] His actions foreshew you what shall be your condition. (Compare iv. 3. xii. 6.) The holy writers in several places speak of themselves in the third person. (See Exod. vi. 26. 1 Sam. xii. 11. Matt. ix. 9.) So that this is an argument of very little force, when it is urged against Moses being the author of the Pentateuch.

And when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord.] Comparing the prediction with the event, will convince the most obstinate, that the immediate hand of God is in the judgments which are come upon you. (See vi. 7. and compare John xiii. 19. xiv. 29. xvi. 4.)

Ver. 25. *When I shall take from them their strength, the*

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joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, &c.] When I shall take from them all that is dear and valuable to them; their temple, an emblem of my special residence among them, and protection over them, whose beauty and magnificence was their peculiar glory, and the most grateful object of their sight; together with their sons and daughters, whereon they placed their affection. (See ver. 21.)

Ver. 26. *That he that escapeth in that day,* &c.] See xxxiii. 21, 22.

Ver. 27. *In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him that is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb.*] From this time to the time when the news comes of the city's being taken, thou shalt not prophesy any more to thine own people; but then will I give thee a new commission to speak, (see xxxiii. 22.) and that not by signs, as thou dost at present, but with freedom and plainness; the event so exactly answering thy predictions, shall give a new authority to what thou speakest. (See iii. 26. xxix. 21. and compare Ephes. vi. 19.)

And thou shalt be a sign unto them, &c.] They shall then be convinced, by experience, that thou didst foreshew by thy actions and behaviour all that should befal them. And this will likewise convince them of my foreknowledge and providence.

CHAP. XXV.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains God's judgments against the Ammonites, Edomites, and Philistines, for their hatred against the Jews, and insulting over them in the time of their distress. Archbishop Usher (in his Annals ad A. M. 3419.) and Josephus (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11.) place these events five years after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *SET thy face against the Ammonites.*] See the note on vi. 2.

Ver. 3. *Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary,* &c.] The Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, though related in blood to the Jews, yet bore a constant hatred towards them, which they took all opportunities to shew, when the Jews were under any distress, and particularly at the time of their general captivity, and the destruction of their city and temple. For this they are often reproved by the prophets, and threatened with the like or severer judgments, and particularly the Ammonites. (See the note on xxi. 28.)

Ver. 4. *I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession.*] By the *men of the east* must be meant the Chaldeans. (See xxi. 19, 20.) Ammon is likewise reckoned among these countries, which God foretold by Jeremy should be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon. (See Jer. xxv. 21.) By the east country is commonly meant Arabia in Scripture, as hath been observed in the notes upon Isa. xi. 14. but Syria and Chaldea, and the countries beyond it, are likewise called the east. (See Gen. xi. 2. Numb. xxiii. 7. Isa. ii. 6.) Chaldea, indeed, lay northward of Judea and the adjacent countries; (see l. 4.) but withal lying with a point towards the east, the Chaldeans and their confederates may not improperly be reckoned among the men of the east; just as Cyrus is sometimes described as coming from the east, and sometimes from the north, (Isa. xli. 25.) with respect to his forces, that consisted both of Medes that lay northward, and Persians that lay eastward of Babylon.

And shall drink thy milk.] Milk was the chief sustenance of those people, whose riches consisted chiefly in their stocks of cattle. Hence the Scythians are called *Galactophagi,* by Homer, Iliad. iii. and *Galactopotæ* by other writers. The LXX. render the sense very well, *Shall drink* or *swallow thy fatness:* the word *heleb* signifying not only milk, but likewise the fattest or choicest parts of any flesh or fruits. So it is used Gen xlv. 18. *Ye shall eat the fat of the land;* and Psal. lxxxi. 16. where our translation reads, *The finest of the wheat,* it is in the Hebrew, *The fat of the wheat.*

Ver. 5. *And I will make Rabbah* (see xxi. 20.) *a stable for camels,* &c.] Instead of being a city inhabited by men, it shall be a place for cattle, and particularly for camels to feed in, of which that and the neighbouring countries had great store. It is a proverbial expression for utter destruction, to say that grass grows where a town stood. (Compare Isa. xvii. 2. xxii. 10. xxxii. 14. Zeph. ii. 14, 15.)

Ver. 6. *Because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with thy feet.*] Gestures that sometimes signify grief and indignation: (see vi. 11.) but are likewise used to express our joy and satisfaction. (Compare Job xxvii. 23. Jer. xlviii. 27. Lam. ii. 15.)

With all thy despite against the land of Israel.] See ver. 3.

Ver. 8. *Because that Moab and Seir do say.*] Seir is the same with Edom. (See xxxv. 2.) The prophet joins them together as guilty of the same crime, and then denounces particular judgments against each of them.

Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen.] They are no longer distinguished from their neighbours by the visible protection of the God whom they worship.

Ver. 9. *Therefore will I open the side of Moab from the cities,* &c.] I will make a passage for his enemies to invade his frontier cities, and from thence to possess themselves of the best of his country. Some translate the middle of the verse, *From the cities, even from Ar, his* [city] *upon his frontiers. Ar* was the coast or *border of Moab,* (Deut. ii. 18.)

The glory of the country.] The best part of all the country of Moab; the Hebrew word is *tsebi,* frequently spoken of Judea, as being in many respects the glory of all lands. (See xx. 6.)

Beth-jesimoth, Baal-Meon, and Kiriathaim.] See Numb. xxxii. 38. Josh. xiii. 20. Jer. xlviii. 25. Baal-Meon is called Beth-Meon in that place of Jeremy, and more fully Beth-Baal-Meon, Josh. xiii. 17. *i. e.* the *house* or *temple of the idol Meon,* by which Bishop Cumberland understands Menys or Osiris, the great deity of the Egyptians; in the first book and the second chapter of his treatise concerning Sanchoniathon's Phœnician History.

Ver. 10. *Unto the men of the east.*] See ver. 4.

That the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations.] May make no figure among their neighbours, their strength being entirely broken.

Ver. 12. *Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance.*] The Idumeans, being the posterity of Esau, bare an ancient grudge against the Jews, upon the account of their ancestor's losing his right of pri-

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mogeniture, and the subduing of Edom by David afterward, (2 Sam. viii. 14.) Upon both these accounts they took hold of all opportunities of venting their spite towards the Jewish nation, particularly see 2 Chron. xxviii. 17. For this their behaviour they were in former times reproved by Amos, i. 11. and afterward by Obadiah, ver. 10. and by Ezekiel in this place, and xxxv. 5. The ill will that they shewed towards them at the time of their captivity, was very remarkable, as appears by those pathetical words of Psal. cxxxvii. 7. *Remember the children of Edom, O Lord, in the day of Jerusalem; how they said, Down with it, down with it, even to the ground.*

Ver. 13. *I will stretch out my hand upon Edom, and cut off man and beast from it.*] See xxxv. 7—9. Jer. xlix. 17, 18. Zeph. ii. 9. Mal. i. 3, 4.

And I will make it desolate from Teman, and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword.] Teman is a noted place in Idumea: (see Jer. xlix. 7. Amos i. 12.) to which Dedan is joined, ver. 8. (Compare Isa. xxi. 13, 14.) The Dedanites were originally Arabians, the posterity of Dedan, Abraham's grandson; but they seem afterward to have been incorporated with the Idumeans. (See the note upon that place of Jeremiah.)

Ver. 14. *And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel.*] The Jews themselves, whom the Edomites have so often insulted, shall be instruments of my vengeance upon Edom, and shall requite the wrongs they have received by subduing Idumea, which they did under the conduct of Judas Maccabæus. (See 1 Macc. v. 3. 2 Macc. x. 16, 17. compare Jer. xlix. 2.) And afterward the high-priest Hircanus made an entire conquest of this country. (See Dr. Prideaux, par. ii. p. 307.)

Ver. 15. *Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge,* &c.] The Philistines, being borderers upon the Jews, were their ancient enemies from the very time of the judges downward, more particularly in the time of Ahaz. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.)

Ver. 16. *Behold, I will stretch out my hand upon the Philistines.*] I will subdue them by Nebuchadnezzar. (See ver. xxv. 20. xlvii. 1.)

And I will cut off the Cherethims.] The *Cherethims,* or *Cherethites,* are the same with the Philistines, or a tribe of that people. (See 1 Sam. xxx. 14. Zeph. ii. 5. and the notes upon Jer. xlvii. 4.)

And destroy the remnant of the sea-coast.] The same who are called the *remnant of the Philistines,* Amos i. 8. *the remnant of Ashdod,* Jer. xxv. 20. and *the remnant of the country of Caphtor,* Jer. xlvii. 4. (See the notes upon these two last places.)

CHAP. XXVI.

ARGUMENT.

This and the following chapter, with part of the twenty-eighth, foretell the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, who took it after a thirteen years' siege, (as Josephus relates out of Philostratus, and the Phœnicians' Annals: see his Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11. *ad fin.* lib. i. contr. Appion. p. 1046.) and in the thirty-second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, according to the Babylonish account. (See the note on xxix. 17.) By reason of which hard service, *every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled,* as our prophet speaks, xxix. 18. The same calamity is foretold by Isaiah, chap. xxiii. This siege forced the inhabitants to remove their effects into an island half a mile distant from the shore, where they built another city, called New Tyre. The learned Dr. Prideaux, in his Connex. of Script. Hist. par. i. p. 91. 484. hath observed, that this prophecy of Ezekiel, as well as the former one of Isaiah, was fulfilled in the destruction of old Tyre, a city that stood upon the continent, and which Nebuchadnezzar utterly destroyed; though he grants some expressions in both prophecies are applicable only to the last siege of that city, when it was conquered by Alexander the Great.

Ver. 1. *IN the eleventh year, in the first day of the month.*] The particular month not being named, some supply the word *fifth,* (as the word *fourth* is supplied, 2 Kings xxv. 3.) and understand it of the month following the taking of Jerusalem, at whose desolation Tyre rejoiced, (ver. 2.) But, as Archbishop Usher observes, ad A. M. 3416. the fifth month belongs to the twelfth year of Jehoiachin's captivity. So we may more probably understand the expression of the *first* month of the year: as *the year of Evil-Merodach's reign,* (2 Kings xxv. 27.) is rightly understood by our interpreters to be the year *when he began to reign;* so *the tenth day of the month* is necessarily to be understood of the first month, xl. 1. of this prophecy. And the inhabitants of Tyre may very well be supposed to insult over Jerusalem at any part of the time of her siege, which they saw must inevitably end in the taking of that city.

Ver. 2. *She is broken that was the gates of the people.*] There was a great confluence of people to Jerusalem from all parts at the solemn feasts of the year, as well of Jews as proselytes. (See John xiii. 20.)

She is turned unto me.] Her wealth is come into my stores. (Compare Isa. lx. 5.)

I shall be replenished now she is laid waste.] Tyre was a noted market for all sorts of trade: so when Jerusalem was taken and sacked, the spoil of the city was carried thither for sale, and, probably, several of the inhabitants being made captives, were sold there for slaves, a traffic the Tyrians dealt in very much, (xxvii. 13.) This interpretation may be confirmed by comparing it with Joel iii. 4—6. where the prophet upbraids the Tyrians for making merchandise both of the persons and substance of the Jews, when they came into their hands. To the same purpose we read Macc. iii. 41. that when *Lysias came with great forces to subdue the Jews, the merchants of the country took silver and gold, and came into the camp, to buy the children of Israel for slaves.*

Ver. 3. *I will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.*] The Chaldeans and their confederates: (compare Jer. xxxiv. 1. li. 27.) whom the prophet compares to the waves of the sea, which come up with an irresistible force. (See Jer. li. 42.) Armies are elsewhere represented by an inundation, that carries all before it. (See Isa. viii. 7. Dan. ix. 26. xi. 22.)

Ver. 4, 5. *I will scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea.*] I will make an entire riddance of her buildings, so that not so much as any dust or rubbish of them shall be left: (compare ver. 12.) and

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nothing shall be seen but the rocks upon the sea-shore, in the place where the city formerly stood. Nebuchadnezzar quite demolished old Tyre, and the stones and rubbish of it were afterward made use of by Alexander, to carry on a causey from the continent to the island where New Tyre stood, by which means he took that. (See Dr. Prideaux, *ubi supra.*) This latter city is since so decayed, that there are no remains of it left, but a few huts for fishermen to hang out their nets a drying upon the rocks, as it is related by travellers that have been upon the place. (See Maundrell's Travels, p. 48. and Huetius, Demonst. Evang. prop. vi. *ad finem.*)

Ver. 6. *Her daughters which are in the field shall be slain with the sword.*] By the *daughters of Tyre* are meant the lesser towns which are under her jurisdiction, as the mother-city and seat of the kingdom. (Compare xvi. 46. and Jer. xlix. 2.)

Ver. 7. *Nebuchadnezzar, a king of kings.*] Who hath kings for his vassals and tributaries. (See xvii. 14. 16. Dan. ii. 37.) The kings of Persia affected the same title afterward: (see Ezra vii. 12.) as the kings of Assyria had done before. (See Isa. x. 8. Hos. viii. 10.)

Ver. 8, 9. *He shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee,* &c.] This expression of a siege properly relates to old Tyre, which stood upon the continent, and was besieged and taken by Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 9. *And with his axes he shall break down thy towns.*] The word we render *axes,* signifies any instrument used in demolishing buildings. (See the note on Jer. xxxiii. 4.)

Ver. 10—12. *By reason of the abundance of his horses, their dust shall cover thee,* &c.] A lively description of the tumult and desolation that attend a conquering army making themselves masters of a great city. (Compare Nahum ii. 3, 4. 9. iii. 2, 3.)

Ver. 11. *And thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground.*] Some render the word *matseboth, thine images,* and understand it of the images of their tutelar gods.

Ver. 12. *They shall lay thy stones, thy timber, and thy dust in the midst of the water.*] The sea shall overflow thy ruins. (See ver. 19.)

Ver. 13. *And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease,* &c.] Great cities are full of all kind of gaiety and luxury; this shall be turned into a melancholy silence. (Compare Isa. xiv. 11. xxiii. 7. 16. Jer. vii. 34. xxv. 10.)

Ver. 14. *I will make thee like the top of a rock, thou shalt be built no more.*] This part of the prophecy was fulfilled upon New Tyre, whose inhabitants were quite destroyed by Alexander when he took the city, and afterward the city itself became desolate. (See ver. 5.)

Ver. 15. *Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall?*] All those that are upon the sea-coast near thee shall be frightened at the news of thy destruction. (Compare xxvii. 28. xxxi. 16. Jer. xlix. 21.)

Ver. 16, 17. *Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones,* &c.] All the princes and rich merchants of Sidon, Carthage, and other maritime cities, that maintained a trade with Tyre, and got great wealth by that means; they *whose merchants are princes,* as Isaiah speaks of the merchants of Tyre, xxiii. 8. (compare ver. 2. 6. 10. of that chapter): they shall express a deep sense and concern for her misfortunes. (Compare xxvii. 30—32. xxxii. 10. Rev. xviii. 11. 17. 19.)

Shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes.] Such was the behaviour of the king of Nineveh at the time of his solemn humiliation, (Jonah iii. 6.)

They shall clothe themselves with trembling, &c.] They shall put on the habit of mourners, and sit upon the ground in a disconsolate condition. (See Job ii. 13. compare vii. 17.)

Ver. 17. *The renowned city which was strong at sea,* &c.] Tyre is called the *strength of the sea,* Isa. xxiii. 4. being strong at sea, both by its situation and the strength of its naval forces, upon which account it was formidable to all that had any trading upon the sea.

Ver. 18. *Now shall the isles tremble at the day of thy fall.*] See ver. 15. St. Jerome translates it, *Now shall the ships tremble,* &c. *i. e.* all seafaring men. (Compare xxvii. 29, 30. Isa. xxiii. 14.)

The isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.] When thy people shall be carried captive. (See Isa. xxiii. 27.)

Ver. 19. *When I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee.*] Thy walls being demolished, the sea shall come up and cover thy ruins: (see ver. 12.) or else the prophet compares the destruction of Tyre to a shipwreck. (See xxiii. 26.)

Ver. 20. *When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit,* &c.] When thou shalt be *thrust down into hell,* as our Saviour speaks concerning Capernaum, Luke x. 15. and brought to utter desolation, like cities which have been long ago buried in ruins and oblivion. (Compare xxxii. 18. 24.)

When I shall set glory in the land of the living.] Compare this and the following verse with xxxv. 14. When I shall restore other cities conquered by the king of Babylon, to that flourishing condition they formerly enjoyed among the inhabitants of this world; so the *land of the living* signifies, xxxii. 23. 26, 27. 32. The word *tsebi* is in many places appropriated to Judea, as being in several respects the glory of all lands, (xx. 6.) but is sometimes applied to other countries. (See xxv. 9.) Some expositors understand it here of Judea, to this sense; That when God should return the captivity of the Jews, and restore them to those marks of his grace and favour, which distinguished them from all other nations, and made them the nearest resemblance of heaven that could be found upon earth: yet even then, as it follows—

Ver. 21. *I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more.*] Thou shalt be left in utter ruins and desolation, and a terrible example of my vengeance. The word *balaloth,* which our interpreters translate *terrors,* is generally joined with words importing utter destruction, and so the LXX. understood it here, and in other places of this prophecy. (See xxvii. 36. xxviii. 19. and compare Psal. lxxiii. 19. Isa. xvii. 14.)

Though thou be sought for, thou shalt never be found again.] An expression denoting utter destruction. (See Psal. xxxvii. 36. and compare ver. 5. 14.)

CHAP. XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

The same subject is continued, where the prophet, setting forth the great trade and riches of Tyre, foretells the irrecoverable fall thereof.

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Ver. 2. *TAKE up a lamentation for Tyrus.*] This alludes to the mournful ditties used at funerals, wherein the *præficæ*, or mourning women, recounted every thing that was valuable or praiseworthy belonging to the deceased, and then lamented his loss. (See the notes upon Jer. ix. 17, 18.) In like manner, those that traded with Tyre should mourn over her, and bewail the loss of her riches and greatness. (Compare xxvi. 16, 17. and see ver. 32.)

Ver. 3. *Thou that art situate at the entry of the sea.*] A sea-port, fitted by situation for carrying on trade with many countries. (See Isa. xxiii. 1.)

Thou hast said, I am of perfect beauty.] Thou hast said in the pride of thy heart, (see xxviii. 2.) The strength of my navy and fortresses are every way complete and beautiful: (see ver. 4. 11.) and I am furnished with all accommodations that can make me considerable in the eyes of the world. (See ver. 10, 11. and xxviii. 12.)

Ver. 4. *Thy borders are in the midst of the seas.*] Taking the words in a strict sense, they are a description of New Tyre, which stood in an island. (Compare xxvi. 5.) The Tyrians are called the inhabiters of the island, Isa. xxiii. 2. But in the Hebrew phrase all places are called islands which lie upon the sea-coast. (See the note on Isa. xi. 11.)

Thy builders have perfected thy beauty.] The following verses shew, that the words are chiefly to be understood of the builders of their ships, wherein the chief strength and glory of the Tyrians was placed.

Ver. 5. *They have made all thy ship-boards of fir-trees from Shenir.*] The decks of thy ships were made of fir fetched from Mount Hermon, called anciently Shenir. (See Deut. iii. 9.)

Ver. 6. *The company of the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory.*] The Assyrians have made the seats for the rowers of ivory, in a very costly manner.

This is the sense of the verse, if we follow the common reading: but Bochart, not without reason, supposes, that the word *bath-ashurim* is pointed wrong, and should be read *bith-ashurim*, and then the sentence must be translated, *They have made thy seats of ivory enclosed in box*, the expression being parallel to that of Virgil, Æn. x.

—— "Quale per artem
Inclusum buxo aut Orycia terebintho
Lucet ebur."

This sense the Chaldee follows.

Brought out of the isles of Chittim.] The *isles of Chittim* are the countries lying upon the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. (See Jer. ii. 10.)

Ver. 7. *Fine linen with broidered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest out for thy sail.*] Fine linen was one of the principal commodities of Egypt: (see 1 Kings x. 28. Prov. vii. 16. Isa. xix. 9.) and was a habit used by persons of the best quality: (see Gen. xli. 42. Esther viii. 15.) which shews to what an excess of vanity the Tyrians were come, to use such costly manufactures for sails to their ships. Suetonius, in his life of Caligula, cap. 37. reckons this among several instances of that emperor's extravagance, that he furnished his pleasure-boats with *costly sails*, and other expensive ornaments.

Blue and purple from the isles of Elisha was that which covered thee.] Blue and purple are elsewhere reckoned among those colours which set off the richest attire. (See Exod. xxv. 4. Jer. x. 9.) The common clothing of the Tyrians was of these kinds, which were brought from the islands of the Egean Sea, particularly Coös, famed for purple among heathen authors. Elisha denotes the countries upon the coast of Greece; a part of Peloponnesus retains the name of Elis among the Greek writers.

Ver. 8. *The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners*, &c.] Thou madest use of the people of other cities and countries, to undergo the servile office of being mariners or rowers, whilst thy own citizens pretended to the skill of steering thy ships, and professed the art of being pilots. Zidon was a famous sea-port town, the mother of Tyre; (see the note on Isa. xxiii. 12.) and Arvad, the same with Arpad or Arphad, (2 Kings xvii. 33. Isa. x. 9. Jer. xlix. 23.) called Aradus by the Greek and Latin authors, was an island and town in the neighbourhood of Tyre.

Ver. 9. *The ancients of Gebal were thy calkers.*] Thou employedst the inhabitants of Gebal for calking thy ships, as being remarkably skilful in that trade: Gebal was a province of Phœnicia near Tyre. (See Psal. lxxxiii. 8. 1 Kings v. 18.) The LXX. interpreters suppose it the same with the city Byblos, with whom agree Eusebius and St. Jerome, de Locis Hebraicis. So the Septuagint render the word in the forementioned text, 1 Kings v. 18. Dr. Grabe, indeed, does there, by way of emendation, read Γίβλιοι in the text, and place Βίβλιοι, the reading of the Alexandrian MS. in the margin: but that learned person did not then remember, that that very word was translated in the same manner in this place of Ezekiel.

Ver. 10. *They of Persia, of Lud, and Phut.*] Thy citizens being all given to trading, thou madest use of foreign soldiers for thine army when thy city was besieged. Lud and Phut are two nations elsewhere mentioned together. (See xxx. 5. Jer. xlvi. 9.) Our interpreters understand by them in these two places, the people of Lybia and Lydia. But Phut and Lubim being mentioned as distinct people, Nahum iii. 9. Phut probably signifies some part of Africa near Egypt; and Lud, or Ludim, the Abyssines. These people, though Africans, are joined with the Persians, xxxviii. 5.

They hanged up the shield and helmet in thee.] In thy garrisons, which they kept in time of peace.

Ver. 11. *The men of Arvad* (see ver. 8.) *were with thine army upon the walls round about.*] They defended thy walls when they were assaulted by the king of Babylon's army. (See the note upon xxvi. 8, 9.)

The Gammadims were in thy towers.] It is very uncertain what people are here meant by this name. Our learned Mr. Fuller supposes them people of Phœnicia. (See his Miscellanies, lib. vi. cap. 3.) Ludolphus conjectures they were Africans, in his Comment. in Histor. Æthiop. lib. i. cap. 22. The Chaldee paraphrase takes them to be Cappadocians. The Vulgar Latin renders the word *Pygmies*; but if we should grant there were such a people, as Ludolphus takes a great deal of pains to prove there were, yet they would not be fit to make use of for soldiers.—*Gammadims:* Dr. Spencer thinks they were images of the tutelar gods, like the *lares* among the Romans; and were not above a cubit in length. (See his additions to the books de Legib. Hebraicis.)

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They have made thy beauty perfect.] See ver. 3.

Ver. 12. *Tarshish was thy merchant.*] Tarshish probably signifies a port of Spain, called by the Greek and Latin authors *Tartessus*, situate not far from the place where Cadiz now stands; famous of old for Hercules's pillars, being the utmost boundary of the ancient navigation. It comes from thence to signify any merchant-adventurers who traded in the Mediterranean Sea. (See the note upon Isa. ii. 16.) The commodities here mentioned, which these merchants traded in, being the product of Spain, confirms this exposition.

Ver. 13. *Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, were thy merchants.*] By *Javan* is to be understood Greece, in which sense Alexander is styled king of Javan or Greece, (Dan. viii. 21.) So the LXX. translate it here, and in that place of Daniel. And all Greece, except Peloponnesus, was anciently called Jonia. *Tubal* and *Meshech* are names usually joined together in Scripture. Bochart supposes them to be the same with those people afterward called Moschi and Tibareni, whose habitation was near the Euxine Sea.

They traded in the persons of men.] In buying and selling slaves in the markets. The Hebrew reads, *In the souls of men;* the word *nephesh, soul,* sometimes signifies a slave. (Compare Numb. xxx. 35. 1 Chron. v. 21. Rev. xviii. 13.) In which sense some understand the word, Gen. xii. 15.

And vessels of brass in thy markets.] Critics observe that the word *nehosheth,* commonly translated *brass,* does likewise signify steel; and so it is rendered by our interpreters, Psal. xviii. 34. a *bow of steel is broken by my arms.* And we may very well understand it so here; for the Chalybes, a people so called from their steel manufactures, lived near Pontus, in the neighbourhood of the Moschi and Tibareni; for which reasons steel is called the *northern iron,* Jer. xv. 12.

Ver. 14. *They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs.*] By *Togarmah,* Bochart understands Cappadocia: the LXX. read the word Θοργαμὰ, (Gen. x. 14.) which comes near in sound to *Trogma,* or *Trocma,* a part of Cappadocia.

Ver. 15. *The men of Dedan were thy merchants.*] The same learned person distinguisheth this Dedan from that mentioned ver. 20. This latter was of Abraham's posterity, whereas Dedan here spoken of was derived from that Dedan mentioned Gen. x. 7. the son of Raamah, or Rhegma. The posterity of this Dedan is probably placed near the Persian Gulf, where there was a city called afterward Rhegma; and so is fitly joined with many islands or countries lying upon the sea-coast, which are usually called *islands,* in the Hebrew phrase. (See the note on Isa. xi. 11.)

Many isles were the merchandise of thy hands, &c.] Those countries exported thy manufactures, *the wares of thy making,* as they are called in the following verse; and, by way of return for them, brought thee in ivory, and other rarities from India, whither they traded. They brought these *for a present,* says our translation, or rather by way of price or return for the commodities exported. The noun *eshear* commonly signifies a present or gift, but it is near in sound to the word *sacar,* that signifies a price or reward; and words of such near affinity are often used in a promiscuous sense. (See the note upon Jer. xxiii. 39. xx. 37. xxix. 7. and xxxvi. 15. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 16. *Syria was thy merchant,* &c.] The Syrians imported into thy haven precious stones, and all sorts of curious apparel, in lieu of which they carried abroad the wares of thy own making.

Ver. 17. *They traded in thy market wheat of Minith,* &c.] These were the commodities which the Jews imported to Tyre, chiefly the necessary provisions for food; the Tyrians having none of their own growth, the Jews supplied them therewith from their own, or the neighbouring countries. (See 1 Kings v. 9. 11. Ezra iii. 7. Acts xii. 20.)

Wheat of Minith.] This was a place belonging to the Ammonites, (see Judg. xi. 33.) noted for excellent wheat, great quantities of which the Jews brought to Tyre.

With Pannag.] A word never elsewhere to be found; supposed by some to be the name of a place; by others more probably taken for some rich ointment or gum.

And balm.] For which Gilead was famous. (See Jer. viii. 22.) There were balsam-trees about Jericho too, which Josephus describes, Antiq. lib. iv. cap. 6. and de Bello Jud. lib. v. cap. 4. though some doubt whether that balsam were the same with the balm of Gilead.

Ver. 18. *In the wine of Helbon.*] Helbon is supposed the same part of Syria which is called Chalybonitis by Ptolemy. The same place which is now called Aleppo.

And white wool.] The word *tsachar* is never met with but here, and Judg. v. 10. where our translation reads *white asses.* Bochart explains the word here to signify wool of a bright purple colour, from the Arabic use of it. So *purpureus* in Latin is used for a bright colour in Virgil, Æn. i. "Lumenque juventæ purpureum." The LXX. and Chaldee render it wool from Miletus, a place famous for that commodity. The wool was died purple at Tyre, as appears from Virgil, Georg. lib. iii.

——"Quamvis Milesia magno
Vellera mutentur, Tyrios incocta rubores."

Ver. 19. *Dan also and Javan, going to and fro,* &c.] By Dan St. Jerome understands the town which was afterward called Cæsarea Philippi, belonging to the tribe of Dan, which was near Tyre; whereas Javan, which likewise traded with Tyre, lay farther off. This is the sense of the words, if we follow the common translation; but Bochart thinks the words might be better translated, *Dan also and Javan coming from Uzal occupied in thy fairs;* to distinguish this Javan, which he supposes to be in the southern part of Arabia, from Greece, more commonly called by that name. (See ver. 13.) In conformity to this interpretation, the copies of the LXX. which we have now, read *from Asel;* though St. Jerome informs us, that the former part of the verse was wanting in the Septuagint, and supplied from Theodotion's translation.

Bright iron [*i. e.* steel] *and calamus were in thy market.*] Bochart confirms the foregoing interpretation from hence, that those of Javan are said to deal in aromatic gums, which are known not to grow in Greece, but in Arabia.

Ver. 20. *Dedan was thy merchant.*] This is probably to be understood of the posterity of that Dedan, who was Abraham's grandson. (See ver. 15. and xxv. 13.)

Ver. 21. *Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they occupied with thee.*] The Hebrew reads, *They were the merchants of thy hands; i. e.* they took off thy manufactures (see ver. 15.) in exchange for cattle, in which their substance did chiefly consist. (See Isa. lx. 7.) Kedar is a

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country in Arabia, often mentioned in Scripture, which received its name from Kedar, Ishmael's son, who settled there. (Gen. xxv. 13.)

Ver. 22. *The merchants of Sheba and Raamah.*] These were people of Arabia Felix, dwelling near the Persian Gulf. (See ver. 15. and xxiii. 42.) They traded in the rich products of their own country, which were spices, precious stones, and gold. (Compare 1 Kings x. 2. 11. Psal. lxxii. 15. Isa. lx. 6.) Bochart places Ophir, so famous for gold, in Arabia Felix. (See his Phaleg. lib. xi. cap. 27.)

Ver. 23. *Haran, and Canneh, and Eden.*] Haran is the place where Abraham dwelt when he came out from Ur of the Chaldees; (Gen. xi. 31.) called Charræ by the Romans, and noted for the defeat of Crassus. Canneh some suppose to be the same place that is called Calneh, Amos vi. 2. or Calno, Isa. x. 9. a city near Euphrates. Others take it for Ctesiphon, a noted city situate upon the river Tigris. Eden is joined with Haran, 2 Kings xix. 12. as it is here. Huetius supposes Paradise was called the garden of Eden, from the name of the country where it was placed, which was where the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates meet. (See his tract de situ Paradisi, cap. 2. n. 7.)

The merchants of Sheba.] There were two Shebas, as there were two Dedans; one descended from Raamah, (Gen. x. 7.) the other from Jockshan, Abraham's son, (Gen. xxv. 3.) As the twenty-second verse is explained of the former, so the latter may be understood here: they were both inhabitants of Arabia.

Chilmad.] Both the Chaldee and LXX. explain this by Carmania.

Ver. 24. *In chests of rich apparel.*] The word in the original translated *chests*, is *ginge*, which is elsewhere rendered *treasuries*. (See 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. Esther iii. 9.) From which word the Latin *gaza* is derived.

Bound with cords, and made of cedar.] Carefully packed up in chests of cedar, to give these clothes a fine scent, and preserve them from putrefaction.

Ver. 25. *The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market.*] Ships of Tarshish signify sometimes in Scripture any trading or merchant ships. (See the note on Isa. ii. 16.) And here I take it in this general sense: the prophet having already reckoned up the principal countries which traded with Tyre, now adds, in comprehensive terms, that all merchant-adventurers sung or spake great things of her riches, or as the word *sharoth* may be rendered, *They ruled or governed in thy markets.*

In the midst of the seas.] See ver. 4.

Ver. 26. *Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters.*] The prophet compares the condition of Tyre besieged by the enemy, to a ship overset by the winds, and just ready to sink under water. (See the like comparison, Isa. xxxiii. 23.) Great numbers are sometimes signified by *great waters*. (See Psal. xviii. 16. cxliv. 7. Jer. li. 42.)

The east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas.] As the violence of the east wind occasions many shipwrecks in the sea; (see Psal. xlviii. 7.) so the Chaldean army, compared elsewhere to an east wind, shall ruin thy strength and glory, and leave thee like a wreck cast upon the shore. (Compare xvii. 10. xix. 12.)

Ver. 27. *Shall fall into the midst of the seas.*] Shall be as utterly ruined and destroyed, as if they were sunk in a shipwreck: (see xxvi. 5. 14. 21.) or shall be killed in a sea-fight, while they defend the city. (See the following verse, and xxix. 8.)

Ver. 28. *The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.*] The cry of thy wounded seamen shall make the inhabitants of the suburbs shake for fear, (xxvi. 15.)

Ver. 29. *All that handle the oar—shall come down from their ships,* &c.] Seafaring men finding no encouragement to follow their employment, now thy traffic is destroyed, shall lay aside their trade, and mourn over thee. (Compare xxvi. 16.)

Ver. 30. *They shall cause their voice to be heard against thee.*] Or rather, *over thee*, as the LXX. and Vulgar Latin translate it: in which sense the preposition *nal* is taken where persons are said to mourn over the dead, or the calamitous. (See xxviii. 12. 1 Kings xiii. 30. Hos. x. 5.)

And shall cast dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes.] Expressions of the deepest mourning and lamentation. (See 1 Sam. iv. 12. Job ii. 12. Jer. vi. 26. Rev. xviii. 19.)

Ver. 31. *And they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee.*] Another expression of public sorrow. (See Jer. xlvii. 5. Micah i. 16.)

Ver. 32. *And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee,* &c.] The words allude to the public lamentations made at funerals. (See the notes upon Jer. ix. 17, 18. xxii. 18. and compare Rev. xviii. 18.)

Ver. 34. *When thou shalt be broken by the seas, in the depth of the waters.*] See ver. 26, 27. xxvi. 19. xxix. 8.

Ver. 35. *All the merchants of the isles shall be astonished at thee,* &c.] See xxvi. 15, 16.

Ver. 36. *Thy merchants among the people shall hiss at thee.*] By way of insulting and derision: (see 1 Kings ix. 8.) as men are apt to despise those in adversity, whom they courted and respected in prosperity. But the Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *They shall be astonished:* and this sense agrees better with the lamentations of the seafaring men mentioned in the foregoing verses.

Thou shalt be a terror, &c.] See xxvi. 21.

CHAP. XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter the prophet denounces God's judgments against the king of Tyre, for his pride and insolence: he likewise foretells the destruction of Zidon, and that the judgments threatened upon those and other heathen countries, Ammon, Moab, &c. shall in the end turn to the benefit of God's people.

Ver. 2. *SAY to the prince of Tyrus.*] Whose name was Ithobalus, according to the Phœnician annals, extracts out of which may be seen in Josephus, lib. i. contr. Appion, p. 1046.

I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas.] Some princes have been so extravagant as to affect Divine honours: this seems to have been the temper of this vain man. The words are an insolent boast of self-sufficiency, as if he had said, I fear none, nor stand in need of any: I am seated in a place of impregnable strength: the seas surround me, that no enemy can assault me. So they represent the excessive pride and carnal security of this prince, who trusted in his own strength, and forgot his de-

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pendance upon God. The same crime was in like manner punished in the king of Egypt, (xxix. 3.) and afterward in Nebuchadnezzar himself, (Dan. iv. 30, 31.) So Babylon is represented as ascribing self-sufficiency to herself, and saying in her heart, *I am, and there is none else besides me,* (Isa. xlvii. 10.)

In the midst of the sea.] See xxvii. 4.

Yet thou art a man, and not God.] A weak, mortal man: an unequal match for the king of Babylon's forces. (See ver. 9. and Isa. xxxi. 3.)

Ver. 3. *Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel.*] The fame of Daniel's wisdom was quickly spread over Chaldea, upon his being advanced to several posts of honour and dignity by Nebuchadnezzar. (See Dan. ii. 48.) Queen Nitocris, who was Belshazzar's mother, gives Daniel a great character for his wisdom and other accomplishments, (Dan. v. 11, 12.) So here the prophet, in an ironical manner, upbraids the vain boasts which the prince of Tyre made of his wisdom, and the policy of those about him, as if it exceeded the endowments of Daniel, so famous, though a young man, for his skill in the several parts of knowledge, and the arts of government. The Phœnicians, of whom the Tyrians were a colony, (see the note on Isa. xxiii. 12.) valued themselves for their wisdom and ingenuity, as being the inventors of navigation, of letters, and sciences. (Compare Zech. ix. 2.)

Ver. 4. *With thy wisdom and thy understanding thou hast gotten thee riches,* &c.] Thy skill in navigation and trade has increased thy wealth. (See ver. 5. and Zech. ix. 3.)

Ver. 7. *Behold, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations.*] The Babylonians, who by their conquests have made themselves terrible to all the countries round about them. (See xxx. 11, 12.)

They shall draw their swords against the perfection of thy beauty.] They shall deface and destroy every thing which thou valuest as ornamental, or useful. (Compare ver. 12.)

Ver. 8. *Thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.*] Thou and thy mariners shall be slain in a sea-fight, or shall be destroyed as those that are swallowed by the sea in a tempest. (See xxvi. 15. xxvii. 27, 28. 34.)

Ver. 9. *Wilt thou yet say to him that slayeth thee, I am as God?*] Mortality will certainly convince thee of thy folly in pretending to divinity. (Compare xxxii. 19.) So Plutarch tells us of Alexander, that he vainly affected to be thought Jupiter's son, and next in honour to Bacchus and Hercules: yet when he saw the blood run out of a wound he had received, which at the same time gave him much pain, he confessed that was not such blood as Homer said issued from the immortal gods, (lib. ii. de Alexandri Fortuna.)

Ver. 10. *Thou shalt die the death of the uncircumcised.*] Thou shalt die by such a remarkable judgment as God usually inflicts upon notorious offenders: thou shalt come to the same ill end as befals the other enemies of God and of his truth. (Compare xxxi. 18. xxxii. 19. 21. 23, 24, &c.) Circumcision being the rite which distinguished God's people from the heathen, *uncircumcised* is equivalent in sense to wicked or profane. So the Chaldee paraphrase renders it here, *Thou shalt die the death of the wicked,* and to the same purpose again, xxxi. 18. In the same sense we are to understand that expression, Lev. xxvi. 41. *If their uncircumcised heart be humbled;* and those of Jeremy, vi. 10. *Their ear is uncircumcised:* and, ix. 26. *The house of Israel is uncircumcised in their heart.*

Ver. 12. *Take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus.*] See xxvii. 32.

Thou sealest up the full sum of wisdom and perfect beauty.] In thine own opinion thou art the perfect pattern of wisdom, and all other excellences: (compare ver. 7.) the expression is taken from vessels and other repositories, which, when they are full, used to be sealed up in order to the preserving what is contained in them, (see Deut. xxxii. 4. Job xiv. 17.) The LXX. and Vulgar Latin render the former part of the verse, *Thou art the seal of likeness; i. e.* Thou art the image of God, or an exact impression taken from that great copy. The following verse shews that the expression alludes to Adam, when he was first created, and came pure out of the hands of his Maker. And then the following words in this verse are to be translated, *Full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty:* an exact description of the state of innocence. The word *tacnith* is translated *pattern,* xliii. 10. of this prophecy, and so it signifies, Exod. xxx. 32. to which sense the Targum there explains it: but our translation renders it *composition.*

Ver. 13. *Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God.*] As thy situation was pleasant, so thou wast plentifully supplied with every thing that could contribute to make thy life pleasant and happy. A state of paradise does in common speech denote a condition every way complete and happy. (See Isa. li. 3.) But this expression, as well as the whole context, alludes to the complete happiness which Adam enjoyed in Paradise before his apostacy and fearful fall.

Every precious stone was thy covering, &c.] Like a great prince or monarch, thy crown was adorned with the choicest jewels, and thou wast arrayed with royal robes, enriched with gold and precious stones of all sorts. The stone probably alludes to the precious stones which were placed in the high-priest's breast-plate, as the next verse alludes to the cherubims over the mercy-seat. Accordingly the LXX. enlarge the number of the stones here mentioned from nine to twelve, and place them in the same order in which they are ranked, Exod. xxviii. 17, &c.

The workmanship of thy tabrets, and of thy pipes, was prepared in thee [or, for thee] *in the day thou wast created.*] The highest expressions of joy, such as are the sounding of all sorts of musical instruments, ushered thee into the world, according to the usual practice at the birth of great princes; and ever since thou hast been brought up in the choicest delicacies, which a royal palace or a luxurious city could furnish. (See xxvi. 13. Isa. xiv. 11.)

Ver. 14. *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth.*] Anointing is the ceremony wherewith kings are inaugurated; so the prophet compares the prince of Tyre, to a ruling or principal cherub, one of the chief of the angelical order, who attend upon God in heaven, and are represented by the cherubims in the temple overshadowing the mercy-seat. To this sense St. Jerome translates it, *The extended cherub that covereth: i. e.* whose wings were stretched out to cover the mercy-seat: (see Exod. xxv. 20.) reading *memushak* instead of *mimshak.* The words allude to the high advancement of Satan in heaven before his fall, where he was placed in one of the highest orders of angels, such as

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were nearest in attending upon the Divine Majesty. So Isaiah's description of the fall of the king of Babylon does plainly allude to the downfal of Satan out of heaven. (Isa. xiv. 12, &c.)

Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God.] The temple is often styled God's holy mountain; (see xx. 43.) and the temple being the place of God's peculiar residence, is now and then put for heaven itself. (See Psal. xi. 4. xviii. 6. Jonah ii. 7.) So the phrase denotes, that this prince might be compared to the cherubims overshadowing the mercy-seat, or the angels who stood before the throne of God, typified by the cherubims in the temple: the expressions still alluding to the high station of Satan before his apostacy.

Thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.] Thy dominion was in the upper region of the sky, where hailstones and lightning are formed; or, as Tertullian paraphrases the expression, (lib. ii. contr. Marcion. cap. 10.) "Inter gemmantes siderum radios demoratus:" *Thou hadst thy abode among glittering stars;* as the angels are sometimes called. (See Job xxxviii. 7. Isa. xiv. 13.) [The words may allude to the sparkling stones of Aaron's breast-plate: so they agree with what goes before, ver. 13, 14. See Dr. More's Synopsis Prophet, book ii. chap. 16.]

Ver. 15. *Thou wast perfect in thy ways—till iniquity was found in thee.*] An exact description of the angelical purity in which the devil was created, and in which he continued, till, being lifted up with pride, he fell from his first estate.

Ver. 16. *By the multitude of thy merchandise, they have filled the midst of thee with violence,* &c.] Thy skill in trading hath degenerated into violence, cheating, and extortion; for which I will degrade thee from the honour of being nearly related to me, as my minister, and the executor of my commands, by which thou didst resemble the dignity of the angelic order. (See ver. 14.)

Ver. 17. *Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty.*] Compare ver. 9. 13. xxxi. 10. So the devil was *lifted up with pride* upon the account of his perfections. (See 1 Tim. iii. 6.)

Thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.] That height of glory and authority to which I had advanced thee has perverted thy judgment, and made thee abuse thy wisdom to craft and deceit. (See ver. 16.)

I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.] I will make thee a spectacle to other princes, expose thee as a miserable object before their eyes, that thou mayest be an example to them to deter them from the like practices. (See xvi. 41. xxiii. 48. xxxi. 14.)

Ver. 18. *Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities,* &c.] The word *mikdash* does sometimes signify a palace, in which sense it is probably taken Amos viii. 13. where our translation renders it *the king's chapel.* Thus Bishop Patrick understands it, Exod. xxv. 8. where the English reads, *Let them make me a sanctuary,* but it may probably mean a palace: for God commanded himself to be served and attended upon in the tabernacle, as a king is in his court. The cherubims were his throne, the ark his footstool, the altar his table, and therefore called by that name, xli. 22. Mal. i. 7. the priests his attendants, and the shew-bread and sacrifices his provisions. Thus the word may most probably be taken here to this sense: That since their palaces and stately buildings are filled with the iniquity and injustice which they have practised in their trade and commerce, therefore God will utterly destroy them by Nebuchadnezzar, who reduced the whole city to a heap of ashes and rubbish, which Alexander afterward made use of to make a bank or causey, by means of which he assaulted the new city of Tyre, and took it. (See Dr. Prideaux, par. i. p. 484.) If we follow the common translation, it imports a denunciation of God's judgments for filling their idolatrous temples with riches and presents gotten by injustice. So God often punishes the contempt of religion, in general, in those who are mistaken in their own way of worship.

Ver. 19. *Thou shalt be a terror,* &c.] See xxvi. 21.

Ver. 21. *Set thy face against Zidon,* &c.] Direct thy face and thy speech towards Zidon; (see vi. 2.) and foretell its destruction by the king of Babylon. (See xxxii. 30. Jer. xxv. 22. xlviii. 4.) Tyre and Zidon were neighbours, and partakers of the same fate both in prosperity and adversity. Zidon was afterward utterly destroyed by Ochus king of Persia.

Ver. 22. *I will be glorified in the midst of thee,* &c.] I will make my power and justice known by the judgments I will execute upon thee. In the same sense God saith, Exod. xiv. 17. *I will get me honour upon Pharaoh;* where the word in the original is the same.

And will be sanctified in her.] God is said to be sanctified in those, for whose preservation or destruction he exerts his power in a remarkable manner. (Compare ver. 25. and see xx. 41.)

Ver. 23. *And I will send unto her pestilence and blood into her streets.*] The pestilence, which often accompanies long sieges, shall destroy her inhabitants as well as the sword. (See v. 12. xxxviii. 22.)

Ver. 24. *And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel,* &c.] My people shall dwell in their land quietly and securely, when the rest of their ill neighbours are destroyed, who were a continual vexation to them, and as so many thorns in their sides. (Compare Numb. xxxiii. 55. Josh. xxiii. 13.) So *a thorn in the flesh,* 2 Cor. xii. 7. signifies a cruel enemy or persecutor, as appears by comparing that place with the context, ver. 9, 10. The following verse shews, that this promise chiefly relates to the general restoration of the Jews, when all the enemies of God's church and truth are vanquished and subdued, often denoted in the prophetical writings, by the names of Edom, Moab, and other neighbouring countries, who upon all occasions shewed their spite and ill will against the Jews. (See the note upon xxxviii. 17. and upon Isa. xi. 14. and compare Jer. xii. 14. with this place.)

Ver. 25. *When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from among the people among whom they were scattered,* &c.] This, if we follow the literal sense of the words, is a plain prophecy of the general restoration of the Jews, and their return into their own land, as will appear by comparing the words with the parallel texts in this prophet, *viz.* xi. 17. xx. 38. 41. xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 24. xxxvii. 12. 14. 21. 25. xxxix. 27. and the rules laid down concerning the division of the land among the twelve tribes, (chap. xlvii. xlviii.) do very much favour this interpretation; (compare Isa. lxv. 9, 10. Jer. xxx. 18. xxxii. 41.) in which prediction most of the other prophets agree with him. (See the note on Isa. xi. 11.)

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And shall be sanctified in them.] See ver. 22. and xxxvi. 23.

Ver. 26. *And they shall dwell safely therein.*] This denotes outward peace and freedom from the annoyance of enemies. (Compare xxxvi. 21. xxxviii. 11. Jer. xxiii. 6.)

And shall build houses, and plant vineyards.] Building and planting are commonly joined together. (Compare Isa. lxv. 21. Jer. xxxi. 4, 5. Amos ix. 14.)

When I shall have executed judgments upon all those that despised them.] See ver. 24. The prophets conclude their threatenings against infidels with gracious promises to God's people; implying, that he will not make an utter destruction of them as of other people, but reserve a remnant, to whom he may fulfil his promises made to their fathers. (Compare Jer. xlvi. 27, 28.)

CHAP. XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

In this and the three following chapters, is foretold the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, which came to pass in the thirty-sixth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, which was the twenty-seventh of Jehoiachin's captivity. (See ver. 17.) This was the same judgment upon Egypt, which was foretold by Jeremiah, xlvi. 13, &c.

Ver. 2. *SET thy face* [see vi. 2.] *against Pharaoh king of Egypt.*] Pharaoh being a common name to all the kings of Egypt, this prince was called Pharaoh-Hophra, by way of distinction, by Jeremiah, (xlvi. 30.) and Apries by Herodotus.

Ver. 3. *The great dragon that lies in the midst of his rivers.*] The word *tannim* signifies any great fish, such as a whale, as it is translated xxxii. 2. where it is applied to the same subject as here. (See the note on Isa. xxvii. 1.) Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, lib. v. cap. 16. 18. not improbably understands it here of a crocodile (see the following note), a fish in a manner peculiar to the river Nile, to which he likens the king of Egypt, because he valued himself so much upon his dominion over that river. The same learned author observes, that the word *Pharaoh* signifies a *crocodile* in the Arabic tongue. The kings of Egypt are elsewhere compared to whales, or some such great fishes, sporting themselves in the waters, and exercising a sort of dominion over the lesser fry. (See Psal. lxxiv. 13, 14. Isa. li. 9.)

Which hath said, My river is my own, and I have made it for myself.] The prophet having described this prince as bearing rule over the waters, in pursuance of the same metaphor, speaks of his kingdom as if it were a great river, and he priding himself in having established his government so firmly over it, *that it was not in the power of God himself to dispossess him of it,* as Herodotus tells us (lib. ii. cap. 169.) he profanely boasted, affecting to be a god, as the prince of Tyre did, (xxviii. 2.)

Ver. 4. *But I will put hooks in thy claws.*] In pursuance of the same metaphor, God tells him that he will put a stop to all his vain-glorious designs and boastings: having the same absolute power over him as a fisherman hath over a fish, when he has fastened his hook in his jaws. (Compare 2 Kings xix. 28.)

I will cause the fish of thy river to stick to thy scales, and I will bring thee out of the midst of thy rivers, &c.] Thou shalt send a great number of thy subjects upon an expedition into Lybia against the Cyrenians, where his army having ill success, the Egyptians, entertaining an opinion that the army was sent upon this expedition on purpose to be destroyed, thereupon mutinied against him, and set up Amasis to be their king.

I will bring thee out of the midst of thy rivers.] By this is metaphorically expressed his undertaking a foreign expedition: the expression alludes to the nature of a crocodile, who is not confined to the water, but useth to come upon the land, where he is frequently taken.

Ver. 5. *And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers.*] Thy army shall be discomfited, and fall in the deserts of Lybia and Cyrene: Apries himself did not perish there; but the king and people being like the head and body, whatever calamity befals either part, is common to both. So the king of Assyria is said to be involved in that destruction which consumed his army, Isa. xxx. 33. Apries himself was afterward strangled in his palace at Sais, by Amasis, that overcame him.

They shall not be brought together, nor gathered.] Their bones or carcasses shall not be brought together in order for burial. (See Jer. viii. 2. xxv. 33.)

I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field, &c.] See xxxix. 17.

Ver. 6. *Because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel.*] The expression alludes to the canes or reeds that grow on the bank of the river Nile; on which if a man leaned, they brake, and the splinters ran into his hand. (Compare 2 Kings xviii. 21.) The prophets often upbraid the Jews with their vain confidence in Egypt, which would certainly disappoint them. (See Isa. xx. 5, 6. xxx. 3. 5, &c. xxxi. 3. Jer. ii. 36.)

Ver. 7. *When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break and rend all their shoulder.*] Or, *their arm.* The king, who was Zedekiah's confederate, came with a great army to raise the siege of Jerusalem; but durst not engage a battle with the Chaldeans, but in a little time retired again into his own country, treacherously leaving Zedekiah, whom they had engaged to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar; whereby they became the occasion of his own and his people's ruin. (See xvii. 15. Jer. xxxvii. 5. 7.)

And madest all their loins to be at a stand.] Or, *to shake,* as men do when they are tottering and ready to fall. The Hebrew verb *hanamadhta* signifies properly to stand, but it is probably here taken in the same sense with the verb *hamanadhta:* words of a near sound being often taken one for the other. (See the note on xxvii. 15.)

Ver. 8. *Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast from thee.*] See xiv. 17. This is to be understood of Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Egypt, who, taking advantage of Amasis's revolt against Apries, overran that country, and made a prey of the whole kingdom. (See ver. 19, and xxxii. 13.)

Ver. 9. *Because he hath said, The river is mine,* &c.] Hophra himself shall be slain, and his country destroyed, for his impiety and insolence. (See ver. 3.)

Ver. 10. *Behold, I am against thee and thy rivers.*] Since thou hast opposed me I will set myself against thee, and bring down the strength and glory of thy kingdom, wherein thou magnifiest thyself so much. (See the note on ver. 3.)

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From the tower of Syene unto the border of Ethiopia.] If we follow this translation, we must understand the word *Cush*, rendered here *Ethiopia*, of *Arabia*, as it is often taken: (see the note on Jer. xiii. 23.) for Syene was the border of Egypt towards Ethiopia: (see Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. v. cap. 9.) which lay westward of Egypt, as Arabia did eastward. But the words may be translated thus, *From Migdol to Syene, even to the borders of Ethiopia.* (Compare xxx. 5. 9.) Migdol was a town near the Red Sea, mentioned Exod. xiv. 2. Jer. xliv. 1. xlvi. 14. so it lay at the entrance of Egypt from Palestine; whereas Syene was at the other end of the country upon the borders of Ethiopia. The parallel text, xxx. 6. confirms this interpretation, where our translation reads, *From the tower of Syene, they shall fall in it by the sword;* but the sense would be much more perfect if we translate it, *From Migdol to Syene*, &c.

Ver. 11. *No foot of man shall pass through it—neither shall it be inhabited forty years.*] The intestine wars between Apries and Amasis, and the conquest of the whole country by Nebuchadnezzar, will make Egypt a desolation the greatest part of forty years, nor shall it recover its former settlement till those are ended. (See xxx. 10. xxxii. 13. compare xxxv. 7.)

Ver. 12. *And I will make the land of Egypt desolate.*] Many of the Jews which fled into Egypt upon the murder of Gedaliah, were involved in the common destruction of the country and its inhabitants. (See Jer. xliv. 27, 28.)

Among the countries which are desolate.] Egypt shall have its share of calamities with its neighbours, who shall be a prey to Nebuchadnezzar, according to the prophecies of Jeremiah, chap. xxv. xliv. xlvi. &c. and of Ezekiel, chap. xxv. &c.

I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations.] Some of them shall flee for refuge into foreign countries, and some shall be carried away captive by the Babylonians. (Compare Jer. xlvi. 19.) This captivity of the Egyptians, though not taken notice of by Herodotus, is mentioned by Berosus in one of the fragments of his history, quoted by Josephus, Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11. and published with notes by Scaliger, at the end of his books de Emendatione Temporum, whose remark upon the place is very observable; *viz.* "The calamities that befel the Egyptians, are passed over by Herodotus, because the Egyptian priests would not inform him of any thing that tended to the disgrace of their nation."

Ver. 14. *And I will cause them to return into the land of Pathros.*] That part of Egypt which is called Thebais, as Bochart proves by several arguments. (See his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 27.)

And they shall be there a base kingdom.] *i. e.* A tributary kingdom. (See xvii. 14.)

Ver. 15. *It shall be the basest of kingdoms*, &c.] Notwithstanding Amasis's shaking off the Persian yoke, Egypt was not able to keep up its former grandeur, but was entirely conquered by Cambyses, Cyrus's son, who made it a province to the Persian empire; and upon its revolting from under that government, it was finally subdued by Ochus the Persian emperor, and has been governed by strangers ever since. "For on the failure of the Persian empire, it became subject to the Macedonians, after them to the Romans, after the Romans to the Saracens, then to the Mamelukes, and is now a province of the Turkish empire:" as Dr. Prideaux observes, in his Connex. of Script. Hist. par. i. p. 79.

Ver. 16. *And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance*, &c.] At the same time that the Jews put confidence in Egypt, they distrusted the promises and assistance of God, and forsook him, to comply with the idolatries of their allies; thereby to recommend themselves to their protection. (See ver. 7. Isa. lvii. 8, 9. Jer. ii. 18. 36. Hos. xii. 1.)

Ver. 17. *In the seven-and-twentieth year, in the first month.*] The following prophecy is related here, not with respect to the order of time (for there is near seventeen years' distance between the date of the foregoing prophecy and this), but because both prophecies relate to the same subject, *viz.* the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, which fell out this year: the city Tyre having been taken by him the year before, after thirteen years' siege. Concerning which event, Dr. Prideaux hath observed, that the chronology of the Phœnician Annals (the extracts of which may be seen in Josephus, lib. i. contr. Appion.) exactly agrees with the time the prophet Ezekiel assigns for the taking of Tyre. (See his Connex. of Script. Hist. par. i. p. 92, 93.)

Ver. 18. *Nebuchadnezzar caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus*, &c.] The siege lasted thirteen years, as hath been already observed; till the heads of their soldiers became bald with continual wearing their helmets, and the skin was worn off their shoulders with carrying earth to raise mounts and fortifications against it. (See xxvi. 8.)

Yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus.] Before the town came to be closely besieged, the inhabitants had removed their effects into an island about half a mile distant from the shore, and there built another city, called New Tyre, which was afterward besieged and taken by Alexander the Great: (see the Argument to chap. xxvi.) so that there was nobody left there when Nebuchadnezzar's army took the city.

Ver. 19. *He shall take her multitude, and take her spoil.*] He and his army shall have the advantage of the captives and spoil of Egypt, which they shall utterly pillage and lay waste. (See ver. 10. 12. and xxx. 12.)

Ver. 20. *Because they wrought for me, saith the Lord.*] The destruction of cities and countries is a work of God's providence, for the effecting of which he makes use of kings and princes as his instruments. Upon this account he calls Nebuchadnezzar his servant, (Jer. xxv. 9.) *because he wrought for him*, as it is here expressed; *i. e.* executed his judgments upon Tyre, and the other cities and countries which God delivered into his hand.

Ver. 21. *In that day.*] This phrase frequently denotes in the prophets not the same time which was last mentioned, but an extraordinary season, remarkable for some signal events of Providence. (See the note on Isa. iv. 2.) In this sense it is to be understood here.

I will cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth.] The word *horn* signifies *strength*, from whence it comes to denote prosperity, or a flourishing condition: (see 1 Sam. ii. 1. Job xvi. 15.) from whence it is applied to express kingly power and majesty. (See Psal. lxxxix. 24. xcii. 10. cxxxii. 17.) So here it signifies, that after the destruc-

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tion of God's and his church's enemies, denoted by Tyre, Egypt, and other oppressors of the Jews, (see the note on xxxviii. 17.) the kingdom and state of the Jews should again flourish under the Messias, as it is more clearly foretold, chap. xxxiv. xxxvii. (Compare likewise xxxiii. 25, 26.)

And I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them.] When thy prophecies are made good by the event, this shall add a new authority to what thou speakest. (See xxiv. 27.)

CHAP. XXX.

See the Argument of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 2. *HOWL ye, Woe worth the day!*] The prophet directs his speech to the Egyptians. (Compare Isa. xiii. 6.)

Ver. 3. *The day is near, even the day of the Lord,* &c.] The time of God's vengeance. (See vii. 7. 12.)

The cloudy day.] When the calamities that are coming upon Egypt shall make every thing look dark and dismal. (See ver. 18. xxxii. 7, 8. xxxiv. 12. Joel ii. 2. Amos v. 18.)

It shall be the time of the heathen.] Of the punishment of the Egyptians and their allies: (see ver. 4, 5. vii. 7. 12.) God's judgments upon particular places and nations, are an earnest of that general judgment, when he shall execute judgment upon all the ungodly. (See the note upon Isa. xiii. 10.)

Ver. 4. *Great pain shall be in Ethiopia.*] See ver. 5. 9.

And her foundations shall be broken down.] Her strong forts and citadels. (Compare Isa. xvi. 7. Jer. l. 15.)

Ver. 5. *Ethiopia, and Lybia, and Lydia.*] The names in the Hebrew are *Cush, Phut,* and *Lud:* who are mentioned together as the Egyptian allies, Jer. xlvi. 9. (See the note there, and compare Nahum iii. 9.) *Cush* probably signifies Ethiopia here, (see xxix. 10.) as being joined with *Phut* and *Lud;* which were people of Africa. *Phut* is rendered *Lybia* by our interpreters here, and in that place of Jeremy; but *Phut* and *Lubim* were a distinct people, as hath been observed upon xxvii. 10. *Phut* may denote some part of Africa near Egypt, and *Lud* probably signifies some part of the Abyssines' country.

And all the mingled people.] All their auxiliaries. (Compare Jer. l. 37.) If we distinguish these from the *men of the league* which follow, they may mean that mixture of Carians, Ionians, and other nations lying upon the Mediterranean Sea, which Apries got together to encounter Amasis, who, together with him, were destroyed. (See Dr. Prideaux, *ubi supra;* and the note on Jer. xxv. 20.)

And Chub.] The *Cubii* are mentioned in Ptolemy as a people of Mareotis, a province of Egypt.

The men of the land that is in league.] The LXX. translate it, *The men of my league,* or covenant; *i. e.* the Jews: many of whom flying into Egypt, were destroyed there with the Egyptians. (See the note on xxix. 12.)

Ver. 6. *They also that uphold Egypt shall fall.*] The governors of the several provinces, those who are called *the stay of the tribes thereof,* Isa. xix. 13. *i. e.* of the several *nomi,* or divisions of Egypt.

From the tower of Syene they shall fall in it.] The sense would be more complete, if the words were translated, *From Migdol to Syene.* (See the note on xxix. 12.)

Ver. 7. *And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate,* &c.] See xxix. 10.

Ver. 8. *When I have set a fire in Egypt.*] God's judgments are often compared to fire. (See xix. 14. xxii. 21. 31. Psal. lxxviii. 63. Jer. vii. 20. Amos i. 4, &c.)

And when all her helpers shall be destroyed.] All her allies and auxiliaries. (Compare xxxi. 7. xxxii. 21.)

Ver. 9. *In that day shall messengers go from me in ships, to make the careless Ethiopians afraid.*] The Ethiopians were the confederates of the Egyptians in former times, and sharers with them in their good or ill fortune. (See Isa. xviii. 1, 2. xx. 3, 4. and the notes upon those places.) The verse may be likewise thus rendered; *In that day shall messengers go from me to the people in the wilderness, to make the careless Ethiopians afraid.* The word *tziim* is translated *the people in the wilderness,* Isa. xxiii. 13. and that appellation is particularly given to the Ethiopians, Psal. lxxii. 9. lxxiv. 14. as the LXX. translate the word.

And great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt.] The Egyptians and Ethiopians being confederates, the ill news of the conquest of Egypt, shall sensibly affect them. (Compare xxiv. 16. xxxiii. 9, 10. xxvii. 35. Isa. xix. 17. xxiii. 5.)

Ver. 11. *The terrible of the nations.*] See xxviii. 7.

Ver. 12. *And I will make the rivers dry.*] I will destroy the strength of Egypt; the metaphor is taken from the decrease or failing of the Nile, upon whose overflowing all the plenty and prosperity of Egypt depended. (Compare xix. 3. Isa. xix. 5, 6.)

And sell the land into the hand of the wicked; and I will make the land waste by the hand of strangers.] See vii. 24. To *sell,* signifies here to deliver up, as men do goods that they sell. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 30. Judg. ii. 14. iv. 9.)

Ver. 13. *I will also destroy the idols.*] Idolatry being one of the principal sins for which God visits the infidel nations, he will take particular vengeance upon the idols, thereby shewing how much he is superior to them in power. (Compare Exod. xii. 12. Isa. xix. 1. Jer. xliii. 12. xlvi. 25.)

And I will cause their images to cease out of Noph.] Noph, or Memphis, was one of the principal cities of Egypt, a seat of their kings, where their sepulchres stood; one of which is still remaining: upon which account it is often mentioned in Scripture. (See Isa. xix. 3. Jer. ii. 16. xliv. 1. xlvi. 14.) In Hosea it is called *Moph,* xi. 6. which comes near in sound to *Memphis.* This place was famous for the worship of Apis and Osiris; whereupon the prophet, in a particular manner, denounces destruction to the idolatry of that place.

And there shall be no more a prince in the land of Egypt.] It shall no more have a natural prince of the Egyptian race to rule over it, as formerly, but shall be subject to foreigners. (See the note on xxix. 15.)

And I will put a fear in Egypt.] Will make them faint-hearted, and not able to defend themselves. (Compare Isa. xix. 16. Jer. xlvii. 5.)

Ver. 14. *And I will make Pathros desolate.*] See xxix. 14.

And I will set fire in Zoan.] Zoan, or Tanis, was one of the ancient cities in Egypt, (see Numb. xiii. 20.) and the metropolis of the kingdom in Moses's time. (See Psal. lxxviii. 12. 43.)

And I will execute judgment in No.] Called the *multitude of No,* or *Hamon No,* in the next verse; and probably the

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same with the city Thebes, famous for its hundred gates. (See the note on Jer. xlvi. 25.)

Ver. 15. *And I will pour my fury upon sin, the strength of Egypt.*] It is generally agreed, that Sin is the same with Pelusium, one of the seven mouths of the Nile, which was commonly called the key of Egypt, as Suidas observes; and therefore was strongly fortified, that no enemy might gain admittance.

And I will cut off the multitude of No.] Or *Hamon No*, as the original reads. The name is generally supposed to be derived from Hamon, who was the Egyptian Jupiter. Mizraim, the son of Ham, was the founder of Egypt, which is called the *land of Ham*, Psal. cvi. 22. And this Hamon was probably either Ham himself, or one of his posterity advanced to Divine honours. Plutarch informs us, in his book de Iside et Osiride, that Ammon, in the Egyptian language, is equivalent to Ζεὺς in Greek, (p. 354. edit. Francof.)

Ver. 16. *And I will set fire in Egypt.*] See ver. 8.

Ver. 17. *The young men of Aven and of Phi-beseth shall fall by the sword.*] Aven is the same with On, mentioned Gen. xli. 45. in aftertimes called Heliopolis, as our margin explains it here, because of a temple or image there dedicated to the sun. (Compare Isa. xix. 18. Jer. xliii. 13.) The word is so translated by the Seventy interpreters, both here and Gen. xli. 45. who were very well acquainted with Egypt, and the principal places of it. Phi-beseth was afterward, with very little variation, called Bubastum, and so translated here by the LXX.

Ver. 18. *At Tehaphnehes the day shall be darkened.*] Compare ver. 3. Tehaphnehes, elsewhere writ Tahapanes, is supposed to be the same place which was afterward called Daphnæ Pelusiacæ. (See the note on Jer. xliii. 7.)

When I shall break there the yokes of Egypt.] When I shall set those at liberty that are oppressed by the bondage of Egypt. (Compare xxxiv. 27.)

A cloud shall cover her.] See ver. 3.

Ver. 21. *I have broken the arm of Pharaoh*, &c.] I have broken his strength, so that he will never be able to recover his former power. (Compare Jer. xlviii. 25.) It is usual for the prophets to speak of a thing future, as if it were already accomplished. (See the note on Isa. xxi. 9.)

Ver. 22. *And I will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken.*] The king of Babylon had before dispossessed the king of Egypt of all his new conquests, from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates: (2 Kings xxiv. 7.) so that this part of his strength was already taken away, and never to be recovered; and now God threatens to destroy the remainder of his power, the kingdom of Egypt itself.

And I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand.] He shall have no more strength to defend himself, than a man hath to use his sword when his arm is broken.

Ver. 23. *And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations*, &c.] See xxix. 13.

Ver. 24. *And I will strengthen the arm of the king of Babylon.*] The same promise God afterward made to Cyrus, Isa. xlv. 1. (Compare Psal. xviii. 39.)

And he shall groan with the groans of a deadly wounded man.] His strength shall perfectly fail, as a man's who is dying of his wounds.

CHAP. XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

A continuation of the judgments denounced against Pharaoh and his kingdom; whose pride God humbles by putting him in mind of the dreadful fall of the king of Nineveh, much superior to him in power and greatness, whose ruin the prophet elegantly describes under the metaphor of a fair flourishing tree cut down and withered.

Ver. 2. *WHOM art thou like unto in greatness?*] Thou pridest thyself as if there never was any prince or king that could compare with thee.

Ver. 3. *Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon*, &c.] By the Assyrian, Archbishop Usher, ad A. M. 3378. and Dr. Prideaux, par. i. p. 47. do most probably understand that king of Assyria, whom some call Chyniladanus, others Saracus. It is of this king of Assyria, the words of the prophet Nahum are to be understood, iii. 18. In like manner Zephaniah joins the destruction of Assyria, and the desolation of Nineveh together, ii. 13. Nabupolassar, the king of Babylon, and Cyaxares, the king of Media, called by the names of Nebuchadonosor and Assuerus in Tobit, xiv. 15. joining their forces together against him, besieged Nineveh, took it, and after having slain the king, utterly destroyed that great and famous city; and put an end to that part of the Assyrian empire. Nabupolassar having before possessed himself of the other part, which was properly called the Babylonian empire. (See Dr. Prideaux, p. 45.) In this remarkable catastrophe, the prophecies of Jonah, Nahum, and Zephaniah, foretelling the destruction of Nineveh, were fulfilled.

The king of Nineveh is compared here to a fair and tall cedar, such as grow in Mount Lebanon. (See the like comparison, Isa. x. 34. xxxvii. 24. Zech. xi. 2.) The greatness of Nebuchadnezzar's power and kingdom, is set forth under the same resemblance, Dan. iv. 10, &c.

His top was among the thick boughs.] He overtopped all the other flourishing trees. (Compare xvii. 3. xix. 11.)

Ver. 4. *The waters made him great*, &c.] As trees flourish by a river side, (compare xvii. 5.) so the traffic of the several branches of the river Tigris, upon which Nineveh was situate, made that city and kingdom rich and populous, and she imparted her wealth and stores among the neighbouring provinces. (Compare Nahum ii. 6.)

Ver. 5. *Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field.*] He became greater than all the kings about him. (Compare Dan. iv. 11.)

Ver. 6. *All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs*, &c.] Several nations applied to him for protection, and thought themselves and all their concerns safe under his government. (Compare xvii. 23. Dan. iv. 12.)

Ver. 8. *The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him.*] He overtopped the goodly cedars, called in the Hebrew, *the cedars of God:* (Psal. lxxx. 10.) such fair ones as might be supposed to have grown in Paradise. (Compare xxviii. 13.)

Ver. 9. *So that all the trees of Eden—envied him.*] *All the kings of the east envied him and his greatness;* as the Chaldee paraphrast expresseth the sense.

Ver. 10. *Because thou hast lifted up thyself in height,*

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&c.] Because thy pride hath still increased with thy prosperity. (Compare xxviii. 17.)

Ver. 11. *I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen.*] Or, *the mighty one of the nations,* as the word *gojim* is rendered in the next verse. The word *El,* though commonly spoken of God, yet is sometimes applied to heroes; (see xxxii. 21.) sometimes to angels, as being mighty in strength, as Psal. lxxxix. 6. So God here saith, he delivered the Assyrians into the hand of Nabupolassar king of Babylon, who joining his forces with Cyaxares king of Media, his confederate, made themselves masters of Nineveh, and the king of Assyria, whose seat it was.

Ver. 12. *And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him,* &c.] Compare xxviii. 7. xxx. 11. The armies of the kings of Babylon and Media shall utterly destroy him and his empire, and leave him without life or strength, like a tree that is cut down, dried up, and withered.

Upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, &c.] As the limbs of such a tree are broke by the fall, and those that rested under its shadow are frighted away, and have forsook the place: so the Assyrian army lies slain here and there: (compare xxxii. 5. xxxv. 8.) and those that lived under his protection and government withdrew their obedience from him. (Compare Dan. iv. 14.)

Ver. 13. *Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain,* &c.] As the birds sit upon the boughs of a tree cut down, and the beasts browse upon its branches; so his dominions shall be a prey to the conquerors: or his armies that are slain, shall become meat to the birds and beasts. (Compare xxix. 5. Isa. xviii. 6.)

Ver. 14. *To the end that none of the trees by the waters exalt themselves,* &c.] Thy destruction shall be a warning to other kings and potentates, to deter them from priding themselves in the time of their prosperity. (See xxviii. 17.)

For they are all delivered unto death.] Whatever distinction there is between them and the inferior sort, death shall make them all equal; (see Psal. lxxxii. 7.) and particularly to Egypt, and those other countries against which God hath denounced his judgments, the same fate is allotted which this Assyrian monarch has already undergone. (See xxxii. 18, &c.)

Ver. 15. *In the day when he went down to the grave.*] This and the following verse are an elegant description of that consternation that seized the king of Assyria's allies at the suddenness of his downfal: the same metaphor being still pursued.

I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him.] The sense might better be expressed thus: *I covered the deep with mourning:* for when two verbs are joined together in the Hebrew, one is usually taken in the sense of a noun, or an adverb. The deep that nursed up this fair tree, (ver. 4.) is described as mourning at its downfal.

I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed.] As if the streams had stopped their usual course, on purpose to lament his fate.

I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, &c.] The forest of Lebanon, and all the stately trees in it, sympathized with his misfortunes; *i. e.* all his confederates and allies.

Ver. 16. *I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall.*] See xxvi. 15.

When I cast him down to hell [or the grave] *with them that descend into the pit.*] See xxxii. 18. 21. Isa. xiv. 15.

All the trees of Eden, the choice of Lebanon, all that drink water, [see ver. 14.] *shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth.*] The deceased princes, confederates to the Assyrians, described here as so many stately trees and cedars, shall feel some mitigation of their calamities, when they see thee brought down as low as themselves. (Com- xxxii. 31. Isa. xiv. 8—10. a place exactly parallel to this.)

Ver. 17. *They also went down to hell* [or the grave] *with him.*] His allies underwent the same fate with himself, and were cut off in the common destruction. (See xxxii. 20, &c.)

Even they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen.] Or, *the nations;* (see ver. 11.) his auxiliaries: (see xxx. 8. xxxii. 21.) who lived under his protection in several countries and provinces. (Compare Lam. iv. 20.)

Ver. 18. *To whom art thou thus like in glory and greatness among the trees of Eden?*] The prophet now applies himself to the king of Egypt; *q. d.* Wilt thou still boast thyself, as if no prince were thine equal? (see ver. 2.) yet thou shalt undergo the same fate with this fair flourishing cedar, the king of Assyria. (See ver. 14. and compare xxxii. 19.)

Thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, &c.] See xxviii. 10. xxxii. 19, 20.

This is Pharaoh, and all his multitude, saith the Lord God.] The judgment that befel the king of Assyria here described, is an exact representation of the destruction that remains for Pharaoh and his people: the word *is* commonly denotes the same as to signify or represent, especially in prophecies, parables, and such-like figurative descriptions. (See xxxiv. 31. xxxvii. 11. Gen. xli. 26. Exod. xii. 11. Matt. xiii. 19. xxvi. 26.)

CHAP. XXXII.

ARGUMENT.

A continuation of the same subject, and a farther description of the lamentable destruction of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar: the prophet illustrating the dreadfulness of his fall by a poetical description of the infernal mansions appointed for tyrants and oppressors, where Pharaoh is to have a place allotted for him.

Ver. 2. *TAKE up a lamentation for Pharaoh.*] See the note on xxii. 2.

Thou art like a young lion of the nations.] Thou art like a beast of prey, devouring far and near. (See xix. 3. 6. xxxviii. 13.)

Thou art as a whale in the seas.] By the word *tannim* we may fitly understand a crocodile, as hath been observed upon xxix. 3. and the description that follows of this creature agrees very well to a crocodile, but cannot be applied to a whale.

And thou camest forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, &c.] Or, *thou rushedst forth through thy streams, and troubledst,* &c. *i. e.* thou wast the occasion of great commotions and disturbances to all thy neighbours. (Compare xxxiv. 18.)

Ver. 3. *I will therefore spread my net over thee,* &c.] I will bring thine enemies upon thee, who shall encompass

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thee, and master thee, as a wild beast or monstrous fish that is taken in a net. (See xii. 14.)

Ver. 4. *Then I will leave thee upon the land, and cast thee forth upon the open field,* &c.] Thine armies shall fall in the open field, and become a prey to wild beasts and ravenous birds. (Compare xxix. 5.)

Ver. 5. *I will lay thy flesh upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy height.*] The vast bulk of thine armies when they are slain, shall fill both mountains and valleys. (See xxxi. 12.)

Ver. 6. *I will also water with thy blood the land wherein thou swimmest.*] The land shall be soaked with thy blood wherein thou bearest rule, just as in the waters the great fish have an absolute power over the lesser fry.

Even to the mountains.] The mountains shall be wet with it, as well as the lower grounds, ver. 5. (Compare Isa. xxxiv. 3.)

Ver. 7, 8. *I will cover the heavens, and make the stars thereof dark,* &c.] These metaphors denote the downfal of states and governments; kings and rulers being figuratively expressed by the sun, moon, and stars. (Compare Isa. xiii. 10. xxxiv. 4. Joel ii. 31. Rev. vi. 12—14.) God's judgments upon particular countries being earnests of a general judgment, they are described in such terms as if the whole frame of nature were dissolved.

And set darkness upon thy land.] Every thing shall look dark and dismal. (See xxx. 3.)

Ver. 9. *And I will vex the hearts of many people, when I shall bring thy destruction among the nations,* &c.] When thy exiles shall be dispersed into foreign countries, (see xxix. 12.) and relate the miserable circumstances of thy destruction, it shall cause grief and consternation in all that hear it. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 10. *Yea, I will make many people amazed at thee,* &c.] See xxvi. 16. xxvii. 35. xxx. 9.

Ver. 12. *The terrible of the nations.*] See xxviii. 7.

Ver. 13. *I will also destroy all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters.*] Or, *that they be no more beside the great waters,* as Noldius translates the phrase, p. 635. The horses shall be consumed in the war, and the other cattle that used to feed in the meadows by the side of the Nile, (see Gen. xli. 2.) shall be destroyed or drove away as a prey. (See xxix. 8. 11.) [*Neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more—then I will make their waters deep,* &c.] Or, *I will make their waters clear,* for so the Hebrew word is taken xxxiv. 18. Following this translation, the words may be interpreted to this sense: There being an entire destruction both of man and beast in Egypt, (see xxix. 11.) and none passing through it, it shall be like the waters of a river which are never disturbed, but run pure and clear like oil.]

Ibid. and Ver. 14. *Neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts,* &c.] Here is a transition from a proper sense to a metaphorical one: the prophet in the second verse compared the disturbances the Egyptians gave their neighbours to troubling and fouling of waters; in allusion to which metaphor he saith here, that when Egypt is made desolate, and the number, both of men and beasts, diminished by their wars and confusions, then their neighbours will enjoy such quietness, as a river does that smoothly glides along, and never hath its streams fouled or disturbed.

Ver. 16. *This is the lamentation wherewith they shall lament her.*] This is the substance of a lamentation which may be properly used to bewail the calamities of Egypt. (See ver. 2.)

The daughters of the nations shall lament her.] *i. e.* The people of the neighbouring countries: so the *daughters of Zion* and of *Babylon* signify the inhabitants of those cities. The expression alludes to the mourning women, whose profession it was to lament at funerals. (See the note on Jer. ix. 17.)

Ver. 17. *In the fifteenth day of the month.*] Of the twelfth month. (See ver. 1.) The LXX. understand it of the first month, as that indefinite expression is probably understood, xxvi. 1.

Ver. 18. *Wail for the multitude of Egypt.*] See ver. 2. 16.

And cast them down, even her, and the daughters of the famous nations.] The prophets are said to do things, when they declare God's purpose of doing them; see xliii. 3. where Ezekiel saith, *he was sent to destroy the city; i. e.* to foretell its destruction. In the same sense we are to understand the expression here of casting down Egypt; *i. e.* foretelling its ruin, together with God's judgments upon other famous kingdoms in that part of the world, which are reckoned up in the following verses, and called here the *daughters of the nations;* concerning which expression see the note on ver. 16.

Unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down to the pit.] The expressions denote utter destruction, and are parallel to those elsewhere used of being brought down to hell, to the grave, or into silence. (Compare xxxi. 14. Isa. xiv. 15.)

Ver. 19. *Whom dost thou pass in beauty? Go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised.*] What reason hast thou now to prefer thyself before others? since thou shalt undergo the same fate with the worst of them? (See the note on xxviii. 10.)

Ver. 20. *They are fallen in the midst of them that are slain by the sword.*] They do not *die the common death of all men,* as Moses speaks, Numb. xvi. 29. but are cut off by an extraordinary judgment from the hand of God himself.

Draw her and all her multitudes.] Carry her and her people away to the grave, like so many carcasses which are buried without any solemnity. The words are spoken to the Babylonians, the executioners of God's judgments upon Egypt.

Ver. 21. *The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him.*] Here follows a poetical description of the infernal regions, where the ghosts of deceased tyrants, with their subjects, are represented as coming to meet the king of Egypt and his auxiliaries, (see xxx. 8.) upon their arrival to the same place. *Hell* signifies here the state of the dead. (Compare xxxi. 16, 17. Isa. xiv. 9, &c. and see the notes there.)

They are gone down, &c.] These warriors, famous in their time for their exploits, have undergone the same fate with other men of blood, and are gone down to the grave by violent deaths. (See ver. 19.)

Ver. 22. *Ashur is there, and all her company.*] The Assyrians, both king and people, whose destruction is represented in the foregoing chapter.

His graves are about him.] The Egyptians lie buried in

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the same place with them. The masculine and feminine genders are promiscuously used in the following verses. The masculine referring to the prince, whose subjects the deceased were; the feminine to the nation or country to which they belonged.

Ver. 23. *Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit.*] Compare xxvi. 20. Isa. xiv. 15.

And her company round about her grave.] Like lesser graves placed round the monument of a person of great quality: or the words may import that death has made them all equal. (Compare ver. 24, 25.)

All of them slain, &c.] See ver. 20.

Which caused terror in the land of the living.] Though they were a terror while they were alive to their neighbours. (See xxvi. 17.)

Ver. 24. *There is Elam, and all her multitude.*] Which was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. (See Jer. xlix. 34. and the notes there.)

Yet have they borne their shame with them that go down into the pit.] They have been shamefully subdued, and lost their lives and glory together, as Ashur did before them. (Ver. 22.)

Ver. 25. *They have set her a bed in the midst of the slain,* &c.] Elam and her people have a place among the deceased princes and potentates. The word *bed* is used for the grave, Isa. lvii. 2. and may, perhaps, in both places, allude to the costly monuments or sepulchres which used to be erected for persons of great quality. *Mittah,* a word of the same sense, is used for a bier or coffin, 2 Sam. iii. 31.

Her graves are round about him.] About those of the king of Egypt, and his people.

Ver. 26. *There is Meshech, and Tubal, and all her multitude.*] Who are threatened by God with a terrible destruction. (See xxxviii. 2, &c.) But they seem to be mentioned here by way of prolepsis, or anticipation, as the critics call it; for the destruction threatened to Meshech and Tubal was not to come to pass till several ages after this prophecy against Egypt was fulfilled, as may be gathered from several expressions in that prophecy. It is usual in the prophets to speak of what is to come, as if it were already past, as hath been observed elsewhere. So the country of Goshen is called the *land of Rameses,* Gen. xlvii. 11. which yet had that name from the city Rameses, built in aftertimes by the Israelites. (See Exod. i. 11.) By the same figure Horeb is called the *mountain of God,* Exod. iii. 1. Concerning Meshech and Tubal, see the note on xxvii. 13.

Ver. 27. *And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised.*] They shall not lie among those heathen heroes who died a natural death, and are laid in their graves with pomp and magnificence. (Compare this verse with Isa. xiv. 18, 19.)

Which are gone down to hell, [or the grave; see ver. 21.] *with their weapons of war,* &c.] The prophet may possibly represent the future state of these tyrants and warriors, according to the popular notions received in the world, and describe their condition in the other life suitably to the character they bore in this. So Virgil describes his heroes in the Elysian fields, (Æneid. lib. vi.)

"Quæ gratia currûm——
Armorumque fuit vivis,—sequitur tellure repostos."

And they have laid their swords under their heads.] Who were carried to their graves in state, and had their achievements and other ensigns of honour affixed to their monuments for perpetuating their memory. It has been the custom of all ages to adorn the sepulchres of heroes with their swords and other trophies of war. (See 1 Mac. xiii. 19.) So Virgil describes Misenus's tomb, (Æn. vi.)

"Ingenti mole sepulchrum
Imponit, suaque arma viro."

But their iniquity shall be upon their bones, &c.] Their death shall carry in it plain tokens of their sins, and of God's vengeance pursuing them for their cruelty.

Ver. 28. *Yea, thou shalt be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised,* &c.] See ver. 19.

Ver. 29. *There is Edom, her kings, and all her princes,* &c.] Of whose destruction Ezekiel prophesied, xxv. 12.

Ver. 30. *There be the princes of the north all of them, and the Zidonians.*] By the *princes of the north,* may probably be understood the Tyrians and their allies, (see xxvi. 16.) joined here with the Zidonians their near neighbours, as they are put together in this prophecy, chap. xxviii. as sharers in the same destruction. Some by the *princes of the north* understand Meshech, Tubal, and other northern nations: see xxxviii. 6. 15. xxxix. 2. whose destruction is foretold in those chapters.

Ver. 31. *Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be comforted over his multitude.*] As it affords some relief to calamitous persons to see others in the same condition with themselves. (See xxxi. 16.)

Ver. 32. *For I have caused my terror in the land of the living,* &c.] As these kings and nations have been a terror to the world whilst they were in it, (ver. 24, &c.) so I will be now a terror to them: and especially to Pharaoh and his people, in making them a remarkable example of my vengeance.

CHAP. XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

The duty of a prophet in warning a people of their sins, is exemplified by that of a watchman; then follows an earnest exhortation to repentance, upon assurance that God will accept it, being for the most part a repetition of what was said before in the eighteenth chapter. Upon the news being brought to the prophet that Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldeans, he foretells the utter destruction of Judea, to check the vain confidence of those who still tarried in it, and withal reproves the hypocrisy of those Jews who were of the captivity.

Ver. 2. *WHEN I bring a sword upon a land.*] Bring an enemy against a land with armed force. (See xiv. 17.)

If the people of the land take a man of their coasts.] Or, *from among them,* to which sense the word *miktse* is translated, Gen. xlvii. 2.

And set him for a watchman.] Such watchmen were placed upon the turrets of their city walls, to give notice of the enemy's approach. (See 2 Sam. xviii. 24, 25. 2 Kings ix. 17. Isa. xxi. 8.)

Ver. 3. *If when he see the sword come upon the land.*] When he spies the enemy marching against it. (See ver. 2.)

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Ver. 4. *His blood shall be upon his own head.*] His destruction is owing to himself. (See xviii. 13. Acts xviii. 6.)

Ver. 5. *But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.*] Shall save his life from the danger that threatens it. In like manner, he that takes warning by the prophet's admonition shall preserve himself from the judgments threatened against sinners. (See ver. 10.)

Ver. 6. *He shall die in his iniquity,* &c.] See iii. 18.

Ver. 7—9. *I have set thee a watchman to the house of Israel,* &c.] See iii. 17—19.

Ver. 10. *If our transgressions be upon us, and we pine away in them, how shall we then live?*] Thou hast threatened that we shall *pine away in our sins,* xxiv. 23. how then can the promises of life belong to us? The words of persons despairing of God's mercy, and from thence taking encouragement to go on in their sins. (See a like instance, Jer. ii. 25.)

Ver. 11. *Why will ye die, O house of Israel?*] See the note on xviii. 4.

Ver. 12, 13. *The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression,* &c.] See the note upon xviii. 26, 27.

Ver. 13. *If he trust to his own righteousness.*] If he rely upon the good works he hath done, and think the worth of them will overbalance the guilt of his evil deeds. This seems to be the sense of the latter Jews, who lay this down for a certain rule in their Mischna, that *all Israel hath a share in the world to come.* [The Mahometans maintain the same opinion. See Relandus, lib. i. de Relig. Mohammed. cap. 6.]

Ver. 15. *If the wicked restore the pledge.*] See xviii. 7.

Give again that he hath robbed.] It is a necessary condition of obtaining pardon, that men make restitution of what they have unjustly gotten from others. The law was express to this purpose, Lev. vi. 5. where the offender is required to add a fifth part to the principal, and *give it to him to whom it appertaineth;* to the same purpose is that received rule among the Christian casuists taken from St. Augustine, epist. 54. "Non dimittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum;" *The sin is not forgiven, unless what is taken away be restored.*

Walk in the statutes of life.] See the note on xx. 11.

Ver. 16. *None of the sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him.*] See the note on xviii. 22.

Ver. 21. *In the twelfth year of our captivity,* &c.] The news of the taking and burning of Jerusalem was brought to that part of the Babylonish dominions where the Jewish captives were, in something above a year and four months after this calamity happened. (See Jer. lii. 12.)

Ver. 22. *Now the hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening.*] I felt a sensible impulse of the prophetical spirit. (See i. 3.)

And had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning, &c.] God has given me commission to speak in his name unto the people, which I had not done before near the space of three years. (Compare xxiv. 1.) And the destruction of the city, which I had so often foretold, being now brought to pass, (which at that time you would not believe, see xi. 3. xii. 22.) gave an indisputable authority and credit to my words. (See the note on xxiv. 27.)

Ver. 24. *They that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel.*] They that are left behind in the land that is now wasted with fire and sword. (See ver. 27. and xxxvi. 4.)

Abraham was one, and he inherited the land.] If Abraham, being but a single person, with his family, had the whole country of Judea given to him, (see Gen. xiii. 15.) there is much greater reason to conclude that God will preserve the possession of it to us, who are a numerous part of Abraham's posterity. These men spake after the vain manner of the Jews, who fondly presume that they have a right in all the promises made to Abraham. (See Matt. iii. 8. John viii. 33. Rom. ix. 7.) The title of *one* is elsewhere given to Abraham, as being singled out from the rest of his family to be the original or head of the Jewish nation. (See Isa. li. 2. Mal. ii. 15. Heb. xi. 12.)

Ver. 25. *Ye eat with the blood.*] Which was forbidden several times in the law, as being a rite the heathens used in the sacrifices they offered to idols (whose worship is reproved in the very next words), as Dr. Spencer proves at large, de Legib. Hebraic. lib. ii. cap. 11. who brings many arguments to shew that the Hebrew phrase *nal hadam,* should be translated *near the blood;* in allusion to the idolatrous rite of pouring the blood of the slain beast into a vessel or pit, and then eating part of the sacrifice just by it.

And lift up your eyes towards your idols.] See xviii. 6.

And shed blood.] See ix. 9. xxii. 6. 9.

Ver. 26. *Ye stand upon your sword.*] You make your *strength the law of justice,* according to the character given of ungodly men, Wisd. ii. 11. Dr. Spencer, in the forecited place, thinks that the expression alludes to a custom of the heathens, who put the blood of their sacrifices into a vessel or pit, in order to call up and consult evil spirits, and then stood with their swords drawn to keep the demons off from doing them any harm.

Ye defile every one his neighbour's wife.] See Wisd. ii. 6. xxii. 11.

Ver. 27. *They that are in the wastes* (see ver. 24.) *shall fall by the sword,* &c.] The three judgments here mentioned, together with famine, are often threatened as the last and finishing strokes of God's vengeance upon the Jewish nation. (See v. 12. 17. vi. 12. xiv. 21. Jer. xv. 3.)

And they that be in the forts, and in the caves, shall die of the pestilence.] Compare Judg. vi. 2. The caves here mentioned were a sort of strong holds formed by nature in the rocks, or cut out under the tops of mountains: they were so large, that men might secure themselves, their families, and their goods, in them. So David is said to *abide in strong holds, and remain in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph,* 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. Such was the cave of Adullam, where David had his residence for some time, and was there resorted to by his relations, (1 Sam. xxii. 1.) and at another time by his principal officers, (2 Sam. xxiii. 15.) [Such a cave is mentioned by Dio, called Ceria, belonging to the Getæ, whither they fled, and carried their moveables, for fear of Crassus: lib. li. *ad fin.*]

Ver. 28. *For I will lay the land most desolate.*] See Jer. xliv. 2. 6. 22. and xxxvi. 34, 35. of this prophecy.

The pomp of her strength shall cease.] All that riches and magnificence wherein they pleased themselves, as that which gave them strength and reputation in the eyes of the world: (see vii. 24.) or the phrase may denote the beauty and glory of the temple, which they looked upon as their chiefest strength and protection. (See xxiv. 21.)

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And the mountains of Israel shall be desolate.] See vi. 2.

Ver. 29. *Then shall they know that I am the Lord,* &c.] See vi. 7.

Ver. 30. *The children of thy people* (those of the captivity) *are still talking against thee,* &c.] Or rather, *of thee,* as the LXX. rightly render it; *for with their mouth they shewed much love,* as it follows in the next verse.

By the walls, and in the doors of their houses.] Both in their public places of concourse, and in their private meetings.

Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord.] These were such as *drew nigh to God with their mouths, but their hearts were far from him;* as Isaiah describes their hypocrisy, xxix. 13.

Ver. 31. *They come unto thee as the people cometh.*] Or, as disciples flock to their teachers. So the Chaldee paraphrase explains it.

And they sit before thee as my people.] See the note on viii. 1.

For with their mouth they shew much love.] *They make loves,* or *jests,* as our margin reads out of the Hebrew; which some interpreters understand, as if they ridiculed the prophet's words, or turned them into burlesque; so the Vulgar Latin renders it, *In canticum oris sui vertunt.* But by comparing this with the following verse, where the same word *nagabim* is spoken of a song or musical tune, we may rather understand the phrase to this sense, That they were delighted with the prophet's harmonious voice, or taking eloquence, but would not make the proper use of what he said for the correcting their evil manners.

Ver. 32. *And, lo, thou art to them as a very lovely song,* &c.] They come to hear thee for their entertainment, not for their edification, as many go to hear famed and eloquent preachers. St. Augustine tells us, that he himself was such an auditor of St. Ambrose, before he was converted, (Confess. lib. v. cap. 13.) "Studiose audiebam disputantem in populo, non attentione qua debui, sed tanquam explorator facundiæ ejus, utrum conveniret famæ suæ.—Verbis ejus suspendebar intentus, rerum autem incuriosus et contemptor astabam." *I heard him diligently when he discoursed in the congregation, but not with that application of mind which I ought to have done; but I came rather out of curiosity to know whether his eloquence was answerable to that opinion the world had of him. I was very attentive to his style, and charmed with the sweetness of his delivery, but had little value or concern for the subjects he treated of.*

Ver. 33. *And when this comes to pass, lo, it will come,* &c.] Or rather, *lo, it is come;* for so the same phrase is translated, vi. 2. 6. 10. the verb being in the present tense. When you see my prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem actually brought to pass, as it appears they are at this time, (see ver. 21.) then you will be convinced of the truth of my mission, and of your own inexcusable crime in despising my predictions. (See xxiv. 27.)

CHAP. XXXIV.

ARGUMENT.

God reproves the ill conduct of the governors of the Jewish nation, both civil and ecclesiastical; and promises a general restoration of his people, and their happy condition under the government of the Messias, their king.

Ver. 2. *PROPHESY against the shepherds of Israel.*] The word *shepherd,* in the prophetical writings, comprehends both civil and ecclesiastical governors: (see the notes upon Isa. lvi. 11. Jer. ii. 8. xxiii. 1.) princes being called shepherds of their people, as well as those who have the immediate care of their souls. (See Psal. lxxviii. 71, 72.) To the same sense Homer calls Agamemnon, ποιμένα λαῶν, *the shepherd of the people.* And as the threatenings here denounced, extend to all sorts of governors; so the several sins of the princes, priests, and prophets, are reproved, xxii. 25, &c. (Compare likewise xlv. 8, 9.)

Woe to the shepherds of Israel that feed themselves.] That regard their own profit and advantage, not the good of the people committed to their charge. Plato, in the first book of his Commonwealth, describing the office of a magistrate, saith, "He should look upon himself as sustaining the office of a shepherd, that makes it his chief business to take care of his flock; not as if *he were going to a feast* to fill himself and satiate his appetite, or to a market to make what gain he can to himself." Eusebius, in his twelfth book de Præparatione Evangelica, cap. 44. hath transcribed the whole passage as an exact parallel to this place of Ezekiel.

Ver. 3. *Ye eat the fat.*] Or, *the milk,* as the LXX. render it. The Hebrew words, *halab, milk,* and *heleb, fat,* differ only in their points; so that the ancient versions take them promiscuously one for the other. (See xxv. 4.)

Ye kill them that are fed.] Them that are fat ye design for the slaughter, wherewith to feed yourselves: (see Zech. x. 5.) *i. e.* they took away the lives of the wealthy and substantial, that they might enrich themselves with their estates. (See xxii. 25. 27.)

Ver. 4. *The diseased have ye not strengthened,* &c.] Ye have not applied proper remedies to the wants and necessities of the people committed to your charge. The magistrates have not took care to relieve the needy, and defend the oppressed. The priests and the prophets have not been diligent in giving the people proper instructions, in reducing those that are in error, or in comforting the disconsolate.

Neither have ye bound up that which was broken.] Ye have not given ease to the afflicted and miserable. A metaphor taken from surgeons binding up wounds. (Compare Isa. lxi. 1.)

Neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, &c.] Or, *which was gone astray,* as the word *niddakuh* is translated, Deut. xxii. 1. Ye have not sought by good instructions to reduce those that have been seduced into error; or to reclaim those that are ready to be lost and perish in their sins. (Compare Matt. ix. 36. xviii. 11.)

But with force and cruelty have ye ruled them.] You have tried to reduce them to their duty by the rough methods of cruelty and compulsion, not by the gentle way of reason and argument. In like manner the methods of instruction and good example are particularly recommended to the pastors of the Christian church, 1 Pet. v. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

Ver. 5. *And they were scattered abroad because there is no shepherd,* &c.] By reason of these neglects of the governors, the whole frame of the government is dissolved,

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and my people are scattered here and there: some are fled for refuge into foreign countries; (see Jer. xl. 11.) others are carried captives by their enemies, who, as so many beasts of prey, have spoiled and devoured them. (Compare Isa. lvi. 9. Jer. xii. 9.)

Ver. 6. *My sheep wandered through all the mountains,* &c.] As sheep, when there is nobody to look after them, wander from one mountain and hill to another; so my people have been forced to leave their habitations, and fly to any place where they might hope for protection. (Compare vii. 16. and see the note upon Jer. xiii. 16.)

And none did seek or search after them.] Their rulers took no care of my people while they had power and authority; and now I have displaced them for their misdemeanours, and there is nobody left whose office it is to take any farther care of my people. (See ver. 10.)

Ver. 10. *I will require my flock at their hands, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock.*] I will require a severe account of their kings and princes, their priests and prophets, of the damage my people have sustained through their ill management; and I will deprive them of that honour and pre-eminence which they have made such ill use of, as I have already displaced Zedekiah, and the princes, priests, and others, that were in authority under him.

Ver. 12. *So will I seek out my sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.*] I will bring them home from their several dispersions, whither they have been driven in the dark and dismal time of the destruction of their country, and their own captivity. (Compare xxx. 3.)

Ver. 13. *And I will bring them out from the people,* &c.] This prophecy may in some degree have been fulfilled in the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity: but seems still to look farther, even to the general restoration of the whole nation; which most of the prophets foretell shall come to pass in the latter days. (Compare xi. 17. xx. 41. xxviii. 25. xxxvi. 24. xxxvii. 21. xxxviii. 8. xxxix. 27.)

Ver. 14. *Upon the high mountains of Israel.*] See vi. 2.

There shall they lie in a good fold, &c.] The expressions denote plenty and security. (Compare Isa. lxv. 10. Jer. xxxiii. 12. Hos. ii. 18. Zeph. iii. 13.)

Ver. 16. *I will seek that which was lost,* &c.] The Messias, whom I will set over them, (see ver. 23.) shall faithfully discharge all the offices of a shepherd towards them, which their former pastors have neglected, ver. 4. (Compare Isa. xl. 11. lxi. 1. Matt. xv. 24. xviii. 11. John x. 11.)

But I will destroy the fat and the strong.] Those that oppress and domineer over the weak. (See ver. 20, 21. compare xxxix. 18. Amos iv. 1.)

I will feed them with judgment.] Or, *with discretion; i. e.* I will deal with each of them according to their deserts, and make a distinction between the fat and lean cattle. (See ver. 18. 20.)

Ver. 17. *Between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats.*] The Hebrew runs thus, *Between the small cattle, and the cattle of rams, and he-goats;* between the weak and the strong cattle, *i. e.* between the rich and the poor, as the Chaldee paraphrase explains the sense upon ver. 20.

Ver. 18. *Seemeth it a small thing unto you, to have eaten up the good pasture,* &c.] This reproof may fitly be applied to those great persons who take no care that the poor may enjoy the benefit of their superfluities; but rather let them be thrown away and perish, than they will be at the trouble of seeing them disposed of for the good of those that want.

Ver. 21. *Because ye have thrust with side and shoulder,* &c.] In pursuance of this comparison, the oppressors of the weak are commonly styled in Scripture by the names of oxen, bullocks, rams, and he-goats. (See Psal. xxii. 12. lxviii. 31. Dan. viii. 3. 5.)

Ver. 23. *And I will set up one shepherd over them—even my servant David.*] The Messias is often described under the character of a shepherd, both in the Old and New Testament. (See the note on ver. 16.) And the title may be applied to him with respect to his office of king, as well as that of priest and prophet. (See the note on ver. 2.) He is elsewhere styled by the name of David, as being the person in whom all the promises made to David were fulfilled. (See Isa. lv. 3, 4. Jer. xxx. 9. Hos. iii. 5.) [The expression may likewise allude to David's first employment, which was that of a shepherd.]

He shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.] This prophecy was remarkably fulfilled when Christ, by the preaching of the gospel, *gathered in one the children of God which were scattered abroad,* (John xi. 52. Eph. i. 10.) among whom were many of *the lost sheep of the house of Israel,* (Matt. x. 6.) But it will receive a farther completion at the general conversion of the Jews, when *the time will come that they shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,* (Matt. xxiii. 37.) And this signal event will usher in or complete the *fulness of the gentiles.* (See Rom. xi. 12. 15. 25. 32.)

Ver. 24. *And I the Lord will be their God.*] I will renew my covenant with them, and receive them again into my protection. (See ver. 30. xxxvii. 27. Lev. xvi. 12. and the notes upon Jer. xxx. 22.)

And my servant David a prince among them.] See the note on xxxvii. 22.

Ver. 25. *And I will make with them a covenant of peace.*] As I will be at peace with them, so I will give them the blessing of outward peace, and will protect them from the annoyance of all their enemies, from persecution and outward violence. (See Jer. xxiii. 6.)

And will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land.] This may be meant of freedom from persecution by infidels and strangers. (Compare ver. 28.) Such a security is elsewhere expressed by *making a covenant for them with the beasts of the field.* (See Lev. xxvi. 6. Job v. 23. Isa. xxxv. 9. Hos. ii. 18.) The words are likewise capable of a literal interpretation, importing, that as God had threatened after the desolation of the land, wild beasts should overrun it, and devour the few inhabitants that were left; (see v. 17. xxxiii. 27.) so upon the repeopling of the country, those ravagers should forsake it.

Ver. 26. *And I will make them, and the places round about my hill, a blessing.*] I will there give remarkable instances of my favour, and the happiness which accompanies it. (See Gen. xii. 2. Isa. xix. 24. Zech. viii. 13.) God's hill is the same with his *holy mountain,* xx. 40.

And there shall be showers of blessing.] Such as shall produce all sorts of plenty. (Compare Mal. iii. 10.)

Ver. 27. *And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit,* &c.]

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The spiritual blessings of the gospel are sometimes described under the emblems of fruitfulness and plenty. (See the notes on Isa. iv. 2. xxxv. 2. lxv. 10. Jer. xxxi. 12.)

When I have broken the bands of their yoke.] The same expression which is used concerning the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt. (Lev. xxvi. 13. Jer. ii. 20.) Their final restoration being represented as the greater deliverance of the two. (See Jer. xxiii. 7, 8.)

And delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.] See Jer. xxv. 14.

Ver. 28. *And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beasts of the land devour them.*] See ver. 25.

And they shall dwell safely, &c.] See the note on Jer. xxiii. 6.

Ver. 29. *And I will raise them up a plant of renown.*] The Messias is often described under the name of the *branch;* and the *rod* or *shoot* growing of the stem of Jesse. (See Isa. iv. 2. xi. liii. 2. Jer. xxiii. 5. Zech. iii. 8. vi. 12.)

And they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land.] But shall be blessed with plenty of all things. (See ver. 26, 27. and xxxvi. 29.)

Neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.] By whom they were reproached, as if their God had cast them off. (See xxxvi. 3. 6. 15.)

Ver. 30. *Then shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them,* &c.] See ver. 24.

Ver. 31. *And ye, my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men.*] These words, at the conclusion of the chapter, explain the metaphor which runs through the whole: that what was said of a flock and its shepherds, is to be understood of men and their governors; and especially of God's people, whom he takes care of, as a shepherd does of his flock. (See xxxvi. 38. Psal. lxxxi. 2.)

CHAP. XXXV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet renews his former denunciations of judgments upon the Edomites, (see xxv. 12.) as a just punishment for their insulting over the calamities of the Jews.

Ver. 2. *SET thy face against Mount Seir.*] See vi. 2. Mount Seir is the same with Idumea. (See Deut. ii. 5.)

Ver. 4. *I will lay thy cities waste,* &c.] See ver. 9.

Ver. 5. *Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred,* &c.] See the note on xxv. 12.

In the time that their iniquity had an end.] When their iniquity received its just doom. (See vii. 6. xxi. 25. 29.)

Ver. 6. *Sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee.*] Since thou hast loved cruelty, and took delight in shedding blood, vengeance shall pursue thee, and thou shalt fall into the hands of those that will be as eager to shed thine. The phrase, *Thou hast not hated blood,* is spoken by the figure called *litotes* by the rhetoricians, when the words imply more than they express. (See the note on Jer. vii. 31.)

Ver. 7. *And cut off from it him that passeth out, and him that returneth.*] No travellers shall go forward or backward in it with safety. (See xxix. 11. compare Judg. v. 6. 2 Chron. xv. 5.)

Ver. 8. *And I will fill his mountains with his slain men,* &c.] Every part of the country shall be filled with the carcasses of those that are slain. (Compare xxxii. 4, 5.)

Ver. 9. *And I will make thee perpetual desolations,* &c.] See xxv. 13. Jer. xlix. 17, 18. Mal. i. 3. Dr. Prideaux, Script. Hist. par. ii. p. 299. informs us, that the Nabatheans having driven the Edomites out of their ancient habitations in the time of the Babylonish captivity, they settled themselves in the southern part of Judea, where they were afterward conquered by Hyrcanus, and obliged to embrace the Jewish religion, and so became at length incorporated with that nation. (See ibid. p. 307.)

Ver. 10. *These two nations, and these two countries, shall be mine.*] They settled themselves in part of the country, and hoped to have got possession of the whole in time. (See the note upon the foregoing verse.) The Ammonites had the same design, as appears from Jer. xlix. 1.

Whereas the Lord was there.] They did not believe that God had placed his name there, had chosen it for a place of his peculiar residence, and would never quite relinquish his property in it. (See xlviii. 35.)

Ver. 11. *And I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee.*] I will make my people see that I have not quite cast them off, by my avenging their quarrel upon thee.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt know that I am the Lord.*] See vi. 7.

They are laid desolate, &c.] See the note on ver. 10.

Ver. 13. *Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me.*] As if I were not able to make good my promises towards the Jews, or to assert my right in Judea. (See ver. 10.)

Ver. 14. *When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate.*] When I shall restore other countries, conquered by the king of Babylon, to their former posterity, thou shalt still lie waste and desolate. The Edomites never recovered their country, after the Nabatheans had expelled them out of it. (See Dr. Prideaux, in the place abovecited.)

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt be desolate—all Idumea.*] The expression is like that of Isaiah, *whole Palestina,* Isa. xiv. 29. *i. e.* all the several tribes and divisions of it.

CHAP. XXXVI.

ARGUMENT.

This and the following chapter contain a prediction of the general restoration both of Israel and Judah, a subject often spoken of by this prophet: of which the return of the two tribes from Babylon may be thought an earnest.

Ver. 1. *PROPHESY unto the mountains of Israel.*] See the following verse.

Ver. 2. *Because the enemy hath said against you, even the ancient high places are ours in possession.*] The Idumeans have made their boasts (see ver. 5. xxxv. 10.) that they should become masters of the mountainous parts of Judea, where the ancient fortresses were placed which commanded all the rest of the country. To the same sense we are to understand the expression of *treading upon the high places of the earth,* Deut. xxxii. 13. *i. e.* taking possession of the fortresses or passes which command the rest of the country.

Ver. 3. *And ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and*

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are the infamy of the heathen.] Your calamities have made you become a proverb, a by-word, and a reproach among the heathen round about you, according to the threatenings of the prophets denounced against you. (See Deut. xxviii. 37. 1 Kings ix. 7, 8. Psal. lxxix. 4. Jer. xviii. 16. Lam. ii. 15. Dan. ix. 16.)

Ver. 4. *Which became a prey to the residue of the heathen that are round about you.*] To these heathens that are left, after the general desolations threatened upon the neighbouring countries, Moab, Edom, Ammon, &c. (Compare ver. 36. Jer. xxv. 20. xlvii. 4.)

Ver. 5. *Surely in the fire of my jealousy.*] In that fervent zeal and concern that I have for my own honour, which is blasphemed among the heathen. (See xxxv. 12, 13. compare xxxviii. 19. xxxix. 25.)

Against the residue of the heathen—which have appointed my land into their possession.] See the note on xxxv. 12.

Ver. 6. *Because ye have borne the shame of the heathen.*] See xxxiv. 29. xxxv. 12, 13.

Ver. 7. *I have lifted up my hand.*] I have solemnly sworn. (See xx. 5, &c.)

Ver. 8. *Yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.*] This may have an immediate aspect upon the Jews' return from Babylon, when they were restored to the possession of their own country. If we suppose the words to relate to the general restoration of the nation, the longest distance of time that the things of this world can extend to, is but as a moment in respect of eternity. (Compare Heb. x. 37. Philip. iv. 5.)

Ver. 10. *And the wastes shall be builded.*] Compare ver. 33. This may likewise have been in some measure fulfilled at their return from Babylon. (Compare Isa. lviii. 12. lxi. 4.)

Ver. 11. *And I will multiply upon you man and beast.*] As God in his judgments threatens to cut off man and beast from a land; (see xiv. 17.) so here he promises to replenish it with both. (Compare Jer. xxxi. 27. xxxiii. 12.)

And will do better unto you than at your beginnings.] In bestowing upon you the blessings of the gospel; the promises of which were made first to the Jews and to their children, (Acts ii. 39.) The words may likewise imply, that God would give them a more lasting and secure possession of their land than ever they had before. (See the following verses.)

Ver. 12. *Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you.*] O mountains or land of Israel, (ver. 8.)

Ver. 13. *Thou land devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations.*] The neighbouring people raised this ill character upon the land of Judea, because of the severe judgments of the sword, famine, and pestilence, which had destroyed the greatest part of the inhabitants. The expression alludes to that evil report which the spies brought upon it, (Numb. xiii. 32.) that it was *a land that did eat up its inhabitants;* as if the air had been unwholesome, or the country always afflicted by some judgment from heaven.

Ver. 14. *Therefore thou shalt devour men no more,* &c.] Thou shalt be free from the strokes of heaven, and from the annoyance of enemies on earth.

Ver. 15. *Neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more,* &c.] See ver. 6. and xxxiv. 29.

Neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more.] The Chaldee, and some other ancient versions, translate the words, *Neither shalt thou bereave thy people* [or nations] *any more;* as if the word, in the original, were *shaccal,* the same which is used in the sense of *bereaving* in the foregoing verses; whereas here the present copies read *cashal,* which signifies to *fall.* But it hath been before observed, that words in the Hebrew, which are near in sound, often have an affinity in their signification. (See the note on xxvii. 15.)

Ver. 17. *Their way was before me, as the uncleanness of a removed woman.*] As such a person was under a legal pollution, and forbidden to come within the courts of the temple, or attend upon God's worship there: so the defilements the Jews had contracted by their idolatries, and other heinous sins, rendered them unqualified to be my people, or to offer up any religious service to me.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore, I poured my fury upon them for the blood they had shed upon the land, and for their idols,* &c.] Murder and idolatry, two sins of the first magnitude, are often joined together in the catalogue of national sins recited in this prophecy; meaning particularly, the blood of their children, which they offered to their idols. (See xvi. 36. 38. xxiii. 37.)

Ver. 19. *And I scattered them among the heathen,* &c.] See v. 12.

Ver. 20. *And when they entered unto the heathen—they profaned my holy name, when they said unto them,* &c.] Or, *When it was said unto them:* verbs of the third person being often taken impersonally. By their evil practices they brought a scandal upon my name, and gave occasion to the heathen to say, See what profligate wretches these are who call themselves by the name of God's people, whom he hath justly expelled out of their country which he had given them. The Chaldee paraphrase understands the words to this sense: "If these are God's people, why does he suffer them to be turned out of the land which he made the place of his own especial residence? why does he not continue to protect them?" But the former sense agrees better with the scope of the text, and with St. Paul's application of it to the Jews of his own time, Rom. ii. 24. and with what follows, ver. 31.

Ver. 21. *But I had pity for my holy name,* &c.] *I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted among the heathen,* as the prophet speaks, xx. 9.

Ver. 22. *I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel.*] The promises I make in your favour in the following verses, are not owing to any desert of yours, but purely to vindicate my own honour. (See ver. 32. and compare Deut. ix. 5. Psal. cvi. 8.)

Ver. 23. *And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen,* &c.] I will give illustrious proofs of my power and goodness, and vindicate my honour from the reproaches with which it has been blasphemed among the heathen, upon the occasion of your evil doings.

And the heathen shall know that I am the Lord.] The return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity was taken notice of by the heathens, as a signal instance of God's providence towards them; (see Psal. cxxvi. 2.) and their general conversion will be a much more remarkable proof of my fulfilling the promises made to their fathers; so that the heathens themselves will be forced to take notice of it. (See xxxvii. 28.) It will be an effectual argument to con-

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vince infidels that your nation, and the rest of the true Israelites, are the only church of God, and professors of his truth. (See Zech. viii. 23.)

When I shall be sanctified in you before your eyes.] When I shall *sanctify my name*, as it is expressed in the former part of the verse, and make my power and goodness known to the world. (See the notes on xx. 41. xxviii. 22.)

Ver. 24. *And I will take you out from among the heathen*, &c.] See xxxiv. 13. xxxvii. 21. xxxix. 25.

Ver. 25. *And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.*] The expression alludes to those legal purifications which were made by sprinkling water upon the unclean person; (see Numb. viii. 7. xix. 13.) and denotes the sacrament of baptism, by which true believers are cleansed from their former sins, and inwardly sanctified. (See Acts ii. 38. xxii. 16. Titus iii. 5. and compare Jer. xxxiii. 8.) St. Paul may probably allude to this text, when he exhorts the Hebrew converts to *draw nigh to God, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water*, (Heb. x. 22.)

From all your filthiness, and from your idols will I cleanse you.] When the prophets foretell the general conversion of the Jews, they usually mention their detestation of their former idolatries, as a necessary preparation towards it. (See Isa. i. 29. xvii. 7, 8. Jer. iii. 22, 23, &c. Zech. xiii. 1, 2.) Some account of this circumstance of their conversion hath been given in the note upon Isa. lxv. 7. and upon the forementioned chapter of Jeremiah.

Ver. 26, 27. *A new heart also will I give you*, &c.] See xi. 19. This promise will be fulfilled, when the heart of this people shall *turn to the Lord, and the veil shall be taken from it*, as St. Paul informs us, 2 Cor. iii. 16. (Compare Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.)

Ver. 28. *And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers.*] See xxviii. 25.

And ye shall be my people, &c.] See xi. 20.

Ver. 29. *I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.*] I will take away the guilt of them, and deliver you from the punishments due to them. (See Matt. i. 21.)

Ibid. and Ver. 30. *And I will call for the corn, and will increase it*, &c.] See the notes upon xxxiv. 27. 29.

Ver. 31. *Then shall ye remember your own evil ways.*] See the note upon xvi. 61.

And shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, &c.] See vi. 9.

Ver. 32. *Not for your sakes do I this—be it known unto you*, &c.] The prophet repeats what he said ver. 22. on purpose to check all vain presumption in the Jews, and confidence of their own intrinsic worth or merit: a fault they have been very prone to in all ages.

Ver. 33. *I will cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded.*] See ver. 10.

Ver. 34. *Whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by it.*] As Moses had threatened, Deut. xxix. 23. 28.

Ver. 35. *This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden.*] See xxviii. 13. Isa. li. 3.

Ver. 36. *The heathen that are left round about you, shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places*, &c.] The heathen nations that are near you, (see ver. 4.) shall be convinced that the restoring the Jews to their former state must be the immediate hand of God, who will certainly, in due time, fulfil what is here foretold. (See xxxvii. 14.)

Ver. 37. *I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.*] God, in his anger, tells the Jews, that he *will not be inquired of by them*, (xiv. 3. xx. 3. 31.) intimating, that during their continuance in idolatry and other wickedness, they ought not to address themselves to him, nor expect any favourable answer to their requests: but now, upon their repentance and reconciliation, he tells them, that he *will be inquired of by them; i. e.* he will dispose their hearts to apply themselves to him by prayer, and will answer the petitions they make to him for the fulfilling these his promises. (See Psal. x. 17. and compare Jer. xxix. 13.)

Ver. 38. *As the holy flock; as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts.*] The sheep and lambs, designed for the sacrifices which were offered at the three solemn feasts, were both very numerous, and likewise of the best in their kind. The epithet of *holy*, and *most holy*, is often applied to sacrifices in the Levitical law, as being wholly dedicated to God, and set apart for his worship. (See Lev. vi. 25. 29. Numb. xviii. 9.)

So shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men.] See xxxiv. 31.

CHAP. XXXVII.

ARGUMENT.

Under the figure of a resurrection of dry bones, is foretold the general restoration of the Jews from their several dispersions; and by the joining of two sticks, is represented the uniting of Israel and Judah into one kingdom.

Ver. 1. *THE hand of the Lord was upon me.*] See the note upon i. 3.

And carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord.] Or, *by the Spirit of the Lord.* (Compare iii. 14. viii. 3. xi. 24.) This was performed either by a local translation of the prophet, or else by way of vision and lively representation. (See the note upon viii. 3.)

Ver. 3. *O Lord God, thou knowest.*] This is only an act of thy power and good pleasure. Raising the dead to life again is peculiarly ascribed to God, as being properly the work of Omnipotence, and a sort of new creation. (See Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. John v. 21. Rom. iv. 17. 2 Cor. i. 9.)

Ver. 4. *O ye dry bones, hear ye the word of the Lord.*] A prophetical and lively representation of that voice of the Son of God, which *all that are in the graves shall hear* at the last day, *and shall come forth out of them*, (John v. 28, 29.)

Ver. 5. *Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you*] The *breath of life*, as it is expressed, Gen. ii. 7. (Compare Psal. civ. 30.)

Ver. 7. *And as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking.*] Such a noise, or commotion, as we may suppose the bones of a human body would make upon their meeting together again, after having been severed one from another.

Ver. 9. *Prophesy unto the wind.*] Or rather, *to the breath*, meaning that vital principle which unites body and soul

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together, and is mentioned as distinct from the four winds in the following words.

Come from the four winds, O breath.] The words figuratively represent the restoration of the Jewish nation from the several countries whither they were dispersed over the world, expressed by their being *scattered towards all winds,* (v. 10. xii. 14. xvii. 21.)

Ver. 10. *An exceeding great army.*] To signify the great numbers they will amount to, when they return from their several dispersions, and unite into one body. They are elsewhere styled *a remnant,* but that is in comparison of the whole nation. (See the notes upon Isa. iv. 2. x. 22. xxvii. 12, 13.)

Ver. 11. *These bones are the whole house of Israel.*] They represent the forlorn and desperate condition to which the whole nation is reduced.

Ver. 12. *I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves.*] I will reunite you into one body or nation, who now lie scattered and dispersed as the bones in a charnel-house. (Compare ver. 21.) In their state of dispersion and captivity they are called the *dead Israelites,* in Baruch, iii. 4. And their restoration is described as a resurrection by Isaiah, (xxvi. 19.) at which time *their bones* are said to *flourish,* or to be restored to their former strength and vigour, in the same prophet, lxvi. 14. In like manner St. Paul expresses their conversion, and the general restoration which shall accompany it, by *life from the dead,* Rom. xi. 15.

And bring you into the land of Israel.] See ver. 25. and the note upon xxviii. 25.

Ver. 14. *And shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live.*] That principle of life expressed by *breath* or spirit, ver. 9. not excluding that new spirit of grace, which God will at that time plentifully bestow upon them. (See xi. 19. xxxvi. 26, 27.) The principle of grace is often spoken of as a higher principle of life, and the earnest of our heavenly happiness. (See Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. vi. 17. xv. 45.)

Ver. 16. *Take thee one stick, and write upon it,* &c.] *i. e.* One rod; the expression alludes to Numb. xvii. 2. where Moses is commanded to take twelve rods, one for each tribe, and to write the name of the tribe upon the rod.

For Judah, and the children of Israel his companions.] Not only the tribe of Benjamin, but many of the other tribes joined themselves to the tribe of Judah, and kept close to the law of God, and the worship of his temple. (See 2 Chron. xi. 12. 16. xv. 9. xxx. 11. 18.)

For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions.] Upon Reuben's forfeiting his birthright, that privilege was conferred upon the sons of Joseph, of whom Ephraim had the precedence: (see Gen. xlviii. 20. 1 Chron v. 1.) which made him be reckoned the head of ten tribes; Samaria, the seat of that kingdom, being likewise situate in the tribe of Ephraim: upon these accounts the name of Ephraim signifies in the prophets the whole kingdom of Israel, as distinct from that of Judah; and particularly in the prophet Hosea, v. 3. 5, &c. (See likewise Jer. xxxi. 6. 18.)

Ver. 17. *And join them one to another into one stick.*] A rod or sceptre is an emblem of power; (see Psal. cx. 2.) so the joining these two rods or sticks together, denotes uniting the two kingdoms under one prince or governor. (See ver. 22.)

Ver. 18. *Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these?*] Ezekiel foretold many things by signs, and the Jews were very inquisitive into the meaning of them; though sometimes their curiosity proceeded rather from a secret contempt of the prophet and his predictions, than a real desire of information. (See xii. 9. xvii. 12. xx. 49. xxiv. 19.)

Ver. 19. *Which is in the hand of Ephraim.*] Of which he is the head. (See ver. 16.)

They shall be one in my hand.] I will make them one nation, and appoint one king to rule over them, the Messias. (See ver. 22.)

Ver. 20. *And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.*] Thou shalt place the sticks or rods thus joined together before their eyes, as a visible token or pledge of the truth of what I enjoin thee to speak to them in the following words.

Ver. 21. *I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen,* &c.] See xx. 34. xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 24. xxxix. 25.

Ver. 22. *And I will make them one nation.*] They shall not be divided any more into separate kingdoms; the consequence of which was their setting up separate ways of worship, and espousing separate interests. (Compare Isa. xi. 13.) It has been already observed, that the prophecies which foretell of the general restoration of the Jews, join Judah and Israel together, as equal sharers in that blessing.

And one King shall be king to them all.] The Messias, who is that one Shepherd and Prince that shall rule over them all, as one nation. (See xxxiv. 23, 24. compared with Luke i. 32, 33.) The Messias is described as king of the Jews in most of the prophecies of the Old Testament, beginning with that of Gen. xlix. 10. concerning Shiloh. From David's time he is commonly spoken of as the person in whom the promises relating to the perpetuity of David's kingdom were to be accomplished. This was a truth unanimously owned by the Jews; (see John i. 49.) to which our Saviour bore testimony before Pontius Pilate, when the question being put to him, *Art thou a king?* he made answer, *Thou sayest* [the truth], *for I am a king:* thus those words should be translated, for St. Paul alluding to them calls them *a good confession,* 1 Tim. vi. 13. The same truth Pontius Pilate himself asserted in that inscription which he providentially ordered to be written upon the cross: (see John xix. 19. 22.) so that the chief priests impiously renounced their own avowed principles, when they told Pilate, that *they had no king but Cæsar.* (Ibid. ver. 15.)

Ver. 23. *Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols.*] See the note upon xxxvi. 25.

Nor with their detestable things.] Or, *abominations,* as the word *shikkuts* is elsewhere translated, and commonly applied to idols. (See xx. 7. 2 Kings xxiii. 13. Dan. ix. 27.)

Nor with any of their transgressions.] This expression comprehends in it, their being touched with a hearty compunction for their great sin of rejecting and crucifying the Messias, their King and Saviour. (See Zech. xii. 10.)

And will save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them.] See xxxvi. 20. 25. 28.

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Ver. 24. *And David my servant shall be king over them,* &c.] See xxxiv. 23.

They shall also walk in my judgments, &c.] See xxxvi. 27.

Ver. 25. *And they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob my servant.*] A promise often repeated in this prophecy. (See ver. 12. 21. and the note on xxviii. 25.)

Ver. 26. *Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them,* &c.] See xxxiv. 25. The words may likewise be understood in a spiritual sense, that God will be reconciled to them through Christ, and admit them into that covenant of peace, of which he is the Mediator, and therefore is called *our peace,* Eph. ii. 14. And then the following words, *It shall be an everlasting covenant with them,* may fitly be explained of the gospel, being such a covenant as shall never be abolished, or give way to any new dispensation. (Compare Isa. lv. 3. Jer. xxxii. 40.)

Ibid. and Ver. 27. *And will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them.*] God's placing first his tabernacle, and then his temple among the Jews, was a pledge and token of his presence among them, and protection over them. (See Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. and the note upon xi. 16. of this prophecy.) And here he promises new and more valuable tokens of his presence among them, by the graces of his Holy Spirit, and the efficacy of his word and sacraments: (compare 2 Cor. vi. 16.) and perhaps will vouchsafe them some extraordinary appearance of the Divine Majesty. (See xliii. 4, 5. 7. Zech. ii. 5.)

Yea, I will be their God, &c.] See xi. 20.

Ver. 28. *And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel.* The conversion of the Jewish nation, and their being restored to their former state of favour and acceptance with God, will be a work of providence taken notice of by the heathens themselves, who shall join themselves to the Jews, as the church of God and temple of truth. (See xxxvi. 23.)

CHAP. XXXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophecy contained in this and the following chapter concerning Israel's victory over Gog and Magog, without question relates to the latter ages of the world, when the whole house of Israel shall return into their own land, (xxxix. 25, 26.) And the expressions we meet with in this chapter, (ver. 8. 16.) that this should come to pass in the latter days, and after many days, or a considerable number of years, and that God had of old prophesied concerning this transaction: these and other circumstances of this prophecy, are a proof that the event was to happen a great while after the several predictions of the prophets concerning it. So that this must be looked upon as one of those obscure prophecies of Scripture, the fulfilling whereof will best explain their meaning.

Ver. 2. *SET thy face* (see vi. 2.) *against Gog, the land of Magog.*] Or, of *the land of Magog.* Magog was the son of Japheth, (Gen. x. 2.) from whence the Scythians are generally supposed to be derived. The Mogul Tartars, a people of the Scythian race, are still called so by the Arabian writers, as Dr. Hyde informs us, in his epistle, De Mensuris Synensibus. By Gog and Magog may most probably here be meant the Turks, who were originally natives of Tartary, called Turcheston by the eastern writers; and whose language is derived from that of the Tartars. The land of Canaan hath been, for several years, in the possession of the Turks: several texts in Ezekiel foretell the Jews' settlement in that country again; and some of the expressions in this and the following chapter intimate, that the people called here by the name of Gog, and their allies, will attempt to recover it again out of the hands of the Jews, its rightful owners: this may probably occasion the war and victory here spoken of. But this is what cannot be positively affirmed; only thus much one may venture to say, that since the whole strength of Europe was so unsuccessful in their attempts to recover that land out of the hands of the infidels in the holy war, it looks as if God had reserved that work to some farther time of his own appointment, when that country should be the scene of some extraordinary event of Providence. We may farther observe, that the *second woe,* mentioned Rev. ix. 12. xi. 14. is by many learned men understood of the Turkish empire; and in consequence of that interpretation, the putting an end to that tyranny, will be an introduction to some extraordinary changes in the Christian part of the world.

The chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.] The king or head of all those northern nations which lie upon the Euxine Sea. (See the notes upon xxvii. 13.) The Turk is called *the king of the north* in Daniel, xi. 40. as several commentators interpret that place. The LXX. interpreters take the word *Rosh,* commonly translated *chief,* for a proper name; so they render the sentence thus, *The prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. Rosh,* taken as a proper name, signifies those inhabitants of Scythia, from whence the Russians derive their name and original.

Ver. 4. *And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws.*] I will disappoint all thy designs, and turn thee about as easily as a fisherman masters a great fish, when he hath once fastened the hook into his jaws. (See xxix. 4.)

And I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, &c.] The sense would be plainer, if the words were thus translated, *After I have brought thee forth,* &c. In which sense the copulative *vau* is sometimes used. (See Noldius's Concordance, p. 291.)

Horses and horsemen.] See ver. 15.

Ver. 5. *Persia, Ethiopia, and Lybia with them.*] Their allies, Ethiopia and Lybia, are called *Cush* and *Phut* in the Hebrew, and are joined together as allies, xxx. 5. (See the note there.) Persians are joined in like manner with Africans, xxvii. 10.

All of them with shield and helmet.] So the Lybians, or people of Phut, are described, Jer. xlvi. 9. as *handling the shield; i. e.* being remarkable for their great and large shields, as Zenophon relates of them, (Cyropæd. lib. vi.)

Ver. 6. *Gomer, and all his bands, the house of Togarmah of the north quarters.*] Gomer is joined with Magog, Gen. x. 2. and probably signifies Galatia, Phrygia, and Bithynia, which, with Cappadocia, denoted by Togarmah, comprehends all the northern parts of Asia Minor, which border upon the Euxine Sea. (See the meaning of Togarmah explained in the note upon xxvii. 14.)

And many people with thee.] Those of Cilicia, Pamphilia, and other nations inhabiting Asia Minor.

Ver. 7. *Be thou prepared—thou and all thy company that*

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are assembled with thee.] The prophet ironically encourages Gog to make all warlike preparations, and muster all his forces together, that God may gain the greater honour by their signal defeat. (See ver. 16. and compare Jer. xlvi. 2, 3. 14. li. 12.)

And be thou a guard unto them.] Let them rely upon thy prowess and conduct as their leader.

Ver. 8. *After many days thou shalt be visited,* &c.] This judgment shall be inflicted by God upon thee, (compare Isa. xxix. 6.) after a succession of many generations: *In the latter years,* or *days,* as it follows here, and ver. 16. *i. e.* towards the end of the world; (compare Dan. viii. 26.) particularly the expression of *latter days,* or years, is used to denote the times of the general restoration of the Jewish nation. (See Deut. iv. 30. Jer. xxx. 24. Hos. iii. 5.)

Thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword.] The *land* is put for the people of the land, who are said to be *brought back from the sword,* as they are elsewhere styled a *remnant; i. e.* those that should survive after the hardships they had suffered in their several dispersions, and the judgments that should fall upon the disobedient in their return home. (See the notes upon xx. 34. 38. and upon Isa. iv. 2.) And perhaps those words of Jeremiah, xxxi. 2. may be best explained to this sense, *The people that were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness.* The whole chapter relates to the general conversion and restoration of the Jews; and the prophet speaks in that verse of the favours God would shew to those that should escape the severe judgments that should destroy the disobedient in their passage home to their own country, called the *desert,* or *wilderness,* by Isaiah, xl. 3. and by Ezekiel, *the wilderness of the people,* or *nations,* xx. 35. (See the notes upon that place.)

And gathered out of many people.] See the note upon xxxiv. 13.

Against the mountains of Israel, [see xxxvi. 1. 4.] *which have been always waste.*] Or rather, *altogether waste,* as the LXX. rightly translate it.

But it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.] Or, *And they have dwelt safely all of them;* the future tense being often put for the preter-perfect. The sense is, that after the return of the people of Israel into their own country, and their having lived there for some time in peace and safety, this enemy will think to take advantage of their security, and fall upon them unexpectedly. (Compare ver. 11.)

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm.*] A comparison elsewhere made use of to express the devastations which attend a destroying army. (See xiii. 11. Isa. xxviii. 2.)

Thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land.] Thou shalt overspread the land like a dark cloud, which makes every thing look melancholy and dismal. (See xxx. 3. Jer. iv. 13.)

Ver. 11. *I will go to the land of unwalled villages,* &c.] A description of a people, that live securely without any apprehension of danger. (Compare Jer. xlix. 31.)

To them that are at rest and dwell safely.] According to the promise often repeated in the prophet, that *in those days Israel should dwell safely, and none should make them afraid.* (See xxxiv. 28. Jer. xxiii. 6. and the note there.)

Ver. 12. *To turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited.*] Judea is described as a country that lay desolate before the Jews' return into it. (See xxxvi. 34, 35.) After it had been for some time reinhabited, Gog and his associates designed to fall upon it with all their forces; in that sense *to turn the hand* is taken, Isa. i. 25. (See the note there.)

That dwell in the midst of the land.] *In the navel of the land,* as the Hebrew reads, *i. e.* in Jerusalem, because that stood near the middle of the holy land, and likewise was situate upon a rising ground, which the Hebrew metaphorically expresses by the *navel.* (See Judg. ix. 37.)

Ver. 13. *Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish—shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil?*] These were people that dealt much in trade: the two former dwelling in the east, the latter often sailing from the Spanish coasts into the eastern parts: they are mentioned xxvii. 12. 15. 20. 22. as having commerce with Tyre, which bordered upon Judea. Those merchants, as soon as they heard of this intended invasion, came into Gog's camp as to a market, to buy both persons and goods which should come into the conqueror's power. (See the note upon xxvi. 2.)

With all the young lions thereof.] The Targum understands it of their kings, *i. e.* their chief merchants, who are described as so many princes, Isa. xxiii. 8. and are called *lions,* because of the injustice and oppression they too commonly practised in their commerce. (See xxviii. 16.) But the LXX. translate the word *kephirim, towns* or *villages;* in which sense it is taken, Nehem. vi. 2. and in other places.

Ver. 14. *In that day.*] At that remarkable time, when God shall bring again the captivity of Israel and Judah, so often spoken of by the prophets. (See the note upon Isa. iv. 2.)

When my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt not thou know it? &c.] As soon as the news of their being settled in their own country comes to thy knowledge, thou wilt certainly make preparations to invade them.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts.*] See ver. 6.

Thou and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, &c.] The character here given of this people, may properly be applied to the Turks, the chief strength of whose armies consists in their cavalry, and the great numbers of them which they bring into the field, as the writers of the Turkish history observe: compare Rev. ix. 16. which place several interpreters expound of the Turks. We may not improbably apply those words of the prophet Zechariah to the event here spoken of, xii. 4. "I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness; and will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah."

Ver. 16. *As a cloud to cover the land.*] See ver. 9.

That the heathen may know me, &c.] This signal victory over Gog and his associates, shall be a means of bringing infidels to give glory unto me. (Compare xxxix. 21. and see the note upon xxxvi. 23.)

Ver. 17. *Art thou he?*] The words would be more significant if they were translated, *Art thou not he?* A sense which *he* the particle of interrogation often imports. (See the note upon xx. 4.)

Of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets, who have prophesied in those days many years.] Or, and *years.* The prophet is speaking here of some ter-

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rible enemy to God's people, who shall be subdued by the immediate hand of Heaven, which victory should make way for glorious times of peace and prosperity. This enemy is said to be foretold *of old by the prophets;* and is therefore probably described under the names of such nations as were the chief enemies to the Jews in the particular times of each prophet. Such we may suppose the Assyrian to be, spoken of by Isaiah, xiv. 24, 25. and by Micah, v. 5. The same enemy may probably be intended under the figure of Tyre; (see the note on xxviii. 24.) of Egypt; (see the note upon xxix. 21. and compare Isa. xi. 15. with Zech. x. 11.) of Moab; (see Isa. xxv. 10.) of Edom; (see Isa. xxxiv. 6. lxiii. 1. Joel iii. 20. Obad. ver. 18, 19.) and under the name of Leviathan, Isa. xxvii. 1. To these we may add those prophecies, which speak of some great and general destruction of God's enemies before the day of judgment, or consummation of all things. Such are Psal. cx. 5, 6. Isa. xxvi. 20, 21. xxxiv. 1, &c. lxvi. 16. Jer. xxx. 7. 10. Joel iii. 9. 14. Obad. ver. 15, &c. Zech. xii. 1. xiv. 1, &c. Zechariah lived, indeed, after Ezekiel's time, but a great while before the fulfilling of this prophecy. The expressions here used, of *old time*, and *which prophesied in those days* [and] *years*, plainly imply, that there was to be a succession of many ages between the publishing those prophecies and this event foretold by them; and therefore seem to look beyond the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, to which some expositors apply this place of Ezekiel. (See the note upon xxxix. 9.)

Ver. 18. *My fury shall come up in my face.*] An expression taken from human passions, which cause the blood to fly up into the face. So Isaiah describes Almighty God as *burning with anger, his lips* being *full of indignation, and his tongue as a consuming fire,* xxx. 27. (See the note upon that place.)

Ver. 19. *For in the jealousy, and in the fire of my wrath, have I spoken.*] See xxxvi. 5. xxxix. 25.

Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel.] Great changes and alterations in kingdoms and governments are expressed in Scripture by *shaking of heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land,* (see Hag. ii. 6, 7. 21, 22. Heb. xii. 26.) and by earthquakes, (Rev. vi. 12. xi. 13. xvi. 8.)

Ver. 20. *So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven,* &c.] Every part of the creation shall bear its share of this calamity, as if there were a convulsion of the whole frame of nature. (Compare Jer. iv. 24, &c. Hos. iv. 3.) The prophets often describe God's judgments upon particular countries or persons, as if it were a dissolution of the whole world, because his particular judgments are an earnest of the general judgment. (See his notes upon Isa. xiii. 10.)

And the mountains shall be thrown down, &c.] These expressions may probably be meant of walls, towers, and other fortifications, which are dismantled and demolished in the time of war. (Compare Jer. li. 25.)

Ver. 21. *I will call for a sword against him.*] I will appoint a sword to destroy him. (Compare xiv. 17.) God's decrees are expressed by his speaking the word, and giving out his command. So he is said to *call for a dearth upon the land of Canaan,* Psal. cv. 16.

Throughout all my mountains.] See ver. 8.

Every man's sword shall be against his brother.] God often destroys his enemies by intestine quarrels among themselves, and making them executioners of his judgments upon each other. (See 2 Chron. xx. 23. Judg. vii. 22. 1 Sam. xiv. 20.)

Ver. 22. *I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood.*] Or, *I will plead with him,* (See xx. 35.) God pleads with men by his judgments, which are a manifest token of the vengeance due to their sins. (See Isa. lxvi. 16. Jer. xxv. 31.) Pestilence is joined with blood here, as it is v. 17. xiv. 19. xxviii. 23.

And will rain upon him and his bands—an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.] God shall as plainly shew himself in the destruction of these his enemies, as when he consumed Sodom and Gomorrah by fire and brimstone from heaven, (Gen. xix. 24.) and discomfited the armies of the Canaanites and Philistines by tempests of thunder and hail. (See Josh. x. 10. 1 Sam. vii. 10. compare Psal. xi. 6. Isa. xxix. 6. xxx. 30. and see xiii. 11. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 23. *Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself,* &c.] Compare ver. 16. and see the note upon xxxvi. 23.

CHAP. XXXIX.

See the Argument of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 1. *O GOG, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.*] See xxxviii. 2.

Ver. 2. *And I will turn thee back.*] See ibid. ver. 4.

And leave but a sixth part of thee.] So the word *shissha,* or *shissah,* as it is read with a different termination, signifies, xlv. 13. Others render it, *I will strike thee with six plagues, viz.* those mentioned xxxviii. 22.

And I will cause thee to come up from the north parts, &c.] The words may be better translated, *After I have caused thee to come up from the north parts, and have brought thee upon the mountains of Israel:* see a like construction xxxviii. 4.

Ver. 3. *And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand,* &c.] *There shall be no might in thy hand,* as Moses threatens the Israelites, Deut. xxviii. 32. Thou shalt not be able to use thy weapons to any purpose.

Ver. 4. *I will give thee to the ravenous birds of every sort,* &c.] See ver. 17. and xxxiii. 27.

Ver. 6. *And I will send a fire on Magog.*] I will consume him by fire and brimstone out of heaven. (See xxxviii. 22.) *Fire* doth likewise signify the fiercest of God's judgments. (See the note upon xxx. 8.)

And among them that dwell carelessly in the isles.] The inhabitants of the sea-coast which dwell securely, and think no harm can come upon them. The expression relates to the *merchants of Tarshish,* and others mentioned xxxviii. 13. All countries lying upon the sea-coast are called *islands* in the Hebrew language.

Ver. 7. *So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel.*] See ver. 21. and xxxviii. 16. 23.

And I will not let them pollute my holy name any more.] The words in the Hebrew run thus, *I will not pollute my holy name any more; i. e.* I will not suffer it to be polluted, as the verbs active often signify only permission. (See the note upon xiv. 9.) The sense is, I will not suffer my name to be dishonoured any more, nor let it be said among the

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heathen, that I was not able to rescue my people out of the hand of their enemies.

Ver. 8. *Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God.*] The time appointed for this great destruction is come, and it is the last and finishing stroke of God's justice upon the enemies of his church and truth. (Compare Rev. xvi. 17. xxi. 6.)

This is the day whereof I have spoken.] *By my servants the prophets,* xxxviii. 17.

Ver. 9. *And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons,* &c.] In token of an entire conquest, and that such a lasting peace should ensue that there should be no more need of warlike preparations. (Compare Psal. xlvi. 9.)

Seven years.] The burning the weapons of war must be the consequent of a complete victory: so that the *seven years* here mentioned cannot be meant, as some would understand them, of those terrible conflicts which the Jews had with Antiochus Epiphanes, from the 143d or 145th year of the *æra Seleucidarum* (according to the different computation of the beginning of that persecution; see 1 Macc. i. 20. 29.) to the 151st year of the same era, when Nicanor was slain. (1 Macc. vii. 1. 43.) Nor is that true which this opinion supposes, *viz.* that Nicanor's death put an end to the troubles of the Jews; for after that *there was great affliction in Israel, the like whereof had not been since the time that a prophet had not been seen among them,* as the same writer informs us, 1 Macc. ix. 27. So that this passage of Ezekiel's prophecy must necessarily be expounded of some other event.

Ver. 10. *So that they shall take no wood out of the field,* &c.] The quantity of these weapons will afford sufficient fuel for all that time.

They shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them.] The same measure they dealt to others, shall be measured out to them again. (Compare Isa. xiv. 2. xxxiii. 1. Rev. xiii. 10. xviii. 6.)

Ver. 11. *The valley of the passengers on the east side of the sea.*] *i. e.* The sea of Gennezareth, as the Chaldee paraphrast explains it. In the Hebrew language all lakes are called by the name of *seas.* The same is called the eastern sea, (xlvii. 18.) to distinguish it from the Mediterranean, called the *great sea westward,* Josh. xxiii. 4. The valley near this sea or lake is called *the valley of the passengers,* because it was a great road by which the merchants and traders from Syria and other eastern countries went into Egypt.

And it shall stop the noses of the passengers.] Or, *the passengers shall stop their noses, viz.* to avoid the smell of so many carcasses: the transitive is often taken in a passive or impersonal sense, as hath been observed upon Isa. xliv. 18.

Ver. 13. *Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them.*] See the note on the following verse.

And it shall be to them a renown, the day that I shall be glorified.] Or, *the day that I shall be glorified, shall be to them* [a day] *of renown; i. e.* a remarkable day of joy and gladness. (See ver. 21, 22.)

Ver. 14. *And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land, to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth.*] The latter part of the sentence may more clearly be translated thus, *even buriers with the passengers,* [to bury] *those that remain,* &c. For the passengers or searchers are distinguished from those whose office it is to bury the dead, in the following verse.

After the end of seven months shall they search.] All the people shall be employed seven months in burying the dead, (ver. 13.) and after they are ended, particular persons appointed for that purpose, shall make a clear riddance.

Ver. 15. *Then shall he set up a sign by it.*] A stone or some other mark of distinction, that men may avoid passing over them. (See the Excerpta out of Dr. Pocock's Miscellany Notes, in the Synopsis upon Luke xi. 44.) [*And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah.*] This is probably meant of a city that should be afterward built near this valley, and called *Hamonah,* signifying *a multitude,* to perpetuate the memory of such a transaction.

Ver. 17. *Speak to every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field,* &c.] It was the custom for persons that offered sacrifice to invite their friends to the feast that was made of the remainder. (See Gen. xxxiv. 54. 1 Sam. ix. 13.) So here the prophet, by God's command, invites the beasts and fowls to partake of the sacrifice of his enemies slain.

Gather yourselves to my sacrifice, that I do sacrifice for you.] The slaughter of God's enemies is called a *sacrifice,* because it is offered up as an atonement to the Divine justice. (Compare this verse with Isa. xxxiv. 6. Zeph. i. 7. Rev. xix. 17.)

Upon the mountains of Israel.] Where this great army was to be destroyed. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 18. *Of rams, of lambs, of goats, of bullocks.*] Of all ranks and kinds, who shall be brought like beasts to the slaughter. (Compare Psal. lxviii. 31. Isa. xxxiv. 6. Jer. l. 27. li. 40.)

All of them fatlings of Bashan.] See Deut. xxxii. 14.

Ver. 19. *And drink blood till ye be drunken.*] Or be *filled,* or satiated; for so the Hebrew *ravah* usually signifies: (see Cantic. v. 1. Jer. xxxi. 14. 25. Hag. i. 6.) and the Greek verb Μεθύω is taken in the same sense, John ii. 10. and so I conceive it should be understood, 1 Cor. xi. 21. where the apostle, reproving the abuse of their love-feasts, saith, *One is hungry, and another drinks,* or fills himself to *the full.*

Ver. 20. *Thus shall ye be filled at my table.*] The feast made upon the peace-offerings, or sacrifices of thanksgiving, is properly called *the table of the Lord.* (See Mal. i. 12.) From whence the expression is applied to the feast of the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. x. 21.

Ver. 21. *And I will set my glory among the heathen,* &c.] See xxxviii. 16. 23.

Ver. 22. *So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God,* &c.] Both by my acts of mercy in returning their captivity, (see ver. 28, 29.) and by my judgments executed upon their enemies.

Ver. 23, 24. *And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity,* &c.] They were not carried away by their enemies, because I wanted power to rescue them, but as a just punishment of their sins. (See xxxvi. 18—20.)

Ver. 25. *Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob.*] See xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 24. xxxvii. 21.

And have mercy upon the whole house of Israel.] See xx. 40.

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Ver. 26. *After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses,* &c.] The shame and reproach due to their sins. (See Dan. ix. 16.)

When they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid.] By their sins abusing those gracious promises of peace and safety which I had given them. (See Lev. xxvi. 5, 6.)

Ver. 27. *And am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations.*] See xxxvi. 23.

Ver. 28. *Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God.*] See ver. 22. and xxxiv. 30.

Ver. 29. *Neither will I hide my face any more from them.*] I will never withdraw my favour or protection from them. (See Isa. liv. 8.)

For I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel.] There will be a new effusion of God's Spirit upon the Jews, in order to their conversion: see Isa. lix. 20, 21. a place applied by St. Paul to this very purpose, Rom. xi. 26, 27. (Compare likewise Zech. xii. 10. and xi. 19. xxxvi. 27. of this prophecy.)

CHAP. XL.

ARGUMENT.

The general Argument to the following chapter.

God having forsaken the city and temple of Jerusalem, and given them up to destruction, for the idolatries and other sins committed there: in this and the following chapters, he sheweth to the prophet, in vision, the model or plan of another temple, of the same dimensions with that built by Solomon; as Villalpandus, and other learned men, with great probability, suppose. David had the pattern of that temple, which Solomon was to build, revealed to him by God: (see 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. 19.) as Moses had the model of the tabernacle represented to him by a vision, while he was in the mount, (Exod. xxv. 40.) And here the plan of Solomon's temple is again discovered to Ezekiel, who, foretelling the destruction of this temple by the Chaldeans, shews how highly it was valued by the Jews, when he calls it, *The excellency of their strength,* and *the desire of their eyes,* (xxiv. 21.) They looked upon it as the honour, glory, and safeguard of their nation. This lying in ruins at the time of this vision, the Jews had need of being comforted, instructed, and humbled upon that occasion; they would not have cared for the thoughts of returning home, were there no promise made of restoring the temple, as well as their commonwealth; the temple being the pledge of God's presence among them. Moses's ritual law would soon have been adapted to the manners of the gentiles, where they lived, if the expectations of a new temple, to which most of its rites were fitted, had not restrained their propensity to idolatry; and they would have been dispirited beyond measure, as they were afterward, upon sight of their second temple, if the prophet had plainly foretold, that their new temple should fall short of the glory of the old one: they were therefore to be encouraged to the observation of their law, with the hopes of returning to rebuild their temple, which should be finished after the plan of that of Solomon.

We cannot suppose any exact model of Solomon's temple remaining, which might be transmitted to those that returned from the captivity; for it was above seventy years from the destruction of the first temple to the finishing of the second, in the sixth year of Darius, (Ezra vi. 15.) During which interval, the ancient priests must be all dead; and those that were younger could have but confused and very imperfect ideas of it. To direct them, therefore, in the dimensions, parts, order, and rules of their new temple, is one reason why Ezekiel is so particular in the description of the old. And, no doubt, but Zerubbabel's temple was accordingly conformable to that of Solomon, in figure, disposition of parts, and order of the whole fabric and service. If in state or magnificence there was some variety, that is to be imputed to the necessity of their circumstances, and doth not imply any essential alteration.

However, the building being found inferior to the model here prescribed, the first discovery of which was a sensible mortification to the ancient men that had seen the first temple, (Ezra iii. 12.) it was natural for the Jews of former ages, that studied the style of prophecy, to conclude, as many of the Jewish writers of later times have done, that Ezekiel's temple had a farther view, and the chief intent and design of it was that to be fulfilled under the Messias. Whatever was august and illustrious in the prophetic figures, and not literally fulfilled in or near their own times, those things were justly thought to belong to the days of the Messias; but as for minuter circumstances, there is no more necessity of giving them a place in the spiritual application of a prophecy, than in the explication of a parable. The temple, and the temple-worship, was a proper figure of Christ's church, and of the spiritual worship to be instituted by him: and the notions of the Jews were to be raised by degrees to a farther and higher meaning, hereafter to be completed, without destroying their obligations to the statutes and ordinances God enjoined for the present.

There was the more reason for Ezekiel's keeping to the figure of Solomon's temple, in speaking of the times of the Messias, because Solomon was a type of the Messias chiefly in this respect, that he was to build a house for the name and worship of God, according to Nathan's prophecy concerning him, (2 Sam. vii. 13, 14.) several parts of which prophecy are applied to Christ in the New Testament: (see Heb. i. 5. Luke i. 32.) this exposition of that place receives a farther confirmation from hence, that other prophets foretell the same thing concerning the Messias. Beside those passages in Ezekiel, which are under our present consideration, Zechary after him prophesied that the *man whose name is the* BRANCH *shall build the temple of the Lord; and bear the glory, and sit and rule upon his throne, and shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both; i. e.* between the kingdom and the priesthood; the same person shall be both king and priest, and his offices shall not interfere with, or obstruct each other. (Zech. vi. 12, 13.)

The New Testament copies the style of the old: St. Paul, in his Epistles, calls the Christian church by the name of the *house* or *temple of God,* (see 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 20, &c. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 6.) In pursuance of the same metaphor he tells us, that *antichrist shall sit in the temple of God,* meaning the Christian

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church, (2 Thess. ii. 4.) And St. John in the Revelation not only describes the heavenly sanctuary by representations taken from the Jewish temple, (Rev. xi. 19. xiv. 17. xv. 5. 8.) but likewise transcribes several of Ezekiel's expressions, (Rev. iv. 2, 3. 6. xi. 1, 2. xxi. 12, &c. xxii. 1, 2.) and borrows his allusions from the state of the temple, as it was built by Solomon, not as it stood in our Saviour's time; as if the former had a more immediate reference to the times of the gospel. Thus, Rev. iv. 1, &c. the throne of God is represented like that over the ark, where the Schechinah or Divine Glory sat, encompassed with four cherubims [see the note upon ver. 6. of the first chapter], and with the seats of four-and-twenty elders, alluding to the heads of so many priestly courses. All these ornaments were proper to the first temple, as it was finished by Solomon; whereas in the second temple there was no proper ark, no throne encompassed by cherubims, no visible glory; and but four of the four-and-twenty courses of the priests returned from Babylon. (See Ezra ii. 36. 39.)

Upon the whole we may conclude, that the general scope of Ezekiel's temple is, by giving a promise of restoring Solomon's, to preserve the Jews from defiling themselves with idolatry during their captivity; and when the time of that should be expired, to encourage them to go home, and rebuild their temple, and observe the laws and ordinances prescribed by Moses, for performing God's worship there, which yet was never to be equal to Solomon's in every respect, before the Messias should come, who should supply its deficiencies, and whose church should resemble Solomon's temple in symmetry and beauty, in firmness and duration, in a regular, orderly, and decent worship of the true God, and in the manifestation of the Divine presence, at first by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, and ever since by the inward assistances, comforts, and protection of the same Spirit.

The fortieth chapter contains a description of the two outward courts, with the chambers thereto belonging, together with the porch of the temple.

Ver. 1. *IN the five-and-twentieth year of our captivity.*] See the note upon i. 2.

In the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month.] *i. e.* The first month, called here the *beginning of the year*, which in the ecclesiastical computation was the month Nisan. The word *month* likewise taken indefinitely signifies the first month, xxvi. 1.

In the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten.] Zedekiah's reign commenced from Jehoiachin's captivity, in the eleventh year of whose reign the city was destroyed, (Jer. lii. 5, 6.) So the fourteenth year after the destruction of the city must be coincident with the twenty-fifth of Jehoiachin's captivity.

The hand of the Lord was upon me.] See i. 3.

Ver. 2. *In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel.*] See the note upon viii. 3.

And set me upon a very high mountain.] The expression points out Mount Moriah, whereon the temple was built, which is here called a *very high mountain;* because it represents the seat of the Christian church, foretold by the prophets that it should be *established upon the top of the mountains.* (See Isa. ii. 1. Micah iv. 1. compared with Rev. xxi. 10.)

By which was a frame of a city on the south.] Mount Moriah lay southward of the hill of Zion, or the city of David, though both of them lay northward in respect of the lower part of the city, which from the times of Solomon was most commonly called by the name of Jerusalem. (See Psal. xlviii. 2. Isa. xiv. 13. and Dr. Lightfoot's Geographical Description of Jerusalem, chap. 22.) So the words describe the situation of the temple on the south side of Mount Zion; which with all its courts, buildings, and walls encompassing the courts, and the whole area, or holy mountain, (see xlii. 20.) resembled a city for bigness. So Tacitus (lib. v. Hist.) describes the temple as built like a citadel for strength and largeness.

Or we may suppose that the prophet being brought by the Spirit from Chaldea into the land of Israel, which lay southward of Babylon, (see i. 4.) might see placed just before his eyes a representation of the city and temple, standing upon an eminence, both in respect of their natural situation, and that the prophet might take a better view of them: for it appears from xlviii. 15, &c. that he had a view of the holy city which was to be restored, as well as of the temple.

Ver. 3. *Behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass.*] Or burnished or polished brass, as we read i. 7. Dan. x. 6. that is, of a bright or flaming colour. This seems to be an inferior angel, because he is distinguished from the Divine Glory, or the Logos appearing in the Schechinah, xliii. 6. (Compare ix. 3.)

With a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring-reed.] The use of the line was to measure the land of Israel, and of the reed, to take the dimensions of the buildings in and about the temple; as also to set out several portions of land belonging to the sanctuary and city, to the prince and people. (See xlv. 1, &c. xlvii. 3, &c.)

And he stood in the gate.] Probably the north gate, being the first entrance the prophet may be supposed to have arrived to, as he came from Chaldea, which lay northward of Judea. (See the note upon ver. 2.)

Ver. 4. *Son of man.*] See the note upon ii. 1.

Behold with thine eyes—declare all thou seest to the house of Israel.] Compare xliii. 10. xliv. 5. The temple now represented, was partly designed to assure the people that their temple should be restored, and to serve them partly as a model, by which they should rebuild it at their return from captivity. The Jewish writers do confirm this opinion, when they tell us, "That the children of the captivity, who returned from Babylon, followed the platform of that temple, which Ezekiel described, as far as their circumstances would allow." (See Dr. Lightfoot's Description of the Temple, chap. 10.)

Ver. 5. *And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about.*] A wall went round the whole compass or square of the holy mountain whereon the temple was situate, to separate the holy ground from that which was profane. (See xlii. 20.)

And in the man's hand a measuring-reed of six cubits long, by the cubit and a hand-breadth.] The prophet explains what sort of cubit he means in the following delineation of the temple; *viz.* such a one as consists of six hand-breadths, or one hand-breadth over the cubit used in Chaldee, where he now lived. (Compare xli. 8. xliii. 13.) This is the

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measure of a Scripture cubit, generally agreed to be equivalent to eighteen inches, or a foot and a half of our measure. (See Bishop Cumberland, of Scripture Weights and Measures, p. 36, &c.)

So he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.] The breadth or thickness of the wall was equal to the height of it.

Ver. 6. *Then he came unto the gate which looketh towards the east.*] The temple being placed towards the west part of the holy mountain, as the sanctuary was at the west end of the temple, (see the note upon viii. 16.) this was the first gate that led to it. This gate opened into the first court, or the court of the people; (see ver. 19.) and is called the *king's gate*, 1 Chron. ix. 18. as being built by king Solomon.

And went up the stairs thereof.] Which consisted of seven steps, as the Septuagint expressly mentioned. (Compare ver. 22. 26.)

And measured the [one] *threshold of the gate, which was one reed broad, and the other threshold,* &c.] He went up the stairs, that he might more easily measure the upper lintel, as well as the lower threshold. The word *saph*, translated *threshold*, signifies the lintel, or upper part of the door-case, as well as the threshold properly so called, or lower part of it. The plural *sippim* comprehends both; see xli. 16. Isa. vi. 4. and the Septuagint translate it there ὑπέρθυρον, the *lintel*. Some understand the word here of the two side-posts, in which sense it is used, Amos ix. 1.

Ver. 7. *And every little chamber was one reed long, and one reed broad,* &c.] Along the wall of the porch were chambers, three on each side, ver. 10. These the angel measured, and they were of equal dimensions, each one reed square, with a passage of five cubits' breadth between them.

And the threshold of the gate, by the porch of the gate within, was one reed.] The inward threshold at the farther end of the porch looking into the first court, was of the same size with the outward one, ver. 6. (Compare ver. 15.)

Ver. 8. *He measured also the porch of the gate within, one reed.*] Or, *He even measured,* &c. for the words seem to be a repetition of what was said in the latter part of the seventh verse; so the Vulgar Latin understood it, and therefore omits the whole verse: and the Septuagint in the Alexandrian copy, published by Dr. Grabe, join the two verses in sense together. (See the like repetitions, ver. 11, 12. 16. xli. 11.)

Ver. 9. *Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits,* &c.] This was a portico beyond the little chambers, which looked inward, *i. e.* into the first court: it was eight cubits wide, and the two side-posts were two cubits thick, which made up the ten cubits mentioned ver. 11. The word *ael*, translated *post*, is the same in sense with *mezuzah*, (xlv. 19.) which properly signifies the side-post that supports the lintel. (See Exod. xii. 22.)

Ver. 10. *And the little chambers of the gate eastward,* &c.] Or, *The little chambers of the eastern gate,* which he has been hitherto describing; and the form of which is here repeated. These rooms were for the use of the porters that took care of the several gates that led to the temple. (See 1 Chron. ix. 18. 23, 24. xxvi. 12, 13. 18.)

And the posts had one measure on this side and on that side.] The side-posts, or fronts of the doors, belonging to each row of chambers, were of the same size.

Ver. 11. *And he measured the breadth of the entry of the gate, ten cubits.*] See ver. 9.

And the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.] By *the length of the gate*, Villalpandus understands the height, which he supposes to have been two reeds, or twelve cubits and a half high; for he reckons every reed to consist of six ordinary cubits, and a fourth part over, which, in the common computation of full numbers for fractions, may be called thirteen cubits. Bern. L'Amy, in his book De Tabernaculo Fœderis, explains the expression of the breadth of the walls on each side of the gate, which he supposes to be six cubits and a half: and so the LXX. interpreters may be thought to understand the words, who translate the Hebrew *oreb* by Εὖρος, *breadth*.

Ver. 12. *The place also before the chambers was one cubit on this side, and—on that side.*] There was a border, or a rail, which enclosed a cubit's space before each chamber.

And the little chambers were six cubits on this side, &c.] See ver. 7.

Ver. 13. *He measured then the gate from the roof of one little chamber to the roof of another: the breadth was five and-twenty cubits.*] Measuring the arch of the gate from north to south, it was in breadth five-and-twenty cubits; which L'Amy thus computes,—the breadth of the gate ten cubits, the breadth of both the side-walls thirteen cubits, and two cubits for the space or border on each of the side-chambers; ver. 12.

Door against door.] The door to each chamber exactly answered the door on the opposite side.

Ver. 14. *He made also posts of threescore cubits.*] The angel described or made a delineation of the height of the columns or pillars, which were to support the rooms or stories over the arch of the gate, and these were in height sixty cubits: the whole building being divided into three stories, like those described xliii. 6. The height of each story is thus computed by Villalpandus: (par. ii. lib. v. cap. 16.) That the pillars of the lower story were twenty cubits high; those of the second fifteen; and the uppermost twelve; the remainder being allowed for floors and the roof. The word *posts* in this verse signifies *pillars*. (Compare xlii. 6.)

Even unto the posts of the court round about the gate.] Villalpandus, and several interpreters, suppose there is an ellipsis in the words, which they thus supply: *And there was one measure* to the pillars of the court, and of the gate round about; which makes the sense run plain and easy: compare xli. 9. where there is the same ellipsis.

Ver. 15. *And from the face of the gate of the entrance unto the face of the inner gate were fifty cubits.*] The whole length of the porch, from the outward front (compare xli. 21. 25.) unto the inner side, which looks into the first court, (ver. 17.) was fifty cubits; which may be thus computed: twelve cubits for the thickness of the wall at each end, (ver. 6.) eighteen for the three chambers on each side, (ver. 7.) and ten cubits for the spaces between the chambers: allowing the same space between the chambers on each side, and the two walls, (ibid.) Villalpandus observes the just proportion between the breadth and length of the gate; the length being double to the breadth, (ver. 13.) The same he tells us was observed between the breadth of the cloisters of the outward court, which was fifty cubits; and the contents of the whole area, which was a hundred. (See the note on ver. 18.)

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Ver. 16. *And there were narrow windows to the little chambers, and to their posts within the gate round about.*] Every one of these little chambers (ver. 7.) had a narrow window to it, towards the inside of the gate, where the passage was; and so there was over the side-posts or fronts, placed at the entrance of every chamber. By *narrow* or *closed* windows, some understand windows with lattice-work, to let in the light: but the phrase seems equivalent to that which is more fully expressed, 1 Kings vi. 4. by *open and narrow windows; i. e.* as the margin of our Bibles doth very well explain it, *broad within* [to disperse the light] and *narrow without.*

And likewise to the arches.] By windows to the arches, Villalpandus understands the stone itself wrought into figures of net-work, and made in the shape of a lattice. The word translated *arches,* doth likewise signify a porch, or entrance, and so the Vulgar Latin here translates it; and then the sense is, that there were windows over every door: compare ver. 31. 34. with ver. 37. where the same sense is expressed in the two former verses, by *arches, aelamo* in the Hebrew; and in the latter, by *posts,* or fronts, *aelau.*

And the windows were round about inward.] A repetition of what was said in the former part of the verse. (See ver. 10.)

And upon each post were palm-trees.] A palm-tree was carved upon the chapiter of each side-post, or front. (See ver. 26.)

Ver. 17. *Then brought he me into the outward court.*] There were two courts belonging to Solomon's temple; the outward for the people, the inward for the priests. It is probable, that Solomon built only the inner court; (see 1 Kings vi. 36. compared with viii. 64.) and that the outer court was built after his time, whereupon it is called the *new court,* 2 Chron. xx. 5. After which time, there is particular mention of the *two courts of the house of the Lord,* 2 Kings xxi. 5. A third court, called *the court of the gentiles,* was afterward added by Herod, when he rebuilt the temple.

The *great court,* mentioned 2 Chron. iv. 9. as distinct from the court of the priests, Dr. Lightfoot explains of the holy mountain, or area, where the temple stood, which Solomon enclosed with a wall, and separated it from common ground; so that text, 1 Kings vii. 12. *The great court round about was with three rows of hewed stones,* &c. is to be understood only of this enclosure, according to his opinion. (See his Description of the Temple, chap. 10. 18.)

And, lo, there were chambers, and a pavement made for the court round about.] These chambers were over the cloister, and supported by it. (See ver. 14. and xlii. 8.) They might be for the use of the priests; and likewise to be store-houses for tithes and offerings. (See 1 Chron. xxviii. 12.)

Thirty chambers were upon the pavement.] The number of them Villalpandus thus divides:—towards the east and west, seven on a side, answering one another; on the north and south sides, eight a-piece, abating one chamber, both on the east and west side, for the thickness of the walls or arches which supported those two gates, which he supposes to be higher than the north and south gates.

Ver. 18. *And the pavement by the sides of the gates, over against* [or equal to] *the length of the gates, was the lower pavement.*] The breadth of this pavement, that lay on the side of the gate, was equal to the length of the whole porch or gate, which was fifty cubits, ver. 15. This will plainly appear, if we consider, that the area of the outward court contained a hundred cubits, ver. 19. So the porticoes, or cloisters, cutting the area in right angles, by the gate placed in the middle of the court, the pavement belonging to each side of the gate, or cloister, must be just half that dimension, *viz.* fifty cubits. The word *gates,* in the plural number, seems to be used for the singular, as it implies the whole building, consisting of upper rooms, as well as the lower passage. (See the note upon ver. 14.) The word *leummah,* which our translation renders *over against,* often signifies *equal, answerable,* or the same *proportion;* (see Noldius, p. 525.) and so it is used i. 20. iii. 8. xlv. 7. xlviii. 13, &c. This was called the lower pavement, in respect of the several ascents which were still to go up, the nearer you came to the temple. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Description of the Temple, chap. 20.) Villalpandus explains the lower pavement by way of distinction to the upper rooms, or chambers, placed over them, for the use of the priests, or as store-rooms for the service of the temple.

Ver. 19. *Then he measured the breadth, from the fore-front of the lower gate unto the fore-front of the inner gate without, a hundred cubits eastward.*] That is, unto the hither side of the gate which faced the inner court. He measured the whole space of ground between the west front of the lower gate to the front of the upper gate, which leads into the eastern inner court, and found it a hundred cubits; the same was the space between the south front and north front: so the court was exactly square. (See ver. 23. 27. 47.) The expression is elliptical; as if he had said, there were a hundred cubits from west to east, and from north to south. There were two gates belonging to the porch, or passage, that led to the inner court; the first was eastward looking towards the outer court, which is here meant; the other looked westward into the inner court. The gate at the east end of the outer court is called the lower gate, for the same reason as the pavement is called the lower pavement, ver. 18. because there was still an ascent, as you went from one court to the other. The expression of the *inner gate without,* is explained in the note upon xlvi. 2.

Northward.] The Septuagint join this word to the following verse, and render the sentence thus; *And he brought me to the north, and behold the gate looking to the north in the outer court.*

Villalpandus explains the nineteenth verse to this sense; That the outward court consisted of seven squares, a hundred cubits each; the first placed directly before the court of the priests, and of the same dimensions with it; the others extended on the north and south sides of the outer court, and likewise commensurate with the sides both of the inner court and of the temple, each of which contained one hundred cubits. By which description it must contain a square of three hundred cubits on the east part, and two hundred cubits both on the north and south side. (Consult Villalpandus's Delineation of the Temple.)

Ver. 20, 21. *And the gate of the outward court that looketh towards the north—and the little chambers thereof,* &c.] The whole model was the same with that of the east gate. (See ver. 9, 10. 13. 15, 16.)

Ver. 22. *And they went up into it by seven steps.*] See ver. 6.

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And the arches thereof were before them.] Or, at the entrance of them. The Septuagint render the word *liphni, before them,* as if it meant the same with *el penemith, within,* or *inward,* (xlii. 4.) This sense is followed by most expositors, to denote that the arches were within, or at the top of the stairs; but the phrase may probably mean the same with *nal penehem, suitable to them; i. e.* to those of the east gate. (See the following note.)

Ver. 23. *And the gate of the inner court was over against the gate towards the north, and towards the east.*] The words might be translated more plainly thus; *And the gate of the inner court was proportionable,* or answerable, *to the gate that was towards the north and towards the east.* The expression is elliptical, as that of ver. 19. and the full import of it is, that the north gate of the inner court did exactly answer this north gate of the outer court, described ver. 20. 22. And in like manner the east gate of the inner court answered the east gate of the outward court. The word *neged,* translated *over against,* signifies here suitable, or proportionable; in which sense it is used xli. 16. Gen. ii. 18. *I will make him a help,* kenegdho, *suitable to him:* so an equivalent expression, *nal penehem, before them,* is used in describing the house which Solomon built, 1 Kings vii. 6. where our margin expresses the sense very properly *The porch was according to them; i. e.* answerable to them, or of the same proportion with them. (See the note upon xli. 4.) So the Greek preposition κατέναντι may most properly be understood, Rom. iv. 17. Κατέναντι οὗ ἐπίστευσε Θεοῦ, not *before,* but *like unto him whom he believed,* even *God;* to this sense, That Abraham is a father of many nations, in like manner as the God in whom he believed, is the Father of gentiles as well as Jews; as it is said in the foregoing chapter, ver. 29.

Ver. 24—26. *After that he brought me towards the south,* &c.] The twenty-third verse is to be read in a parenthesis, where the prophet having shewed the exact correspondence between the gates of both courts, he proceeds in the three following verses to describe the south gate of the outer court, by the same dimensions he had before given of the east and north gate. He takes no notice of the western gate of the outer court, because it joined to the eastern gate of the inner court, which he describes ver. 32.

Ver. 27. *And there was a gate in the inner court towards the south.*] The south gate in the inner court was exactly parallel to the south gate in the outer. (See ver. 23.)

And he measured from gate to gate a hundred cubits.] See ver. 19. 23. 47.

Ver. 27, 28. *And there was a gate in the inner court towards the south.—And he brought me to the inner court by the south gate.*] Villalpandus, and those of his opinion, who maintain, that the outer court enclosed the inner on the east, north, and south sides, explain these words to this sense; That the prophet was conducted from the south gate of the outer court (ver. 24.) to the south gate of the inner court, which was over against it, and so into the inner court itself.

Ver. 28, 29. *And he brought me to the inner court towards the south,* &c.] After he had measured the inner court, he took the dimensions of the south gate itself, and the chambers thereto belonging, and found them of the same dimensions with the former.

Ver. 30. *And the arches round about were five-and-twenty cubits long, and five cubits broad.*] Length is here taken for height, as before, ver. 11. The words express the dimensions of those arches, which were between the several little chambers, between each of which there was the space of five cubits, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 31. *And the arches thereof were towards the outer court.*] Or, *were like* [those of] *the outer court;* for the preposition *el* is sometimes taken in this sense. (See Noldius, p. 63.) If we understand it according to the common interpretation, that the arches or fronts (see the note on ver. 16.) of the inner court looked towards the outer, it is a confirmation of Villalpandus's opinion, that the outer court surrounded the inner. (See the note upon ver. 19.)

And the going up to it had eight steps.] Whereas in the outer court the ascent had but seven. (Ver. 22. 26.) The fifteen Psalms, from the hundred and twentieth forward, called *Songs of Degrees,* or Ascents, are supposed to have been sung upon some of these steps, or ascents.

Ver. 32—37. *And he brought me into the inner court towards the east,* &c.—*And he brought me to the north gate,* &c.] The east and north gate had the same dimensions with the south gate, described ver. 28, 29. 31.

Ver. 34. *And the arches thereof.*] What is expressed here by *arches,* is signified by *posts,* or fronts, ver. 37. (See the notes upon ver. 10. 16.)

Ver. 38. *And the chambers, and the entries thereof, were by the posts of the gate, where they washed the burnt-offering.*] The chambers mentioned ver. 36. were near the entrance of the north gate, where they washed the legs and entrails of the burnt-offering, and marble tables were placed there for that purpose. See Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, chap. 35. According to this exposition, the word *gates* stands for the singular number, as ver. 18. But that learned author observes in the same chapter, that they washed the sacrifices on the south side of the court of the priests, as well as on the north side, when the sacrifices were more numerous than the north side could well contain; so he understands the word *gates* as comprehending both north and south gate; and confirms this interpretation from the placing of the lavers, which were designed for that use, and were set five on the right side of the house, and five on the left, (1 Kings vii. 39.)

Ver. 39, 40. *In the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side,* &c.] Those expositors, who by the word *gates* in the foregoing verse understand both the north and south gates, render the sense of these two verses perspicuously thus: *In the porch of one gate (viz.* that on the south) *were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side,* &c. *And at the outer side of the step of the entry of the north gate were two tables:* which interpretation agrees very well with what follows, ver. 41. *Four tables were on this side, and four tables on that side.* But they that understand these verses to be only a description of the north gate (on which side of the altar the sacrifices were commonly killed), suppose that two tables were on each side, as you came into the porch of that gate, and two on each side of the inner part of the gate that looked towards the altar.

Ver. 39. *The sin-offering, and the trespass-offering.*] It is no easy matter to ascertain the difference between a sin-offering and a trespass-offering. Dr. Outram (lib. i. cap. 13. de Sacrificiis) is of opinion, that a trespass-offering implied

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an injury done to another, as well as a breach of God's law. Dr. Lightfoot hath accurately related the sense of the Jewish writers upon this subject, in his Temple Service, chap. 8. sect. 2, 3.

Ver. 43. *Within were hooks, a hand broad, fastened round about.*] Within the gate or entrance on the north side of the inner court, were iron hooks, for the hanging up the beasts that were to be sacrificed, in order to the flaying off their skins. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Description of the Temple, chap. 35.)

And upon the tables was the flesh of the offering.] Or, they laid *the flesh of the offering.* Upon those marble tables the priests laid the flesh of the slain beasts, and there cut it in pieces, and fitted it for laying upon the altar. (See Lev. i. 6.)

Ver. 44. *And without the inner gate were the chambers of the singers of the inner court.*] On the farther side of the inner gate, as you come into the inner court, (compare ver. 40.) were the chambers of the singers, who constantly attended upon the service of the temple. (See 1 Chron. vi. 31, 32.)

Which was on the side of the north gate; and their prospect was towards the south.] These chambers were placed at the north-east corner of the inner court, and so had their prospect towards the south.

One at the side of the east gate, having the prospect towards the south.] They had likewise chambers on the south-east corner of that court, which had the prospect towards the north.

The copies which the Septuagint followed, read this verse to a clearer and better sense thus: *And he brought me into the inner court, and, behold, there were two chambers; one on the side of the north gate, looking towards the south; and the other on the side of the south gate, looking towards the north.*

Ver. 45. *This chamber, whose prospect is towards the south, is for the priests,* &c.] The word *chamber* may stand for chambers in the plural, (as *side-chamber* doth, xli. 5. 9.) and signify a row of buildings on the north side of the inner court, distinct from the chambers of the singers, (ver. 44.) and designed for the use of the priests, who were in constant attendance, according to their courses, upon the service of the temple. (See Numb. xviii. 5. 1 Chron. vi. 49. 2 Chron. xiii. 11.)

The keepers of the charge of the house.] They took care of the holy vessels, and kept constant watch and ward (as the word *mishmereth* properly signifies) about the temple. (See 1 Chron. ix. 23. Psal. cxxxiv. 1.) The word *priests* may include *Levites* under it, as *Levites* elsewhere comprehends *priests.* (See xliv. 10. xlviii. 11.)

Ver. 46. *And the chamber whose prospect is towards the north is for the priests and keepers of the charge of the altar.*] Another row of chambers on the south side of the inner court is for the descendants of the family of Aaron, whose office it is to attend upon the service of the altar, and keep the fire burning thereon perpetually, (Lev. vi. 12, 13.)

These are the sons of Zadok, among the sons of Levi.] To the eldest house of the sons of Aaron the high-priesthood belonged; so that office of right belonged to Zadok, though the family of Ithamar usurped it for some time, from Eli, who was high-priest in Samuel's time, to Abiathar, whom Solomon dispossessed, and restored the high-priesthood to the right line, by placing Zadok in his room, (1 Kings ii. 27. 35.) The family of Zadok is only taken notice of in this vision, it may be for this reason, because they kept close to the worship of God, when the priest of Ithamar's line forsook it, and fell into idolatry. (See xliv. 15.) And the eldest son of Zadok's family having an unquestionable title to the high-priesthood, (see Numb. xxv. 13.) upon that account was an eminent type of the Messias, the eternal High-priest. (See Numb. xxxv. 25. 28.)

Ver. 47. *And he measured the court, a hundred cubits long, and a hundred cubits broad, four-square.*] The inner court was of the same dimensions with the outer. (See ver. 19. 23. 27.)

And the altar that was before the house.] Or rather, *and the altar was before the house; i. e.* stood in the inner court just before the porch that opened into the temple. The altar was now measured; the measure of it being described afterward, xliii. 13, &c.

Ver. 48. *And measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side.*] By the *posts* are meant the side-posts or columns on each side of the door of entrance. (See ver. 9.) These were measured to be five cubits thick, both on the north and south sides.

And the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side.] By the *breadth of the gate,* Villalpandus understands the space of the wall on each side, from the entrance itself to the two corners: (compare xli. 3.) which, supposing with the text here to take up six cubits, and the entrance of the porch to be fourteen cubits, both those dimensions make up the length of the porch to be twenty cubits, from north to south, according to the measure set down in the following verse. This interpretation is countenanced by the Septuagint, who translate the latter part of the verse thus: *And the breadth of the gate fourteen cubits; and the sides of the gate of the porch three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side.*

Ver. 49. *The length of the porch was twenty cubits.*] The same length with the porch of Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi. 3. which being there said to be of the same measure with the breadth of the house, must be understood of its dimensions from north to south.

And the breadth eleven cubits.] The porch in Solomon's temple was but ten cubits in breadth: (1 Kings vi. 3.) the length of such buildings being commonly double to the breadth. (See ver. 13. 15. 21. 25. 33. and 36. of this chapter, and xli. 2.) Some copies of the LXX. read *ten cubits;* and L'Amy conjectures that was the ancient reading in the Hebrew. St. Jerome, upon the place, suspects there might be a mistake in the Hebrew copy, though the emendation he offers doth not at all render the sense clearer.

Villalpandus supposes the breadth of the porch to be ten cubits and a half; (see the note on ver. 11.) which, putting an entire number in the room of a fraction, may be accounted eleven.

And he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it.] The ascent was by eight steps, according to the Vulgar Latin; the same number which belonged to the several entrances into the inner court. (See ver. 31. 34. 37.) The copies of the LXX. read *ten steps.*

And there were pillars by the posts.] By the side-posts of the door, or entrance; (see ver. 48.) like those erected

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in Solomon's temple, called *Jachin* and *Boaz*, 1 Kings vii. 21. which were set up *before the temple*, as it is expressed 2 Chron. iii. 17.

CHAP. XLI.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a description of the measures, parts, chambers, and ornaments, of the temple itself.

Ver. 1. *AFTERWARD he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, which was the breadth of the tabernacle.*] By the *posts* are meant the piers or door-cases on each side of the entrance: (see xl. 9. 48.) these were six cubits thick on the north and south sides. *Rochob*, translated *breadth*, sometimes signifies thickness: (see ver. 9. 12. of this chapter, and xl. 5.) the same thickness had the upper lintel over the door; for so Villalpandus rightly explains the Hebrew word *ohel*, which we render *tabernacle*. That word sometimes signifies a *covering*, and so it is rendered by our translators, Exod. xxvi. 7. and is to be understood in the same sense, Exod. xxxvi. 14. where our English reads, *For a* tent *over the tabernacle;* but it should be translated, *For a* covering *over the tabernacle;* to which sense the LXX. translate it in both places. In this signification it may not be unfitly applied to the upper lintel, which is a kind of covering to the door; and thus it is generally understood by the rabbins upon this place.

Ver. 2. *And the breadth of the door was ten cubits; and the sides of the door were five cubits on this side, and five cubits on the other side.*] The entrance itself being ten cubits broad, and the wall on each side five cubits, makes the breadth of the house itself to be just twenty cubits, as it is expressed in the latter part of the verse, which was the same in Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi. 2.

And he measured the length thereof, forty cubits.] The length of the first sanctuary, as distinct from the inward, or the holiest of all, which was twenty cubits in length, (ver. 4.) and made the whole structure sixty cubits long; wherein it agreed with Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi. 2. 17.

Ver. 3. *Then he went inward, and measured the posts of the door two cubits,* &c.] From the outward sanctuary he went forward towards the holiest of all, and measured the thickness of the partition-wall, called the *veil of the temple*, Matt. xxvii. 51. to be two cubits, the entrance itself six cubits, and the breadth of the wall on each side of the door seven cubits: compare xl. 48. where the *breadth of the gate* is taken in the same sense: the breadth of the wall, thus computed, making up fourteen cubits, and being added to the breadth of the entrance itself, makes up twenty cubits; the breadth of the inner sanctuary, as it is set down in the following verse.—*And measured the post of the door two cubits.*] Maimonides, in Beth-Habbekirah, saith, That in the first temple there was a wall between the sanctuary and most holy place of the thickness of a cubit: but in the second temple, instead of a wall there were two veils made, one towards the most holy place, and the other towards the outward sanctuary, leaving a space between them of the thickness of a cubit, where the wall was supposed to stand in Solomon's temple.

Ver. 4. *So he measured the length thereof twenty cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits.*] It was an exact cube of the same dimensions in length, breadth, and height. (See 1 Kings vi. 20.)

Before the temple.] The words should rather be rendered, *According to the* [breadth of] *the temple.* The Hebrew word *el-pené, before,* is promiscuously used with *nal-pené,* which signifies *of the same size,* or proportion; (see the note on xl. 23.) and so it is used 2 Chron. iii. 8. where the text, speaking of this subject, runs thus in the Hebrew, *He made the most holy house, the length thereof before the face of the breadth of the house;* where our translation very properly expresses the same sense, *According to the breadth of the house.* In the same sense the phrase is used, I Kings vi. 3. So the sense here is, that the breadth of the inner sanctuary was equal to the breadth of the outer part of the temple, which is said to be twenty cubits, ver. 2.

Ver. 5. *After he measured the wall of the house six cubits.*] The thickness of the wall from the foundation, the first story of the side-chambers. (See ver. 8.)

And the breadth of every side-chamber four cubits.] The side-chambers upon the lowermost floor were five cubits in breadth, (1 Kings vi. 6.) Therefore Villalpandus understands these words of the thickness of the buttresses, which supported those side-chambers.

Ver. 6. *And the side-chambers were three, one over another.*] They were three stories high. (See 1 Kings vi. 6.)

And thirty in order.] As in Solomon's temple, according to Josephus's description of it, (Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 3. sect. 2.) and built *round about the house on every side:* as it is expressed in the foregoing verse; to which the text in the first book of Kings agrees, vi. 5. The Talmudists increase the number to eight-and-thirty, placing fifteen on the north side, fifteen on the south, and eight on the west side of the temple. (See Cod. Middoth. cap. 4.) The supernumerary chambers being probably added in latter times.

And they entered into the wall which was for the side-chambers round about.] At five cubits' height from the ground, the wall or the buttresses which supported these outward chambers (see ver. 5.) abated of their thickness one cubit, and there was a rest or ledge of one cubit's breadth, on which the ends of each story were fastened. (See 1 Kings vi. 6. 10.)

But they had not hold in the wall of the house.] They were not fastened into the main wall of the house, but rested on the outside of the wall, where it grew narrower; which is meant by *migrenoth*, the *narrowest rests,* or rebatements, which we read 1 Kings vi. 6.

Ver. 7. *For there was an enlarging and a winding about still upward to the side-chambers,* &c.] So much of breadth was added to the side-chambers, as was taken out of the thickness of the wall; so that the middle story was one cubit larger, and the uppermost story two cubits larger, than the lower rooms. And winding stairs, which enlarged as the rooms did, went up between each two chambers from the bottom to the top; and there were two doors at the top of each pair of stairs, one door opening into one room, the other into that over against it. (See 1 Kings vi. 8.) The Talmudists add, that these winding stairs were continued from one side of the temple to the other, beginning at the north-east side, and by these they went into the upper room which was over the sanctuary. (See Cod. Middoth. cap. 4. sect. 5.)

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Ver. 8. *I saw also the height of the house round about.*] By *the house* is meant these chambers three stories high; in which sense the word *beth, house,* is used ver. 9.

The foundations of the side-chambers were a full reed of six great cubits.] By the *foundations of the side-chambers,* Villalpandus understands those rests or buttresses which supported them, which were at six cubits' distance from each other. Bernard L'Amy supposes this verse to contain a description of the second story of these side-chambers, which were six cubits broad, being one cubit wider than the lower rooms. (See the note on ver. 7.) Concerning the size of these cubits, see the note upon xl. 5. They are called *great cubits,* because they are larger than the cubit used in Chaldea, as was there observed.

Ver. 9. *The thickness of the wall, that was for the side-chamber without, was five cubits.*] This is to be understood, not of the veil of the temple, which was six cubits thick, (ver. 5.) but of the outward wall that enclosed these side-chambers. *Side-chamber* in the singular number is used for the plural, as in ver. 5. and xlii. 1. So *door* is used for *doors,* ver. 16. 20. *post* for *posts,* ver. 21. *chamber* xlii. 1. for *chambers,* ver. 4.

And that which was left [or the void space] *was the place of the side-chambers that were within.*] Or, *that belonged to the house,* or temple. This void space was of the same measure; *viz.* five cubits. (Compare ver. 11.) So the sense is supplied by Villalpandus and Noldius, n. 889. (Compare xl. 14.) The space of five cubits was allowed for the lower chambers, though the upper stories were wider by reason of the rebatement of the wall. (See ver. 7. and 1 Kings vi. 6.) Others understand this space of five cubits to be allowed for a walk before the chambers, or a passage from one chamber to another. (See ver. 11.)

Ver. 10. *And between the chambers was the wideness of twenty cubits round about the house.*] The chambers, called *leshacoth* in the Hebrew, are to be distinguished from the side-chambers mentioned in the foregoing verses; they mean, probably, the chambers of the inner court, described xl. 44, 45. Between these and the temple was left a space of twenty cubits. The temple stood in an area of a hundred cubits square, (ver. 14.) and was seventy cubits wide; (ver. 12.) to which adding the five cubits on either side, mentioned ver. 9. and the twenty cubits in this verse, makes up just a hundred cubits.

Ver. 11. *And the doors of the side-chambers were towards the place that was left,* &c.] Or, *towards the void space:* the doors of the lower rooms opened into this void space before the chambers, (ver. 9.) Or it may be understood of the two doors on the north and south sides, which opened on the top of the staircase into the upper rooms. (See ver. 7.)

And the breadth of the place that was left was five cubits round about.] See ver. 9.

Ver. 12. *Now the building that was before the separate place, at the end towards the west, was seventy cubits broad.*] Bernard L'Amy seems to give the clearest account of this difficult place, (lib. vi. cap. 11. n. 2.) He understands this word *binian,* translated *building,* of a wall or enclosure, as it is used, xl. 5. which ran along the outside of the priest's court, commensurate with the breadth of the western side of the temple, which was seventy cubits from north to south, and extended in length, from east to west, ninety cubits; ten cubits shorter than the whole area itself (see the following verse), and enclosing a void space of five cubits' breadth, which lay between the side-chambers and the enclosure; so he explains those words, *The wall of the building was five cubits thick round about.* (Compare xlii. 10.) Which void space he understands by *the separate place,* in this verse, and *the place which was left,* ver. 11.

Seventy cubits broad.] This was the breadth of the temple at the west end, and the buildings adjoining to it, which the abovementioned author thus computes: the breadth of the oracle twenty cubits; the thickness of the side-walls six cubits on each side; the side-chambers six cubits on each side; (see the note upon ver. 8.) thickness of the out-walls of those chambers five cubits on each side; a walk or gallery of five cubits before those chambers, (see the note on ver. 9.) and the utmost wall, enclosing the whole building, five cubits. Those that differ from him, as to some of those particulars, make up the sum of seventy cubits, by making an allowance for the stairs, and for conveyances to carry off the water.

Ver. 13. *So he measured the house, a hundred cubits long; and the separate place,* &c.] The whole temple, with the porch and walls, was in length a hundred cubits, from east to west, which may be thus computed: the thickness of the wall of the east porch five cubits; the passage through the porch eleven cubits; the wall between the porch and the temple six cubits; the outward sanctuary forty cubits; the partition-wall two cubits; the holiest of all twenty cubits; the thickness of the west wall six cubits; the side-chambers at the west end of the holy place five cubits; and outer wall of those chambers five cubits.

Ver. 14. *Also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the separate place towards the east, a hundred cubits.*] The whole front of the house eastward was a hundred cubits, which some expositors thus compute: the breadth of the temple twenty cubits; the thickness of the outward walls twelve cubits; the side-chambers eight cubits (of these dimensions they explain the latter part of the fifth verse of this chapter); the walls of those chambers five cubits on each side; the breadth of the void space five cubits on each side; and the twenty cubits round about the house, (ver. 10.) Others compute the sum a different way, by making different allowances for the outward buildings, and the several passages from one part of the temple to the other.

Ver. 15. *And he measured the length of the building over against the separate place which was behind it.*] Noldius translates this sentence more clearly thus: *And he measured the length of the building which was before the separate place,* [and] *that which was behind it,* or opposite to it; by which he understands the north and south porches; the east and west sides having been measured before, ver. 12. 14. (See his Concordance, p. 104.) The phrase *el-pené,* translated here *over against,* is rendered *before* in our English version, xliv. 4.

And the galleries thereof on one side, and on the other side, a hundred cubits, with [or *and*] *the inner temple, and the porches thereof.*] As the temple, and the area wherein it stood, made a square of a hundred cubits; so the courts and buildings thereto belonging were of the same dimensions. (See xl. 19. 47.)

By the *galleries* are meant the side-chambers, described ver. 6, 7. (Compare the following verse.)

With the inner temple.] Called the *inner house,* ver. 17.

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and xlii. 15. to distinguish it from the courts and buildings which were about it.

Ver. 16. *The door-posts, and the narrow windows, and the galleries round about in their three stories.*] He measured likewise the thickness of the walls on each side of the porch, (see xl. 48.) and the thickness of the door-cases, at the entrance into the temple, (xli. 1.) as also the narrow windows belonging to the three stories of chambers, which were placed on the outside of the temple. (See ver. 6. and xl. 16.)

Over against the door, ceiled with wood round about.] Or, *answerable* to which was *the door ceiled with wood.* The doors of the little chambers exactly answered one another, as those belonging to the porch did, xl. 13. The word *neged, over against,* signifies likewise *answerable,* or proportionable. (See the note on xl. 23.)

Door signifies every door. (See the note upon ver. 9.)

And from the ground up to the windows.] He measured from the ground up to the windows of the temple, which were placed above the side-chambers.

And the windows were covered.] Either because the side-chambers jetting out beyond the main wall of the temple, hindered their being seen in the inner court; or else they were covered on the inside with curtains drawn before them.

Ver. 17. *To that above the door, even to the inner house and without,* &c.] This verse may best be explained by joining it to what went before to this sense: that the windows were made in exact proportion, both over the porch and through every part of the temple, and the buildings adjoining to it. The *inner house* may mean only the first or outward sanctuary in this verse, as it is distinguished from the porch and outer buildings, expressed by the word *without:* (compare ver. 15.) for it is generally supposed that there were no windows in the inner sanctuary. But Villalpandus explains the words *even unto the inner house,* in an exclusive sense, as if he had said, As far as the inner house; and by the *walls round about,* understands the north and south walls of the temple. (Par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 34.)

Ver. 18. *And it was made with cherubims and with palm-trees,* &c.] On the inside of the house the walls were adorned with carved work of cherubims and palm-trees, as Solomon's temple was, 1 Kings vi. 29. The cherubims and palm-trees were placed alternately; and, according to the different way of counting them, you might reckon a palm-tree placed between two cherubims, or a cherubim placed between two palm-trees.

Ibid. and Ver. 19. *And every cherub had two faces; so that the face of a man was towards the palm-tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion towards the palm-tree on the other side.*] The cherubims had four faces or appearances: (see i. 10.) but only two of these appeared in the carved work; the two other faces, *viz.* that of an ox and an eagle, being supposed to be hid in the plain or surface of the wall.

Ver. 20. *From the ground up to above the door.*] *Up to the windows,* as it is expressed ver. 16. *up to the ceiling,* as the Septuagint explain it.

Ver. 21. *The posts of the temple were squared, and the face of the sanctuary.*] *i. e.* The entrance into the inner sanctuary. (Compare xl. 15.) The lintels, or door-posts, both of the temple and inner sanctuary, were not arched, but square, with a flat beam or upper lintel laid upon the top of the side-posts; compare 1 Kings vi. 33. where the margin translates the word *rebingim, four-square.*

Ver. 22. *The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits.*] The Septuagint add by way of explication, *And the breadth thereof two cubits;* that it might be four-square, as Moses's altar of incense was, Exod. xxx. 2. The altar here described is a cubit higher, and double the breadth to that of Moses, which is supposed to be agreeable to the dimensions of the altar made by Solomon, who did not exactly observe the proportions prescribed to Moses, in making the cherubims and the other furniture of the temple: God having given a new model to David of all the parts and ornaments of the temple. (See 1 Chron. xxviii. 12. 19.) This altar was made of wood, but overlaid with gold, (Exod. xxx. 3.) and therefore is called the *golden* altar, 1 Kings vii. 48. Rev. viii. 3.

And the corners thereof, the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood.] The corners are the same with the *horns* mentioned Exod. xxx. 2. being made out of the four posts which supported each corner of the altar. The surface or top of it is called the *length,* and the sides the *walls.*

This is the table that is before the Lord.] Compare xliv. 16. The words altar and table are used promiscuously, as hath been observed upon xxiii. 41. Incense was an emblem of the prayers of saints; (see Psal. cxii. 2. Rev. viii. 3, 4.) which are the spiritual sacrifices of those that worship God *in spirit and in truth.* (See Hos. xiv. 2.) This table or altar is said to be before the Lord, *i. e.* in the place of his peculiar presence. (Compare Exod. xxx. 8.) In the same sense the burnt-offering is said to be made *at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord, i. e.* in the place dedicated to his worship, Exod. xxix. 42. and the lamp is said to *burn before the Lord,* xxvii. 21. though the candlestick stood in the outward sanctuary.

Ver. 23. *And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors.*] Each of them had a double or a folding door. (See 1 Kings vi. 31. 34.)

Ver. 24. *And the doors had two leaves a-piece.*] The two doors being exceeding large, that of the outward sanctuary ten cubits broad, and that of the inner six, (see ver. 2, 3.) and of a height proportionable; each of them had two leaves, that they might be more easily opened, and each leaf had a wicket in it. (Compare 1 Kings vi. 34.)

Ver. 25. *And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubims and palm-trees.*] On the doors both of the outward and inward sanctuary. (Compare 1 Kings vi. 32. 34.)

And there were thick planks upon the face of the porch without.] There was a wainscot-work of boards fastened to the end of the great beams, which came out beyond the wall of the porch: these were laid so as to make a frieze-work over the entrance into the eastern porch.

Ver. 26. *And there were narrow windows and palm-trees on the sides of the porch, and upon the side-chambers of the house.*] Compare xl. 16.

And thick planks.] The sense would be plainer, if we translate it, *And* [upon] *the thick planks; i. e.* the figures of palm-trees were carved upon that wainscot, which was described in the foregoing verse.

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CHAP. XLII.

ARGUMENT.

A description of the priests' chambers, and their use, and the dimensions of the holy mountain whereon the temple stood.

Ver. 1. *THEN he brought me forth into the outer court, the way towards the north,* &c.] The angel now brings the prophet out of the inner court by the north gate, into some chamber or building, which looked towards the south side of the temple, and faced the wall or enclosure that encompassed the north side of the inner court and temple, mentioned xli. 12. 15. Some suppose this to be a building distinct from all the parts of the temple hitherto described.

The words of the seventh and ninth verses imply, that it was a distinct building from the outer court.

Into the chamber that was over against the separate place, and before the building.] Or, *Before the separate place, and before the building:* for the preposition *neged* is used in both parts of the sentence. *Chamber* is put for chambers. (See ver. 4. and xli. 9.)

Ver. 2. *Before the length of a hundred cubits was the north door, and the breadth was fifty cubits.*] This north door faced one of the cloisters, whose length was a hundred cubits, and its breadth fifty; which was the proportion of all the cloisters. (See the note upon xl. 15.) Noldius translates the words to this sense, *Unto the place whose length was a hundred cubits towards the north door.* He supposes these buildings to be distinct from any hitherto described, and adds, that the Jews profess their ignorance how they were situate; because there was nothing in the second temple that answered to them. (See his Concordance, n. 390.)

Ver. 3. *Over against the twenty cubits which were for* [or, which belonged to] *the inner court, and over against the pavement which was for* [or, belonged to] *the outer court.*] One side of these buildings looked upon the void space about the temple, which contained twenty cubits, mentioned xli. 10. and the other side was towards the pavement belonging to the outer court, described xl. 17.

Was gallery against gallery in three stories.] Like those mentioned xli. 16.

Ver. 4. *And before the chambers was a walk of ten cubits inward.*] There was a walk or cloister of ten cubits' breadth, running along the inside of the wall, which divided the buildings into two rooms; one half of which looked into the outer court, the other into the inner. (See xlvi. 19.)

A way of one cubit.] This some understand of an entrance at each end of the cloister.

And their doors towards the north.] See ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 5. *Now, the upper chambers were shorter: for the galleries were higher than these, than the lower,* &c.] The marginal reading in the Hebrew is to be preferred, the sense of which is, *For the galleries did abate of these, i. e.* of the lower and middlemost parts of the building; the reason of which is assigned in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *For they were in three stories, but had not pillars as the pillars of the courts,* &c.] The two upper stories had balconies standing out of them, the breadth of which was taken out of the rooms themselves, and made them so much the narrower, because the weight of the balconies was not supported by pillars, as the rooms over the cloisters of the outward court were, but only by the wall. This is L'Amy's exposition of the words.

Ver. 7. *And the wall that was without—towards the outer court on the forepart of the chambers, the length thereof was fifty cubits.*] The wall that enclosed these buildings was commensurate with the breadth of one of the cloisters of the outer court, which was fifty cubits broad. (See ver. 2.)

Ver. 8. *For the length of the chambers that were in the outer court was fifty cubits.*] The chambers that were built over the cloisters were in length fifty cubits. What is called *length* here, is expressed by *breadth,* ver. 2. as that is opposed to the length of the outer court, which was a hundred cubits. (See the following words.)

And, lo, before the temple were a hundred cubits.] The words imply that the angel conducted the prophet from these north chambers to those on the south side: (see ver. 11. 13.) so that crossing over the space of ground that fronted the east side of the temple, they took notice of its dimensions, which they had before measured, and found to be a hundred cubits. (See xli. 14.) The LXX. with a small alteration of the Hebrew text, and reading, probably, *hennah* for *hinneh,* and *häelle col* for *häecal,* translate the sentence thus: *The one side was opposite to, or answered the other, and in all were a hundred cubits;* meaning that the chambers, on the north and south sides, contained each of them fifty cubits.

Ver. 9. *And from under these chambers was the entry on the east side,* &c.] The entry into these south chambers was by a pair of stairs at the east corner of the outer court. Compare this verse with chap. xlvi. 19. and with the description Dr. Lightfoot gives of the stairs that went up into the chamber about the temple, chap. 12. though his description belongs to the temple, as it was in our Saviour's time.

Ver. 10. *The chambers were in the thickness of the wall of the court towards the east.*] Or rather, *in the breadth of the wall; i. e.* in the breadth of ground which that wall enclosed: so those words, xli. 12. *The wall of building was five cubits thick round about,* are explained by some of a space of ground five cubits broad, enclosed by that wall. (See the note there.)

Over against the separate place, and over against the building.] Or, *before the separate place, and before the building.* (See ver. 1. 13.) The expressions denote, that these south chambers had the same situation, with respect to the temple, as the north chambers had, spoken of ver. 1.

Ver. 11. *And the way before them was like the appearance of the chambers that were towards the north.*] Such a way led to these chambers, as is described leading to the chambers on the north side, ver. 4.

As long as they, and as broad as they; and their goings out were both according to their fashions, &c.] The proportions of both were the same; and the windows, doors, and passages belonging to these, were exactly uniform with those on the north side.

Ver. 12. *And according to the doors of the chambers that were towards the south.*] The sense would be plainer, if the words were thus translated, *And such were the doors of the chambers towards the south* [as those towards the north]. In which sense the affix *ke* is used in the foregoing verse.

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[There was] *a door in the head of the way*, &c.] Like that described ver. 9.

Ver. 13. *The north and south chambers*, &c.] Which were described in the foregoing part of the chapter. (See ver. 8. 10—12.)

They be holy chambers, where the priests that approach unto the Lord shall eat the most holy things.] The shew-bread, the remainder of the meat-offering, sin-offering, and trespass-offering, are expressly called the *most holy things*, Lev. vi. 14. 17. xxiv. 9. Numb. xviii. 9. and are distinguished from the holy things, such as are peace-offerings, first-fruits, and tithes, Lev. xxi. 22. These were to be eaten within the precincts of the temple, by the direction of the same laws.

There they shall lay up the most holy things.] These rooms were likewise set apart for laying up the remainder of the sacrifices, till they were eaten by the priests and their families. (See Lev. x. 13. xxii. 13.)

Concerning the difference between the sin-offering and the trespass-offering, see the note upon xl. 39.

Ver. 14. *And when the priests enter therein.*] Within the inner court, xliv. 17.

They shall not go out of the holy place into the outward court, but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister.] They shall not go into the court of the people in their priestly vestments, but shall lay them up in some of these chambers: the priestly garments were only to be used in the time of their ministration, as appears from Exod. xxix. 43. and is farther confirmed from this verse, and xliv. 19. Josephus asserts the same, de Bello Jud. lib. vi. cap. 15.

The Christian church followed the practice of the Jewish, in this as well as in many other customs: the testimony of St. Jerome, in his Commentary upon xliv. 19. of this prophecy, plainly proves, that the clergy of that age wore a distinct habit from the laity, at the time of their performing the public offices of religion: "Religio Divina alterum habitum habet in ministerio, alterum in usu vitaque communi." And that this was the practice of the earlier ages of the church, may be probably concluded from the testimony of Polycrates, a writer of the next age to the apostles, who tells us, that St. John wore an ornament upon his head resembling the mitre, with a plate upon it, which was worn by the Jewish high-priest. (See Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. v. cap. 24.) And in the next age, Pontius, the writer of St. Cyprian's life and martyrdom, acquaints us, that the bishop's seat in the church used to be covered with white; "Sedile erat fortuito linteo stratum, ut et sub ictu passionis episcopatus honore frueretur:" and it can hardly be imagined, there should be a peculiar dress for the bishop's seat, and none for the bishop himself.

And shall approach to those things that are for the people.] The words should rather be thus translated, *And shall come into* the court *belonging to the people;* the outer court, mentioned at the beginning of the verse.

Ver. 15. *Now, when he had made an end of measuring the inner house.*] The *inner house* denotes the temple, as it is distinguished from the courts about it. (Compare xli. 15.)

He brought me forth to the gate whose prospect is towards the east.] The gate that opened into the first court. (See xl. 6.)

Ver. 16. *He measured the east side with the measuring-reed, five hundred reeds*, &c.] This and the following verses contain the measures of the holy mountain, or area, upon which the temple stood, which is described to be an exact square, consisting of five hundred reeds in measure on each side of it. We may observe, that the *heavenly Jerusalem*, represented to St. John, Rev. xxi. 16. is likewise described as four-square, that figure being an emblem of solidity. And Ezekiel's vision as well as St. John's is designed, in its mystical sense, to represent the regularity and strength of Christ's church and kingdom. (Compare with this verse xl. 47. xli. 13, 14. xlv. 2. xlviii. 20.)

Capellus is of opinion, that instead of *five hundred reeds*, we ought to read *five hundred cubits:* he supposeth the word *ammoth, cubits*, wanting in the present reading of the text, to have been rejected as spurious by the correctors of the Hebrew copies, by reason of its affinity with *meoth, a hundred;* and the word *kanim, reeds*, substituted in its place. This emendation he justifies from the authority of the Septuagint, who read *cubits* both in the seventeenth and twentieth verses: which reading St. Jerome acknowledges to have been in the Greek copies in his time. He confirms it likewise from the parallel text, xlv. 2. which he thinks, according to the rules of grammar, should be expounded of cubits. And he farther argues, that the Jews themselves formerly understood this text of cubits; because they are generally of opinion, that the temple stood in an area or square, containing five hundred cubits on every side; (see Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, chap. 2.) whereas, according to the present reading, the whole compass of the area will amount to three miles and a half, according to the same author's computation; which is more than half the circuit of the whole city of Jerusalem in its most flourishing condition. (See the Excerpta out of Capellus's Triplex Delineatio Templi, in the first volume of the Polyglot Bible.)

Whereas the angel is said to measure the east side of this square *round about;* and so of the other three sides: we need not from hence conclude, that the whole compass of the ground was measured four times over; for the phrase *round about* often signifies, in this prophecy, only from side to side, or from one end to another. (See xl. 14. xli. 16.) The words therefore only import, that the angel continued measuring from one side to the other, till he had gone over the whole compass of the area.

Ver. 20. *It had a wall round about*, &c.] To defend it from being invaded or profaned. (Compare Rev. xxi. 17.) The wall was five hundred cubits every way; (see ver. 16.) as it composed the length and breadth of the temple, and its courts: see the same expression, xl. 47.

To make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place.] By the *sanctuary* is here meant the whole compass of ground which was the precincts of the temple, elsewhere called the *holy mountain*. (See xliii. 12.) In comparison of which, Jerusalem itself, though upon several accounts styled *the holy city*, was esteemed but as profane ground. (See xlviii. 15.)

CHAP. XLIII.

ARGUMENT.

The glory of the Lord is represented as returning to the temple, where God promises to fix his residence, if the people repent, and forsake those sins which made him

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depart from them. Then the measures of the altar, and the ordinances relating to it, are set down.

Ver. 1. *THEN he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looked towards the east.*] The eastern gate of the priests' court, which was just before the temple. (Compare ver. 4. and xliv. 1. xlvi. 1.)

Ver. 2. *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east.*] The word *behold* is an expression of joy and admiration: as if the prophet had said, *Behold a wonderful and joyful sight!* The glory of that God, who calls himself *the God of Israel*, as choosing to dwell among them, and to give evident tokens of his presence among them, and protection over them. This glory, which had departed from this place for so long a time, now returned to it, and fixed its residence there. The glory of the Lord, when it forsook the temple, is described as departing from the eastern gate of it, (x. 19.) Afterward it is represented as quite forsaking the city, and removing to a mountain on the east side of the city, (xi. 23.) and now it returns by the same way it departed.

And his voice was like the noise of many waters.] Great and terrible: (compare i. 24. Rev. i. 15.) either to signify the dreadfulness of God's judgments, or the efficacy of his commands, who calls things into being by speaking the word.

And the earth shined with his glory.] The rays of his glory, like the sun-beams, enlightened the earth. (Compare x. 4. Isa. vi. 3. Hab. iii. 4.)

Ver. 3. *And it was according to the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city.*] See ix. 3. 5. The prophets are said to do those things which they foretell shall come to pass. (See the notes upon xiii. 19. xxiii. 54. Jer. i. 10.)

Ver. 4. *And the glory of the Lord came into the house, by the way of the gate whose prospect is towards the east.*] See ver. 1, 2. and xliv. 2.

Ver. 5. *So the spirit took me up.*] See iii. 12. 14. viii. 3. xxxvii. 1. xl. 2.

And he brought me into the inner court.] Carried me from the gate that enters into it, into the middle of it, just before the temple.

And, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house.] That glory, or symbol of the Divine presence, which I saw coming from the east, (ver. 13.) entered into the temple, and settled there, as it did when it was finished by Solomon, (1 Kings viii. 10, 11.)

Ver. 6. *And I heard him speaking to me out of the house.*] With a great and mighty voice, (ver. 2.)

And the man stood by me.] See xl. 3.

Ver. 7. *The place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet.*] The sense would be plainer, if the beginning of the verse were thus rendered, *This is the place of my throne*, &c. The cherubims were God's throne, from whence he is said to *dwell* or *sit between the cherubims*, and the ark was his footstool. (See Psal. xcix. 1. 5.)

Where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.] He means the promise formerly made with relation to the tabernacle and temple: (see Psal. lxviii. 16. cxxxii. 14.) which is to be understood as those were, under the condition of their obedience; (see ver. 9.) and to be eminently fulfilled in Christ, in whom all the promises of the Old Testament are to have their final accomplishment. Zechary prophesies of the Messias, (vi. 13.) that he should build *the temple of the Lord*, and *bear the glory; i. e.* as the spiritual sense of these prophecies is explained in the New Testament, He shall build the *Christian church;* in him shall *all the fulness of the Godhead dwell bodily*, and really, not in types and figures. (See Heb. iii. 3. Matt. xvi. 18. John i. 14. Coloss. ii. 9.) To the same sense we may explain the prophecy of Haggai, ii. 7. *The glory of the latter house shall be greater than that of the former.* There was no visible Schechinah, or glory, appeared in the second temple, till the Lord, *whom they expected; came to his temple;* (Mal. iii. 1.) *i. e.* till the Messias, who was *the brightness of his Father's glory*, appeared there, and made it an illustrious figure of that true church, or temple of believers, where he would continue his presence for ever. (See 2 Cor. vi. 16.)

And my holy name shall the house of Israel no more defile by their whoredom.] By idolatry, often described in Scripture, and particularly by this prophet, under the metaphor of fornication. (See chap. xvi. xxiii.) The captivity had that good effect upon the Jews, that they scarce ever afterward relapsed into idolatry. The entire destruction of idolatry is likewise often mentioned as a blessing reserved for the *latter days*, when the Jews shall be converted, and *the fulness of the gentiles* come into the church. (See the note upon Isa. i. 30.)

Nor by the carcasses of their kings, in their high places.] Idols are called *carcasses*, because they are without life and motion, and likewise upon the account of their being hateful and loathsome in the sight of God. (See Lev. xxvi. 30. Jer. xvi. 18.) They are called *the carcasses of kings;* because they were set up, and the worship of them encouraged, by the idolatrous kings of Judah, who erected high places for that purpose near Jerusalem, in the very sight and view of the temple. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 13.) By this means the temple itself was profaned by those that came directly from the worship of idols, to attend upon God's service in the temple. (See chap. xxiii. of this prophecy, 38, 39.)

Ver. 8. *In their setting up their thresholds by my thresholds*, &c.] Their kings still advanced to greater degrees of idolatry, in setting up altars and images for their idols in the temple itself, and the courts before it. (See v. 11. viii. 6. 15. 2 Kings xvi. 14. xxi. 4, 5. 7.)

And the wall between me and them.] The margin gives a plainer sense, *For there was but a wall between me and them.*

Ver. 9. *Now let them put away their whoredom*, &c.] See the note upon ver. 7.

Ver. 10, 11. *Shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities*, &c.] The words, if understood as spoken to the Jews of that age, imply, that the house here described, with the whole platform of it, and the ordinances relating to it, might be a model for them to imitate, as far as they were able, when they should return to their own country, and rebuild their temple. (See the general preface before chap. xl.) The same draught or description, when duly considered, would be a proper inducement to make them sensible of their former deviations from God's worship, and touched with deep remorse for those sins, which provoked him to deprive them of the

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honour of his residence among them, and the benefit of his ordinances. (See ver. 7, 8.) But we may probably suppose, that the words may have a farther view, and import, that the model of God's temple, here set forth, is but a pattern of heavenly things, as Moses's was, Exod. xxv. 40. and a type of that pure church *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone;* which we may hope God will, in due time, every where restore. And in the mean season, it is the duty of all good Christians, according to their abilities, to inform themselves and others, what is the pattern, form, and fashion, of this true church of God, in order to reform all those deviations which have been made from it.

And let them measure the pattern.] In order to build their new temple by it, when they shall return from captivity, as far as their abilities will reach. (See the general preface before the fortieth chapter.) For the same purpose the prophet is commanded to write it in their sight, in the following words.

Ver. 11. *And if they be ashamed.*] Or, *And that they may be ashamed:* so the particle *im* is often used. (See Noldius, p. 90.)

Ver. 12. *Upon the top of the mountain.*] Whereupon the temple stood. (See xl. 2.)

The whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy.] See xlii. 20.

Ver. 13. *The cubit is a cubit and a hand-breadth.*] See xl. 5.

The bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the borders thereof—shall be a span.] The *bottom* signifies the basis or foundation; (see ver. 14.) this shall be a cubit in height, and a cubit over in breadth; the parts above the lower settle being contracted, and growing narrower by the breadth of a cubit. (See the following verse.) This lower ledge or settle about the altar had a border of the height of a span, or half a cubit, (see ver. 17.) to keep the blood that was poured out at the foot of the altar from running upon the pavement; but it was conveyed away into two holes at the south-west corner of the altar, and so into a sink or common shore under ground.

And this shall be the higher place of the altar.] The Hebrew reads, *The back of the altar;* which imports, that this basis was the protuberance of the altar, or the widest part of it; the Hebrew word *gab,* signifying any part that sticks out, and is used for the eyebrows, the protuberance of a hill, or such-like eminence.

Ver. 14. *And from the bottom upon the ground, even to the lower settle, shall be two cubits.*] The altar was made narrower as it came nearer to the top; these narrowings or in-benchings are called here settles. The word is *azarah* in the Hebrew, which is elsewhere used for a court; because the priests trod upon these settles, as they and the people did in the courts before the temple. From the foundation to the lower of the two settles here mentioned, the text saith, was to be two cubits; which seems to contradict the words in the verse before, *the bottom shall be a cubit.* This difference in expression Dr. Lightfoot thus reconciles, in his Description of the Temple, chap. 34. that the foundation, as it lay flat upon the ground, was but a cubit high; but then there arose a slope of another cubit's height, which was thicker than the compass of the altar just above it; so that from the ground to the top of the rising was two cubits: and thus he reconciles the description here given with that of the Talmud, which reckons five cubits from the lower settle to the higher; whereas the prophet counts but four in the following words.

And the breadth one cubit.] The breadth of this lower settle, or border, was one cubit, which made that part of the altar which was above it narrower, by a cubit on every side of the square, than that part which was nearer the foundation.

And from the lesser settle even to the greater settle shall be four cubits, and the breadth one cubit.] Dr. Lightfoot, in the same place, assigns this reason, why the upper settle is here called the *greater,* because the upper settle, though it was less in compass (being narrower by two cubits on every side of the square), yet was larger in breadth; the lower settle rising with a leaning slope, as was observed before, which took up a considerable part of its breadth, and made the walk upon it not so large as that upon the upper.

Ver. 15. *So the altar shall be four cubits.*] *i. e.* From the upper settle, which makes the altar ten cubits high, the same height with that made by Solomon, 2 Chron. iv. 1. The fourteenth verse reckons six cubits to the upper settle, and here are four cubits added to the top of the altar. The dimensions of the altar are the same in the Talmud, as Dr. Lightfoot observes in the place abovecited; who farther remarks, out of the Jewish writers, that within two cubits of the top, or the place where the hearth was, there was another narrowing, or bench, of a cubit's breadth, where the priests stood to officiate.

The altar is twice mentioned in this verse under two different names; the first *harel,* that is, *the mountain of God,* being so called, as some rabbins think, in opposition to the idolatrous altar built upon high places; the second *ariel,* that is, *the lion of God,* having that name given to it, because it devoured and consumed the sacrifices offered upon it. (See Isa. xxix. 1.)

And from the altar and upward shall be four horns.] To be added at each corner, as was in Moses's altar, Exod. xxvii. 2. These were squares of a cubit on each side, and hollow in the middle; and into these cavities some of the blood of the sacrifices was put. (See ver. 20.) They arose from the uppermost bench, where the priest stood to officiate.

Ver. 16. *And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad,* &c.] The upper part of it shall be an exact square, reckoning from the second settle, which is properly called the altar, and distinguished from the bottom or foundation. (See ver. 15.)

Ver. 17. *And the settle shall be fourteen cubits long, and fourteen broad.*] This is to be understood of the lower settle, which was two cubits wider than the upper part of the altar, as appears by the description already given.

And the border about it shall be half a cubit.] Or *a span,* as it is expressed, ver. 13.

And the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about.] A cubit wider than the lower settle. (See ver. 13.)

And his stairs shall look towards the east.] God forbade his priests to go up by steps to his altar, Exod. xx. 26. which is usually expounded, that he would not have his altar set upon a great ascent, in imitation of the heathen high places; yet Solomon's altar was ten cubits high; (2 Chron. iv. 1.) which necessarily required some ascent

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for the priests to go, that they might officiate on the top of it: and in this place there is express mention of stairs to go up to the altar here described, being of the same height with Solomon's. The Jews tell us, that since the law prohibited stairs or steps, the ascent to the altar was by a gentle rising, which they call *kibbesh*, of thirty-two cubits in length, and sixteen in breadth; the landing-place being upon the upper bench or walk, next the hearth or top; of which mention hath been already made in the notes upon ver. 16. See Dr. Lightfoot in the forecited place, and Dr. Prideaux's Connex. of Script. Hist. par. i. where there is a draught of the altar, and the ascent to it, which very much helps to explain the description here given of it.

This ascent is directed to be placed at the east side of the altar, that they, who went up, should look towards the west, and upon the temple, and should turn their backs to the rising sun, in opposition to the rites of those idolaters who worshipped the rising sun. (See the note upon viii. 16.)

Ver. 18. *And to sprinkle blood thereon.*] See Lev. i. 5. iii. 8.

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt give to the priests, the Levites, that be of the seed of Zadok.*] See the notes on xl. 45. xliv. 15.

A young bullock for a sin-offering, &c.] To consecrate the new altar therewith, and the persons who were to offer sacrifice upon it. (Compare xlv. 18, 19. Exod. xxix. 10. 12. and ver. 36.)

Ver. 20. *And upon the four corners of the settle.*] The word *settle* may signify both the settles, as the singular number elsewhere stands for the plural. (See the note upon xli. 9.)

Ver. 21. *And he shall burn it.*] Or rather, *It shall be burnt,* as the LXX. rightly express the sense; the verb transitive being often used for the impersonal. (See the note upon Isa. xliv. 18.)

In the appointed place of the house without the sanctuary.] In some place appointed for that purpose, within the precincts of the holy mountain. The temple itself is called the *inner house,* xli. 15. xlii. 15. to distinguish it from the outer courts and precincts thereof. The body of the bullock, whose blood was to sanctify the altar, was to be *burnt without the camp,* by the order of the law, Exod. xxix. 14.

This was the first day's sacrifice; the ceremony of consecration being to last seven days. (See ver. 26.)

Ver. 22. *And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin-offering.*] This is over and above the sacrifices of consecration, prescribed Exod. xxix. 1. Some other rites are prescribed in the following ordinances, that differ a little from those ordained by Moses. (See the note upon xlvi. 4.)

Ver. 23. *Thou shalt offer a young bullock and a ram out of the flock.*] Called the *ram of consecration,* Exod. xxix. 31. Lev. viii. 22. These sacrifices were to be repeated every one of the seven days of the consecration. (See ver. 25.)

Ver. 24. *And the priest shall cast salt upon them.*] Every sacrifice was to be salted with salt. (Lev. ii. 13.)

Ver. 26. *Seven days shall they purge the altar, and purify it.*] Seven days were appointed for the performing the ceremonies of purifying the altar, and consecrating the priests. (See Exod. xxix. 35. Lev. viii. 34.)

And they shall consecrate themselves.] The expression in the Hebrew is, *They shall fill their hands;* the phrase being taken from that ceremony used in consecrating a priest, of filling his hands with part of the sacrifice then offered. (See Exod. xxix. 24.)

Ver. 27. *Upon the eighth day, and so forward.*] See Lev. ix. 1.

Your peace-offerings.] The margin reads *thank-offerings,* because they were offerings of thanksgivings for mercies received.

CHAP. XLIV.

ARGUMENT.

The chapter begins with a description of the glory of God returned into the temple; then follows a reproof of the people for suffering idolatrous priests to profane the temple by ministering there; and ordinances are set down relating to the deportment of God's true priests, and the maintenance due to them.

Ver. 1. *THEN he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary.*] From the altar to the gate belonging to the court of the priests that leadeth to the outward court of the temple. (Compare ver. 27. and xlvi. 1.) All the courts were reckoned holy ground, and called sometimes by the name of the temple. (See John viii. 20. Acts xxi. 28.)

And it was shut.] After that the glory of the Lord had entered that way; (xliii. 4.) to signify that the Divine presence would never forsake the temple any more.

Ver. 2. *This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened.*] It shall not stand open continually, as it formerly did, but only at certain seasons: (see ver. 3. and xlvi. 1.) and that out of respect to the Divine glory, which made its entrance into the temple that way, where it had now took up its fixed residence, (see xliii. 7.) not to depart any more by the east gate of the temple, as it formerly did. (See the note on xliii. 4.)

Because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it.] That is, the glory of the Lord, as it is expressed xliii. 2. 4. The glory of God is himself, and is often called by the name of the Lord, or the God of Israel. (See Exod. xxiv. 10. Isa. vi. 1. 5.)

Ver. 3. *It is for the prince.*] Solomon placed his seat at the entrance into the inner court before the altar of the Lord, (2 Chron. vi. 13.) and here the prince seems to have had his place in aftertimes, whenever he came to worship at the temple. (See 2 Chron. xxiii. 13. xxxiv. 31.) Not far from which place a seat was placed for the high-priest, as may be gathered from Eli's seat, mentioned 1 Sam. ii. 9. and from whence the high-priest pronounced the blessing after the service was ended. (See Ecclus. l. 20. and Lightfoot's Temple Service, chap. 36.) Some understand by the *prince,* the high-priest; which title does very properly belong to the Messias, who is both king and priest, and hath the style of Prince given him, xxxiv. 23. But in the parallel place to this, (xlvi. 2, 3. 8, 9.) the word *prince* is opposed to the people: and other ordinances are there laid down, which cannot be fitly applied to the Messias. For which reason, I conceive the word must be taken here in its usual sense, to denote the chief governors of the

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Jews, such as were Zerubbabel and Nehemiah after the captivity.

The prince shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord.] To eat part of the peace-offerings, which are to be provided at his charge. (See xlvi. 2.) Bread stands for all sort of entertainments; (see Gen. xliii. 31.) and particularly for a religious feast made of the remainder of a sacrifice, (Gen. xxxi. 54.)

He shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, &c.] See xlvi. 8.

Ver. 4. *Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house.*] The east gate being shut, ver. 1.

And, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.] There was no door into the house on that side, but I could see the brightness of the Divine glory shining through the windows. (See xliii. 3. 5.)

And I fell upon my face.] See i. 28.

Ver. 5. *Mark well, and behold with thine eyes,* &c.] See xl. 4. xliii. 2.

Mark well the entering of the house with the going forth of the sanctuary.] The word *laws* is here to be repeated, to this sense, That the prophet should admonish the people of the laws relating to the admitting certain persons into the temple, or the courts of it, and suffer none that are unqualified to attend upon God's service there. (See the following verses.)

Ver. 6. *And say to the rebellious* [house], *even to the house of Israel.*] See ii. 5.

Let it suffice you of all your abominations.] Let the time past be sufficient for you to have provoked me with your abominations. (See xlv. 9. compare 1 Pet. iv. 3.) We find the same expression Numb. xvi. 3. where our translation reads, *ye take too much upon you:* but the phrase may more properly be translated, *Let it suffice you* [to have usurped an authority hitherto].

Ver. 7. *In that you have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart,* &c.] In setting up idols within the precincts of mine own house, and appointing idolatrous priests to officiate there. (See xliii. 8.)

When ye offer my bread, my fat, and my blood.] At the same time that ye offer my sacrifices upon the altar. Or the words may imply, that they suffered heathens to offer at God's altar, expressly against the law, Lev. xxii. 27.

By *bread* may be understood the meat-offerings made of flour, which accompanied the other sacrifices: although every thing offered upon the altar is properly called the *bread of God.* (See the note upon xxiii. 41.) The fat and blood of every sacrifice were peculiarly appropriated to God. (See Lev. iii. 16. xvii. 11.)

And they have broken my covenant.] Idolatry was a direct breach of that covenant God had entered into with the Jews, that he *would be their God, and they his people,* Lev. xxvii. 12. Upon which account it is so often represented under the metaphor of adultery and fornication: being a breach of that covenant which is usually described under the notion of a marriage-contract. (See the note upon xvi. 8.)

Ver. 8. *And ye have not kept the charge of my holy things,* &c.] You have not observed the laws I gave you, for taking care of the things relating to my house and worship; but have appointed such persons to officiate there, as best suited with your own inclinations. (See the note upon xl. 45.)

Ver. 9. *No stranger shall enter into my sanctuary.*] To offer any sacrifice or oblation there; (see ver. 7.) nor be suffered to go beyond the precincts appointed for proselytes.

Ver. 10. *And the Levites that are gone far from me,* &c.] The same who are called the *priests, the Levites,* ver. 15. *i. e.* the sons of Levi, who are priests. Many of these departed from attending upon God's service, and fell into idolatry; first, in the general apostacy of the ten tribes, afterward under Ahaz, and other wicked kings of Judah: (see 2 Kings xxiii. 9.) these shall bear the punishment due to their iniquity, and shall be degraded from attending upon the higher offices belonging to the priesthood, and thrust down to meaner services. (See ver. 13.) It is not likely that any of those priests who had been defiled with idolatry in former times, lived to see the restoration of God's worship in the temple after the captivity: so the punishment here allotted to them, either relates to their posterity; God having particularly threatened to punish the sin of idolatry to *the third and fourth generation,* Exod. xx. 5. or else the ordinances here prescribed are standing rules, that were to be perpetually observed, whensoever this case should happen.

The discipline of the Christian church was still more severe: for whoever of the clergy had committed idolatry in the times of persecution, was for ever deprived of his function; and even for lesser crimes they were degraded from a higher to a lower station; as the learned Mr. Bingham, in his Eccl. Antiq. book xvii. chap. 3. hath shewed in several instances.

Ver. 11. *Having charge of the gates of the house.*] Performing the office of porters, an inferior station belonging to the Levites. (See 1 Chron. xxvi. 1.)

They shall slay the burnt-offering.] Kill the beasts appointed for the daily burnt-offering and other sacrifices, and flay their skins, which was an office usually performed by the Levites. (See 2 Chron. xxxv. 11.)

And they shall stand before them.] They shall be servants to the people, in undergoing the most servile offices belonging to the temple; whereas it is the proper office of a priest to be God's immediate minister. (See Deut. x. 8. xvii. 12.)

Ver. 12. *Because they ministered to them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into their iniquity.*] They led the people into idolatry, by giving them an ill example.

Therefore have I lifted up my hand against them.] I have solemnly sworn that I will punish them for this their sin. (See the note on xx. 6.)

Ver. 13. *And they shall not come near to me, to do the office of a priest unto me,* &c.] They shall not offer sacrifice at my altar, or come into the temple, to perform any part of the priestly office there. So Josiah discharged the priests that had been guilty of idolatry, from attending upon the service of the altar, (2 Kings xxiii. 9.)

Ver. 14. *But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof,* &c.] They shall perform the servile offices belonging to my temple and worship. (See 1 Chron. xxiii. 28. 32.)

Ver. 15. *But the priests, the Levites.*] The sons of Levi, who are priests. (Compare Deut. xvii. 9. xviii. 1. xxiv. 8.)

The sons of Zadok.] See xl. 46. xliii. 19.

To offer to me the fat and the blood.] See ver. 7.

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Ver. 16. *They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table.*] The foregoing verse expresses their ministering at the altar, and offering sacrifice there: this denotes attendance upon God's service within the temple: the principal part of which was burning incense there upon the altar placed in the temple for that purpose: which mystically implied the offering up the prayers of the people to God. This altar of incense is called here the table of the Lord, as it is xli. 22. (See the note there.)

Ver. 17. *When they shall enter in at the gates of the inner court.*] The court just before the temple, where the altar of burnt-offering stood, ver. 27. of this chapter.

They shall be clothed with linen garments.] The ephod, breeches, mitre, and girdle, which was the habit of the ordinary priests, were all of fine linen, contrived for *glory and beauty:* (Exod. xxix. 40.) fine linen being the habit of persons of the greatest quality. (See the note upon xxvii. 7.)

While they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within.] Or, *in the house,* or temple itself, as Noldius translates the word *bayetha,* n. 829.

Ver. 18. *They shall not gird themselves with any thing that causeth sweat.*] With a woollen girdle, which may make them sweat, during their laborious services about the altar, and make their garments smell offensively. But the Chaldee paraphrase renders it thus: *They shall not be girt about their loins, but be girt upon* (or about) *their heart; i. e.* they shall not wear girdles about their middle, or under their arm-pits, either of which may cause them to sweat, but shall wear them about their breasts. So St. John describes our Lord appearing in the habit of a high-priest, and *girt about the paps with a golden girdle,* Rev. i. 13.

Ver. 19. *And when they go forth into the outer court, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered.*] See the note on xlii. 14.

And they shall not sanctify the people with their garments.] By the rules of the law, things immediately dedicated to God's service did convey some degree of holiness to common things that touched them: so the altar *sanctified the gift* that was laid upon it. (See Lev. vi. 27. Matt. xxiii. 13.) Thus some sort of holiness might be derived to the garments of the people by touching those of a priest: which God would have prevented, to keep up an exact difference between the holy and profane, (ver. 23.)

Ver. 20. *Neither shall they shave their heads.*] This prescription is implied in those words of the law, Lev. xxi. 5. especially according to the translation of the Septuagint, who render the sentence, *Thou shalt not shave thyself with baldness* [to make baldness] *upon thy head for the dead.* They, indeed, understand it as an expression of mourning for the dead, which agrees with the sense of the parallel texts, Lev. xix. 27, 28. Deut. xiv. 1. But the words in the original contain a general prohibition, and consequently include the times of mourning as well as other seasons. St. Jerome upon the place does with great probability suppose, that the Jewish priests were forbid to shave their heads, thereby to distinguish them from several of the heathen priests, particularly the Egyptian priests of Isis and Serapis, who had their heads shaved and uncovered; which were funeral rites, and therefore proper to be used in the worship of the heathen gods, who were no better than dead men. (See Baruch vi. 31.) Learned men have observed, that many other Jewish laws were made, in opposition to the funeral rites observed in the heathen worship.

Nor suffer their locks to grow long.] It is the opinion of Dr. Spencer (Leg. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 25.) and Schindler, that this law is likewise taken out of the same chapter of Leviticus, at the tenth verse; where our translation renders the original, *He shall not uncover his head.* But the Chaldee paraphrase translates the words, *He shall not nourish the hair of his head;* which sense several interpreters follow: letting the hair grow long and neglected, being a sign of mourning, as well as shaving it close to the head.

Ver. 21. *Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court.*] During the time of their ministration. (See ver. 17.) This law is likewise taken from Lev. x. 9, 10. And the reason of the prohibition is there given, that they might *put a difference between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean; i. e.* that they might be able exactly to determine the cases relating to legal uncleanness: many of which had a great deal of niceness in them, by reason of the variety of circumstances. (Compare ver. 23. of this chapter.)

Ver. 22. *Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, or her that is put away,* &c.] This law we find in Lev. xxi. 13, 14. But it is there spoken of the high-priest only, here it is applied to all the priests in general.

Ver. 23. *And in controversy they shall stand in judgment,* &c.] The priests were to determine all controversies relating to the law, as well the judicial as the ceremonial part of it, which were brought before them; (see Deut. xvii. 8, 9.) and the *people were to seek the law at their mouths,* (Mal. ii. 7.) *i. e.* to inquire of them what was the purport and meaning of it, and to stand to their determination. And when the supreme judicial power was placed in the Sanhedrin, the majority of that court consisted chiefly of such as had the chief stations among the priests. (See Acts iv. 5, 6.)

And they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies, &c.] As well upon the solemn festivals, and the assemblies proper to them, (see Exod. xii. 16.) as on the ordinary sabbaths.

And they shall hallow my sabbaths.] Whereas the priests before the captivity profaned them, and neglected to perform the Divine worship prescribed upon them. (See xxii. 26.)

Ver. 25. *They shall come at no dead person to defile themselves.*] Whosoever touched a dead body became legally unclean, (Numb. xix. 11.) and thereby was unqualified to attend upon God's worship in the temple: (see Lev. xxii. 3.) upon which account the priests were forbidden to contract such a defilement, unless for their nearest relations, (Lev. xxi. 1—3.) which prohibition is here renewed.

Ver. 26. *And after he is cleansed, they shall reckon unto him seven days.*] His uncleanness continued for seven days by the forecited law, (Numb. xix. 11.) and the priests were to reckon to him seven days more, before he was to be admitted into the sanctuary.

Ver. 27. *And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, unto the inner court.*] See ver. 17.

He shall offer his sin-offering.] He shall offer a young bullock for a sin-offering. (See Lev. iv. 13.)

Ver. 28. *And it shall be unto them for an inheritance,* &c.] Their ministry in my sanctuary, mentioned in the foregoing

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verse, and the perquisites thereto belonging, shall be to them instead of lands and cities, of which they shall not have any share, as the other tribes; (see Deut. x. 9. Josh. xiii. 14.) excepting the portion allotted to them in the beginning of the following chapter.

Ver. 29. *They shall eat the meat-offering, and the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering.*] They shall have their share of it, after God's part hath been consumed upon the altar. (See Lev. vi. 18. 29. vii. 6.)

And every delicate thing shall be theirs.] Whatsoever men dedicate to God, the use of it shall accrue to the priests: if it be a living creature, it shall be killed, and the priest shall have the benefit of it: if it be a piece of land, it shall belong to the priests. (See Lev. xxvii. 27, 28. Numb. xviii. 14.)

Ver. 30. *And the first of all first-fruits of all things, and every oblation of every sort of your oblations, shall be the priest's.*] The words translated *first-fruits* and *oblations*, are in the Hebrew *biccurim* and *trumah*. The former imports the first ripe, or best of the fruits, while they were growing in the field; (compare Exod. xxiii. 19. with Numb. xviii. 12.) the latter denotes an oblation out of the product of the ground, after it was made fit for use: as out of the corn, after it was thrashed and laid in heaps in the floor or granary: and so of oil and wine, after they were pressed and fitted for spending. These oblations are by some authors, particularly by Mr. Selden in his treatise of Tithes, chap. 2. esteemed to amount to the sixtieth part of the whole produce. Schindler rates the *biccurim* at the lowest proportion to be the sixtieth part, and computes the *trumah* at the fiftieth. Dr. Comber supposes the *biccurim* to amount to a hundredth part, and the *trumah* at a medium to be the fiftieth. (See his treatise of Tithes, par. i. chap. 2. and the notes on xlv. 13.)

Ye shall also give unto the priest the first of your dough.] The first dough that you bake of the new corn every year shall belong to the priests, in the same proportion to be observed here, as in other first-fruits, *viz.* a sixtieth part. (See Numb. xv. 20.)

That he may cause a blessing to rest in thine house.] That the priest, whose office it is to bless the people in God's name, (see Numb. vi. 23. Deut. x. 8.) may procure a blessing upon thee from him, according to the promise he hath made of blessing those with an extraordinary degree of plenty, who conscientiously pay their tithes and offerings, as grateful acknowledgments to God, the giver of all good things. (See 2 Chron. xxxi. 10. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 10. compare Deut. xxvi. 13—15.)

Ver. 31. *The priest shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself, or torn.*] A command given to all the Jews, Exod. xxii. 31. and more particularly to the priests, Lev. xxii. 8.

CHAP. XLV.

ARGUMENT.

The several portions of land appointed for the sanctuary, the city, and the prince; together with ordinances concerning the provisions for the ordinary and extraordinary sacrifices.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, when ye shall divide the land by lot for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation to the Lord.*] The land was divided by lot in the first division of it under Joshua, and is appointed to be divided so in the partition of it, as it here follows: (see xlvii. 14. 22.) a particular share of which was to be God's portion, as an acknowledgment of his sovereign dominion: (see Lev. xxv. 23.) it is therefore here called *trumah*, or *oblation;* which word properly signifies the offering made to God out of the first-fruits, and other increase of the ground; (see xliv. 30. Numb. xviii. 24, &c.) because this was a sort of first-fruits of the land, or soil itself, (xlviii. 14.)

The length shall be five-and-twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth shall be ten thousand.] The Hebrew doth not express either *reeds* or *cubits:* our translation supplies the word *reeds*, but many interpreters expound the place of *cubits*, which sense they think is plainly determined by ver. 3. where it is said, *Of this measure (viz.* the cubit measure mentioned ver. 2.) *shalt thou measure the length of five-and-twenty thousand*, &c. According to this measure, the portion here set apart will be almost seven miles square; whereas if we measure by reeds it will arise to six times as much, and can only be understood in a mystical sense.

Ver. 2. *Of this there shall be for the sanctuary five hundred in length, with five hundred in breadth, square round about.*] If we understand these dimensions of cubits, it exactly agrees with the opinion of the Jews, that the temple stood in an area of five hundred cubits square. (See Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, chap. 2.) A square figure is the emblem of solidity. (See the note on xlii. 20.)

And fifty cubits round about for the suburbs thereof.] This likewise bears a suitable proportion to the content of a square of five hundred cubits.

Ver. 3. *Of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five-and-twenty thousand.*] See the note upon ver. 1.

And in it shall be the sanctuary and the most holy place.] Both the outward sanctuary and the inward oracle, or holiest of all, together with the courts adjoining, shall be placed in the centre or middle of it. (See xlviii. 10.)

Ver. 4. *And it shall be a place for their houses.*] The priests were divided into four-and-twenty courses, (1 Chron. xxiv.) who performed the public worship by turns; so the houses were for them to live in, who were not in their course of waiting.

And a holy place for the sanctuary.] See xlviii. 10.

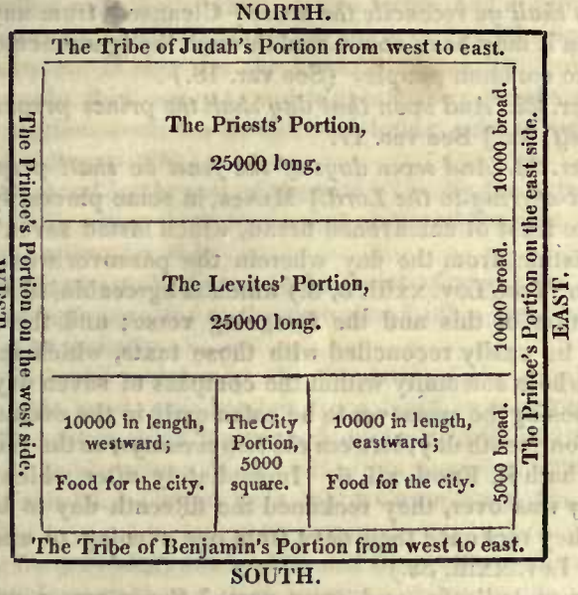
Ver. 5. *And the five-and-twenty thousand of length, and ten thousand of breadth, shall also the Levites have for themselves.*] The French translation renders the sense plainer thus, *There shall be other five-and-twenty thousand*, &c. (See xlviii. 13.) This appears to be the true sense of the place, because else there will be wanting ten thousand in breadth to make an exact square of twenty-five thousand. (See the following verse.) The Levites, being very numerous, (they were reckoned thirty-eight thousand in David's time, 1 Chron. xxiii. 3.) had as large a piece of ground allotted to them as belonged to the temple, and the whole priestly order. The word *other* is, upon a like occasion, supplied by our interpreters, xlviii. 8.

For twenty chambers.] Most commentators understand this of several rows of chambers, or ranges of building. The LXX. read, Πόλεις κατοικεῖν, *cities to inhabit:* such cities as were allotted to them by Moses, Numb. xxxv. 2. The copies the Septuagint followed probably read, *Narim Lashebeth*, instead of the present reading, *Nesharim Lesha-*

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coth, כ and ב being easily put one for another. [These twenty chambers with apartments and storehouses, were for the use of the Levites. See 1 Chron. ix. 26. 33. 2 Chron. xxxi. 11, 12. Neh. x. 38, 39.]

Ver. 6. *And ye shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five-and-twenty thousand long, over against* (or, by the side of; see xlviii. 15.) *the oblation of the holy portion.*] This must run parallel in length with the holy portion, though but half its breadth: by which means these three portions made an exact square, (see xlviii. 20.) as you may see in the following draught.



It shall be for the whole house of Israel.] The capital city, to which all the tribes shall resort upon the solemn festivals, and shall have twelve gates, according to the number of the tribes of Israel; (xlviii. 31.)

Ver. 7. *And a portion shall be for the prince on the one side, and on the other side of the oblation of the holy portion,* &c.] One half of the prince's portion was to lie on the west side of the three portions laid out for the priests and sanctuary, the Levites and the city; and the other half lay on the east of it, and it lay parallel to them in breadth, from north to south.

And the length shall be over against one of these portions from the west border to the east border.] I think the words may be translated more plainly thus: *And the length shall be answerable to every one of these portions, both on the west border and the east; i. e.* it shall run parallel with them, both on the east and west side. The word *leummath,* translated *over against,* signifies likewise *parallel,* or *answerable,* as it hath been observed upon xl. 18. The word *echad, one,* signifies *each one,* or *every one,* and is understood so in this text by Noldius, p. 785. and the phrase, *from the west border to the east,* is equivalent to that expression which often occurs in the sacred text, *from small to great,* which is very properly rendered, *both small and great.*

Ver. 8. *In the land shall be his possession in Israel.*] Or, *this shall be his possession of land in Israel:* for the particle *la,* in *laaretz,* is sometimes the note of the genitive case; particularly the eighteenth and nineteenth verses of this chapter. Or, *As for land, this shall be his possession in Israel.*

And my princes shall no more oppress my people.] As they formerly did: for which they are severely reproved. (See xix. 6, 7. xxi. 27. Jer. xxii. 17.)

Ver. 9. *Let it suffice you, O ye princes of Israel,* &c.] This is a reproof of the oppressions of the former kings, and their chief officers. (See the note upon xliv. 6.)

O ye princes of Israel.] This is to be understood of such princes as the Jews afterward had of the Asmonean race; for there were no more princes to reign of the tribe of Judah till Christ came. (See xxi. 27.)

Ver. 10. *Ye shall have just balances,* &c.] Ye shall take care that there be no deceit in private trade: ye shall provide just measures both for buying and selling, both dry things and liquid. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 11. *The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure.*] The ephah was the measure of dry things, as the bath was of liquid: the homer was about ten bushels, which amounts to about eighty gallons in liquid things.

The ephah the tenth part of a homer.] We must distinguish the word *homer* or *chomer,* writ with a *cheth* in the Hebrew, and *omer,* writ with an *ain.* The ephah is said here to be the tenth part of a homer, whereas the *omer is but the tenth part of an ephah,* Exod. xvi. 36.

Ver. 12. *And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs.*] This is made the standard of the shekel, (Exod. xxx. 13.) which confutes the common opinion, that the weights of the sanctuary were double to those of common use. Bishop Cumberland computes a *gerah* to be equivalent to an Attic *obolus,* consisting of almost eleven grains of silver. The shekel is usually valued at two shillings and sixpence of our money; but the same learned author supposes it to be in value but two shillings and fourpence farthing of our money, and a little over. (See his treatise of Scripture Weights and Measures, p. 104, &c.)

Twenty shekels, five-and-twenty shekels, and fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh.] *Maneh* is the same with the Greek μνᾶ and the Latin *mina,* being both derived from it. A *maneh,* or *mina,* consists of sixty shekels, *i. e.* thirty ounces of silver: (see ibid. p. 122.) which, reckoning every shekel at two shillings and sixpence value, amounts to seven pounds ten shillings. The dividing the *maneh* into twenty, twenty-five, and fifteen shekels, supposes there were coins of these several values, which, taken all together, are to be of the same weight with the *mina.*

Ver. 13. *This is the oblation ye shall offer.*] The Hebrew word, translated *oblation,* is *trumah:* which is always distinguished from the *biccurim,* or *first-fruits,* and signifies the portion belonging to the Levites out of the fruits of the earth when they were gathered in. (See xliv. 30.) For which reason, St. Jerome, upon the place, supposes the following words to express the proportion the people ought to pay the Levites out of the increase of their ground; which, by their rabbies, was determined to amount to at least a sixtieth part; in which determination they probably followed the rule laid down in this verse. (Compare ver. 11.) This sense is likewise favoured by the Chaldee paraphrase: after which separation, a tenth part was to be paid out of the remainder. The portions allotted to the priests and Levites were not intended only for their own maintenance, but likewise to make a constant provision for those sacrifices, both ordinary and extraordinary, which were appointed by the law. (See Mal. iii. 10.)

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Ver. 14. *Concerning the ordinance of oil, a bath of oil,* &c.] Or, *Concerning the ordinance of oil, even the bath of oil.* The *cor*, and the *homer*, are mentioned as containing the same quantity; so a *bath* is the tenth part of a *cor*, as an *ephah* is the tenth part of a *homer;* and the tenth part of a bath of oil is the hundredth part of a *cor*, which amounts to about six pints of our measure, according to Bishop Cumberland, p. 137.

Ver. 15. *And one lamb out of the flock out of two hundred.*] This offering is enjoined, besides setting apart the first-born for the use of the priests and Levites, (Numb. xviii. 15.) for making provision for the daily burnt-offering, (Numb. xxxviii. 3.) and for burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, or sacrifices of thanksgiving, that were to be made upon proper occasions. (See xliii. 27.)

Out of the fat pastures of Israel.] This implies, that these lambs were to be of the best and fattest of their kind; (see Mal. i. 8. 14.) as all other tithes and things dedicated to God were to be. (See Numb. xviii. 12.)

For a meat-offering.] These words relate to the thirteenth and fourteenth verses. The *meat-offering*, which might be more properly translated the *bread-offering*, being made of fine flour mingled with oil. (Lev. ii. 5, 6.)

To make reconciliation for them.] This effect is ascribed to burnt-offerings, as well as to those which are properly sacrificed for sin. (See Lev. i. 4.)

Ver. 16. *All the people of the land shall give this oblation for the prince.*] The marginal reading is, *with the prince*, which makes the plainer sense; *i. e.* the prince shall join with the people in making these oblations; whereas those that follow, in the next verse, are to be at the sole charge of the prince.

Ver. 17. *And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and drink-offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons,* &c.] Or, *even in the new moons,* as the particle *vau* often signifies. Meat-offerings and drink-offerings were always joined with burnt-offerings. (See Numb. xxviii. 5. 7.) The particular sacrifices which the prince was to provide upon the sabbaths, and other festivals, are specified, xlvi. 4. 11.

He shall prepare the sin-offering.] *i. e.* Provide it. Concerning the sin-offering, see xl. 39.

To make reconciliation for the house of Israel.] See ver. 15.

Ver. 18. *In the first month, in the first day of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock and cleanse the sanctuary.*] The words are directed to the prince, who is commanded, on the first day of the new year, (which, according to the ecclesiastical computation, began with the month Nisan, and answers to our tenth of March; see Exod. xii. 2.) to provide a bullock for a burnt-offering, to cleanse the temple from any defilement it may have contracted, by the people's offering their sacrifices, or coming into any of the courts belonging to it, while they were under any legal pollution. (See Lev. xvi. 19.)

A young bullock without blemish.] Whatever was offered to God was to be perfect, without blemish, and the very best in its kind. (See the note upon ver. 15. and Lev. xxii. 20.)

Ver. 19. *And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering.*] Of the bullock which was offered for a sin-offering. (See xliii. 19.) The office of the priest is here distinguished from that of the prince: the prince was to provide the sacrifices, and the priest was to offer them.

And put it upon the posts of the house.] Upon the lintels, or the door-posts of the house. (See xli. 21.)

And upon the four corners of the settle of the altar.] See xliii. 14. 20.

And upon the posts of the gate of the inner court.] See xlvi. 1.

Ver. 20. *So shall ye do the seventh day of the month, for every one that erreth.*] There were particular sacrifices appointed for sins of ignorance, whether of private persons, or of the whole congregation. (See Lev. iv. 13. 27.)

So shall ye reconcile the house.] Cleanse it from any pollution it may have contracted through the ignorance of any of the common people. (See ver. 18.)

Ver. 22. *And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself,* &c.] See ver. 17.

Ver. 23. *And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt-offering to the Lord.*] Moses, in some places, speaks of the feast of unleavened bread, which lasted seven days, as distinct from the day wherein the passover was to be eaten; (see Lev. xxiii. 5, 6.) which is agreeable to the injunction of this and the foregoing verse; and the words may be easily reconciled with those texts, which include the whole solemnity within the compass of seven days, by supposing the passover to be eaten early in the evening, on the fourteenth day, *between the two evenings,* as the Hebrew text hath it, Exod. xii. 6. Immediately after which ceremony was over, they reckoned the fifteenth day to begin; for they reckoned their days from one evening to another. (See Lev. xxiii. 32.)

Seven bullocks, and seven rams.] Seven was a number often used in religious rites: most of the feasts, under the law, continued seven days; and this number of sacrifices seems to be derived from patriarchal institution, because such a custom prevailed where Moses's law was not known. (See Numb. xxiii. 1, 2. Job xlii. 8.)

And a kid of the goats daily for a sin-offering.] This was the sin-offering most commonly prescribed. (See Numb. xxviii. 15. 22. 30. xxix. 5. 11. 16. 19, &c.)

Ver. 24. *And he shall prepare a meat-offering of an ephah,* &c.] See ver. 11. 15.

And a hin of oil for an ephah.] For each ephah of fine flour. A *hin* was the sixth part of an ephah or bath; which contains one gallon and two pints, according to Bishop Cumberland, in the forecited place.

Ver. 25. *In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month.*] When the feast of tabernacles was kept. (See Lev. xxiii. 34.)

CHAP. XLVI.

ARGUMENT.

A continuation of the ordinances relating to the worship of the prince and people: and concerning the gifts he shall bestow on his sons and servants. Then follows a description of the courts appointed for boiling and baking any part of the holy oblations.

Ver. 1. *THE gate of the inner court that looketh towards the east shall be shut the six working days.*] See the notes upon xliv. 1, 2.

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But on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon.] Under the sabbath and new moon, all the other feasts may probably be comprehended. (See xlv. 17.)

Ver. 2. *And the prince shall enter in by the porch of that gate without.*] He shall go through the outer gate of that court, and so pass to the inner gate, where he may see the whole service performed at the altar. Or, *the porch of the gate without* may signify the farthermost porch of the gate, with respect to those that are coming towards the temple, which is the same with the innermost, in respect of the temple itself. In this sense the word is taken xl. 44. The word *michuts*, or *michutsah*, signifies both the hither and the farther side, both being relative terms, and applicable to the same place, as persons are going out or coming into the temple. It signifies the hither side, xl. 19. and the farther side, ibid. ver. 44. and in this verse. So the word *neber* signifies both the farther and hither side of a river. (See Noldius, p. 660.)

Shall stand by the post of the gate.] *i. e.* By the entrance of the gate, where there was a seat prepared for him. (See the note upon xliv. 3.)

And the priest shall prepare his burnt-offering.] Or, *offer his burnt-offering:* for so the verb *nasah* often signifies, as *facio* does in Latin.

And he shall worship at the threshold of the gate.] By bowing his head, and bowing down his face to the earth, or falling down upon the ground, as the posture of Divine worship is elsewhere described. (See Gen. xxiv. 26. 52. Exod. xii. 27. 1 Chron. xxix. 20. 2 Chron. xxix. 29. Job i. 20.)

But the gate shall not be shut until the evening.] Because the people were to pay their solemn worship in the same place, as it is prescribed in the following verse.

Ver. 3. *Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate,* &c.] During the continuance of the tabernacle, they that would offer any sacrifice were required to bring it to the *door of the tabernacle of the congregation*, and there *lay their hands upon the head of it;* (Lev. i. 3, 4.) and under the temple they came to the north or south gate of the inner court, according as the sacrifice was to be slain on the north or south side of the altar, and there presented their sacrifice. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Temple, chap. 34.) Here the inner porch of the east gate is assigned for their station, who came to present themselves before the Lord upon the solemn festivals, and they were to come no farther into the inner court.

Ver. 4. *And the burnt-offering that the prince shall offer in the sabbath-day,* &c.] It was the prince's part to provide sacrifices for the sabbaths and other festivals. (See xlv. 17.) This was a new ordinance, whereupon the number of the beasts that were to be offered, and the proportions of the meat and drink-offerings, are different here from those prescribed in the law: as will appear by comparing the fourth, sixth, seventh, and fourteenth verses of this chapter with Numb. xxviii. 9. 11, 12. 15.

Ver. 5. *And the meat-offering shall be an ephah for a ram, and a hin of oil to an ephah.*] See xlv. 24.

And the meat-offerings for the lambs, as he shall be able to give.] The margin reads from the Hebrew, *according to the gift of his hand, i. e.* as much as he shall think sufficient. (See the same expression, Deut. xvi. 17.)

Ver. 8. *He shall go in by the way of the porch of that gate.*] See ver. 2. To go in at the eastern gate was the privilege of the prince and the priests only: the people were to enter in by the north or south gates, as it is said in the following verse.

Ver. 9. *He that entereth in by the north gate to worship, shall go out by the way of the south gate.*] The words imply the reason why the people were not to come in at the east gate, because there being no passage or thoroughfare out of the temple westward; if they had entered in at the east gate, they must have returned back the same way they came in, which would have been turning their back upon God, and the place of his residence. (See the note upon viii. 16.) Dr. Spencer mentions this as a rule in the Talmud, that *they who come within the holy mount, should enter in by the way of the right hand, and go out by the left;* understanding the right hand of the northern part of the temple, and the left hand of the southern: so he is of opinion that God designed to take away that superstitious distinction between the several gates of the temple, by commanding that every one should go out the opposite way to that by which he came in, whether it were towards the north or south. (See lib. iv. de Leg. Hebr. cap. 8.)

Ver. 10. *And the prince in the midst of them when they go in, shall go in.*] He shall pay the same attendance upon God's worship with the people, since all men are equal in the sight of God.

Ver. 12. *When the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt-offering.*] The foregoing verses gave orders about the sacrifices the prince was enjoined to offer upon solemn days: this gives directions concerning free-will-offerings. (Concerning which, see Lev. xxii. 18. 21.)

One shall then open him the gate, &c.] When the service is performed he shall go back the same way; (see ver. 8.) and the porter shall shut the gate after him, because it may not stand open upon ordinary days, (ver. 1.)

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt-offering unto the Lord.—Thou shalt prepare it every morning.*] The daily evening sacrifice is generally supposed to be here implied, according to prescription of the law, Numb. xxviii. 3, 4. and both together called by the name of the *daily sacrifice*, Dan. viii. 11, 12. The daily oblation seems to have been provided at the joint charge of prince and people. (See xlv. 16, 17.)

Ver. 14. *The sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of a hin of oil.*] In Numb. xxviii. 5. the proportion required is the *tenth part of an ephah*, and *the fourth part of a hin of oil.*

By a perpetual ordinance unto the Lord.] So the law of the Passover is called a *perpetual ordinance*, Exod. xii. 17. and likewise ordinances about the first-fruits, Lev. xxiii. 14. The Hebrew word *olam* is used in each of these places: but that does not always denote perpetuity in a strict sense, but only a remarkable period or succession of time; accordingly the Jews themselves divide the duration of the world into three *olams*, or ages; that before the law, that under the law, and the times of the Messias.

Ver. 17. *It shall be his to the year of liberty.*] So the year of jubilee is called by the name of liberty, Lev. xxv. 10. because it freed both men's persons from the service of their masters, and their estates from any engagements, by which the right of them was transferred from their proper owners.

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After, it shall return to the prince.] Or to his heirs, if he be dead.

But his inheritance shall be his sons for them.] Or, His inheritance shall belong to his sons, it shall be theirs; so as not to be alienated.

Ver. 18. *Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression.*] As Ahab did, 1 Kings xxi. 16. (Compare xlv. 8.)

That my people be not scattered every man from his possession.] Lest being turned out of their own, they be forced to wander up and down the country for a livelihood.

Ver. 19. *Afterward he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers of the priests, which looked towards the north.*] This entry or private passage (see xlii. 9.) led to the priests' chambers, which were on the north side of the inner court, and are described xl. 44. 46.

Behold, there was a place on the two sides westward.] Or, *on their sides westward: i. e.* there was an enclosure on the west sides of these chambers: if we follow the sense of the English translation, we may suppose a walk or way between these western buildings, which divided them into two rows, or equal parts. (See chap. xlii. 4.)

Ver. 20. *This is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass-offering and the sin-offering.*] See xlii. 13. xliv. 29. The flesh of the sacrifices which were to be eaten was to be boiled, except the flesh of the passover. (See 2 Chron. xxxv. 13.) So it is taken notice of as a piece of daintiness, and an over nice palate in the sons of Eli, that they would not have the flesh which came to their share *sodden*, but *roasted*, (1 Sam. ii. 15.)

Where they shall bake the meat-offering.] According to the directions given Lev. ii. 4, 5. 7.

That they bear them not into the outer court, to sanctify the people.] The flesh of those sacrifices, and the remainder of the meat-offering, was accounted most holy; (see Lev. vi. 17. 29. vii. 6.) and consequently did convey some holiness to those that touched it. (See the note on xliv. 19.)

Ver. 21. *Then he brought me forth to the outer court.*] The court of the people, mentioned in the foregoing verse.

And, behold, in every corner of the court there was a court.] At every corner where the side walls met in right angles there was another little court.

Ver. 22. *In the four corners of the court there were courts joined of forty cubits long and thirty broad.*] These little courts were in the shape of an oblong square, joined with inner walls to the outside walls of the greater court. The Hebrew word *keturoh*, translated *joined*, is rendered in the margin, *made with chimneys;* which sense very well agrees with the description that follows of the uses for which these courts were designed.

Ver. 23. *And there was a row of buildings round about in them.*] On the inside of these courts.

Ver. 24. *These are the places where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people.*] As there was a place in the inner court for boiling the trespass and sin-offering, (ver. 19, 20.) so these boiling places might be appointed for boiling the peace-offerings, which were esteemed inferior in holiness to those abovementioned, (see the note upon xlii. 13.) and therefore, perhaps, were dressed by the Levites, or inferior ministers: whereas the former were boiled by the priests in the court properly belonging to them. Although it must be granted, the priests and Levites are often taken promiscuously in this prophecy. (See the note upon xl. 45.)

CHAP. XLVII.

ARGUMENT.

The vision of the holy waters issuing out of the temple, and the virtue of them: together with a description of the several bounds of the holy land, which is to be indifferently shared between the Israelites and the proselytes that sojourned among them.

Ver. 1. *AFTERWARD he brought me again unto the door of the house.*] The door of the temple, which is described xli. 2.

And, behold, the waters issued out from under the threshold eastward.] There was a great quantity of water necessary for the uses of the temple, for washing the bodies of those that officiated, as well as the sacrifices which they offered. This was conveyed in pipes under ground from the fountain Etam, as Dr. Lightfoot observes from the rabbins, and from Aristeas, an eye-witness. (See his Temple, chap. 23.) These waters gave occasion to the vision here related.

For the forefront of the house stood towards the east.] The inward sanctuary being placed towards the west. (See the note upon viii. 16.)

And the waters came down from under the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.] This is spoke with respect to those that come out of the temple, and direct their faces eastward, for then the south side is on a man's right hand. These waters were conveyed, by the right side of the altar, into a room they called the well-room. (See Dr. Lightfoot, in the forecited place.)

Ver. 2. *Then brought he me out of* [or by] *the way of the gate northward.*] The east gate being shut. (See xlvi. 1.) The prophet in this vision is led to the north gate of the inner court.

And led me about the way without unto the utter gate.] He led me into the outward court, and so on till he came to the outmost north wall, that encompassed the whole mountain of the Lord's house. (See xlii. 20.)

By the way that looketh eastward.] When the prophet was come quite through all the courts, and is on the outside of the outermost, he is directed to come from the north gate towards the east gate.

And, behold, there ran waters out on the right side.] On the south side. (See ver. 1.) These were the spare waters not used in the service of the temple, which were conveyed away by the east part of the mountain, and by degrees increased its stream, till it became a river, and fell at last into the Dead Sea. (See ver. 8. 10. and compare Joel iii. 18.)

Ver. 3. *And the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward.*] The angel described with a line in his hand, (xl. 3.) went on directly from the east gate before the holy mountain.

Ibid. and Ver. 4, 5. *He measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; and the waters were to the ancles,* &c.] The gradual rise of the waters represented in this vision, denotes the large effusion of the Spirit, which which was very remarkable at the first publication of the

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gospel, and its wonderful increase from small beginnings; and will be so again, when God shall *pour the spirit of grace* upon the Jews, in order to their conversion. (Zech. xii. 10. see the note upon Isa. liv. 13.) The supplies of grace are often represented in the holy writers under the metaphor of a river, and streams watering the dry and thirsty earth, both cleansing and making fruitful the ground where they pass. The metaphor is probably taken from the river that watered Paradise. (See Rev. xxii. 1. and compare Isa. xliv. 3. Zech. xiii. 1. xiv. 8. and see the notes upon Isa. xxx. 25.)

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this?*] Hast thou considered or taken notice of this vision now shewed unto thee? (Compare xl. 4.) To *see*, often signifies to take notice of what we see; on the contrary, they are said to *have eyes, and see not*, who do not observe what is placed before their eyes.

Then he caused me to return to the brink of the river.] He made me go along by the river side.

Ver. 7. *Behold, on the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.*] The words allude to the trees planted in Paradise, and designed for man's food in the state of innocence, and especially to the tree of life which grew there. (See ver. 12. and compare Rev. xxii. 2.)

Ver. 8. *These waters issue out towards the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea.*] These waters are described as taking their course along the plain or champaigne country (for that is the sense of the word *araba*, here rendered *desert*) towards the lake where Sodom formerly stood, called the Dead Sea, and by Moses the Salt Sea. (Compare Deut. iii. 17. with this verse.)

Which being brought forth into the sea the waters shall be healed.] This is the observation of all writers, who describe this lake, that nothing can live in it: and the text here tells us, that these living streams shall, by mixing with these salt and brackish waters, make them wholesome and fit for use: mystically denoting the healing virtue of God's grace to cure the vices and corruptions of wicked men.

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live,* &c.] The metaphor is still continued, to this sense: That as the fish which move or swim (compare Gen. i. 20.) in waters cured or made wholesome, have life and nourishment from thence, whereas no fish can live in the Dead Sea: so the waters which flow from the *wells of salvation*, as the prophet Isaiah expresses it, (Isa. xii. 3.) shall make all those thrive and multiply who enjoy the benefit of them, though their condition before were never so desperate. The word *rivers* and *river* are promiscuously used in this verse, though some of the Jewish writers are of opinion, that these waters divide themselves, and some flow eastward, and others westward: which opinion they ground partly upon the plural number used in this verse, but chiefly upon the words of Zechariah, xiv. 8.

Ver. 10. *And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it, from En-gedi to En-eglaim.*] *En-gedi* was a town that lay on the south-west of the lake of Sodom, or the Dead Sea, called *Hazezon-tamar*, Gen. xiv. 7. compared with 2 Chron. xx. 2. *En-eglaim*, or *En-gallim*, as St. Jerome reads the word, is another on the east side of the same lake, where Jordan falls into it; upon the confines of Moab, as may be conjectured from Isa. xv. 8. which is confirmed by the parallel text in Joel, iii. 18. where it is said, that *a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim:* which we know was in the country of Moab. (See Numb. xxv. 1.) So these two places denote the whole extent of that lake, which the prophet saith shall be full of fish, still prosecuting the allegory begun in the foregoing verses.

They shall be a place to spread forth their nets.] These two towns shall afford convenience for the fishers to hang out their nets a drying. (See xxvi. 5.)

Their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea.] This lake for plenty of fish may compare with the Mediterranean Sea, called the *great sea* here, and ver. 15. 19. xlviii. 28. and more distinctly described in Joshua by *the great sea westward*, Josh. xxiii. 4. Perhaps Christ may allude to this place, when he tells his disciples, he *will make them fishers of men*, Matt. iv. 19.

Ver. 11. *But the miry places shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.*] By those unsound, rotten places, may be understood hypocrites; who shall receive no benefit by these healing waters, no more than some sort of marsh land can be made fruitful: but after all the care or culture that can be bestowed upon it, continues barren and unprofitable, which the Hebrew language expresseth by being *given to salt:* saltness is equivalent to barrenness in that language: (see Deut. xxix. 23. Psal. cvii. 34. Jer. xvii. 6.) so we read Judg. ix. 45. when Abimelech destroyed Shechem, he *sowed* the ground whereon it stood *with salt*, to denote that it should never be cultivated or inhabited again.

Ver. 12. *And by the river, upon the bank thereof, shall grow all trees for meat.*] See the note on ver. 7.

Whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed.] They shall be perpetually in a thriving condition, like the trees of Paradise, never barren or withering: a proper emblem of the flourishing state of the righteous still bringing forth *fruit unto holiness*, and whose *end is everlasting life.* (See Psal. i. 3. Jer. xvii. 8.)

It shall bring forth new fruit according to its months.] It shall be constantly fruitful, not only once a year, as fruit-trees commonly are. (Compare Rev. xxii. 2.)

The fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.] As the waters issuing from the sanctuary have a healing virtue; (see ver. 8.) so the leaves of the trees shall have the same quality. The expression alludes to the opinion commonly received among naturalists and physicians, that the leaves of several trees are medicinal.

Ver. 13. *This shall be the border,* &c.] The borders described in the following part of this chapter shall be the limits or boundaries of your country. By the several captivities both of Israel and Judah, the several limits or borders belonging to the inheritance of each tribe were obliterated and forgotten: whereupon here is a new boundary and division made of the holy land, a full possession of which they might have expected to enjoy, if their sins had not prevented such a blessing. This may perhaps be the literal sense of the following part of the prophecy; though there is, without question, a mystical sense implied under this literal description. (See the note on xlviii. 7. 20.)

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Joseph shall have two portions.] Upon Reuben's forfeiting his birthright, the double portion belonging to the first-born accrued to Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, according to Jacob's own appointment. (See Gen. xlviii. 5. 1 Chron. v. 1.)

Ver. 14. *And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another.*] The ten tribes which are scattered abroad, as well as Judah and Benjamin: (see xlviii. 1. 7. 23. 27.) who, together with some of the families of the tribe of Levi, made up the principal part of those who returned from the Babylonish captivity; from hence we may conclude that this prophecy relates to the general restoration of the Jews, an event often foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament. (See the note upon xxviii. 25.)

Concerning the which I lifted up my hand to give it to your fathers.] See xx. 5, 6.

And this land shall fall unto you for inheritance.] The word *fall* is taken from the manner of their first acquiring the possession of the land, which was by lot, as it had formerly been, when they first took possession of it. (See ver. 22. and xlviii. 29.) By which means all controversies will be prevented, the lot referring all things to the Divine designation and appointment, (Prov. xvi. 33.)

Ver. 15. *From the great sea, the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad.*] The northern border of the land was to begin from the west point, on which side lay the Mediterranean Sea, (see ver. 10.) and go on northward towards Hethlon, a place near Damascus: (see xlviii. 1.) and so on forward to Zedad, mentioned Numb. xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 16. *Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath.*] The places here mentioned were within this tract of ground. Hamath was the utmost point of the land northward, therefore called the *entrance of Hamath*, and described as the opposite point to the river of Egypt: (see 1 Kings viii. 65. Amos vi. 14.) the other two towns were situate between Hamath and Damascus.

Hazar-hatticon, which is by the coast of Hauran.] Or, as our margin reads, *the middle villages* between Hamath and Hauran, a place lying eastward from Hamath, from whence that country was called Auranitis.

Ver. 17. *And the border from the sea shall be Hazar-enan,* &c.] Or, *Shall be to Hazar-enan,* even *the border of Damascus, and all the northern frontier, and the border of Hamath; i. e.* that tract of land which is called the *entrance of Hamath,* as was observed before. Your north border shall be, as if a line were drawn from the Mediterranean Sea, along by Hamath, and so to Hazar-enan: (see Numb. xxxiv. 9.) keeping along by the frontier of that part of Syria, called Syria of Damascus: so as to distinguish the northern boundaries of Israel from the southern limits of Syria.

Ver. 18. *And the east side ye shall measure from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead.*] Damascus lay more northerly than Hauran, but the country called Auranitis might reach nearer it. Gilead was a long tract of ground that joined to Mount Libanus, and was extended to the land of Zihon, king of the Amorites, as St. Jerome tells us in his book de Locis Hebraicis: it is called *the land of Gilead,* and reached *unto Dan,* Deut. xxxiv. 1.

From the land of Israel by Jordan, from the border unto the east sea.] From the northern limits of the land of Israel, (ver. 17.) near Cæsarea or Dan, where the river Jordan takes its rise, unto the Dead Sea, or the lake of Sodom. (See ver. 8.)

Ver. 19. *And the south side southward, from Tamar even to the waters of strife in Kadesh,* [to] *the river, to the great sea.*] Compare xlviii. 28. The southern frontiers shall be from En-gedi, called *Hazazon-tamar,* 2 Chron. xx. 2. (see Dr. Lightfoot's Descript. of the Land of Israel, chap. 6.) to the waters of Meribah, or strife, in Kadesh, (Deut. xxii. 52.) and from thence to the river of Egypt. The river of Egypt riseth out of Mount Paran, taketh its course westward to Rhinocorura, and from thence falls into the Mediterranean, called *the great sea,* ver. 10. See Gen. xv. 18. Josh. xv. 47. 1 Kings viii. 65. Isa. xxvii. 12. where the LXX. translate it, Ἕως Ῥινοκορούρων, *to Rhinocorura,* near which it runs. This river seems to be the same with Sihor, mentioned Josh. xiii. 3. though that name be commonly understood to signify the Nile. (See the notes upon Jer. ii. 18.)

Ver. 20. *The west side also shall be the great sea from the border.*] *i. e.* From the south border, mentioned in the foregoing verse; so ver. 18. *from the border,* means the northern border, mentioned ver. 17.

Till a man come over against Hamath.] Or rather, *Till a man come to Hamath;* for so the particle *nad-nocah* signifies: (see Noldius, p. 657.) till you come to Hamath, the northern point towards the west frontier.

Ver. 22. *Ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you.*] See the note upon ver. 14.

And to the strangers that sojourn among you.] Foreigners never before had the privilege of purchasing or possessing any inheritance among the Jews; so this mystically denotes the incorporating the gentiles into the same church with the Jews: making them *fellow-heirs, and of the same body with them, by the gospel,* Ephes. iii. 6.

They shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.] In whatsoever tribe they sojourn, as it is expressed in the next verse.

CHAP. XLVIII.

ARGUMENT.

This last chapter contains a description of the several portions of land belonging to each tribe: together with the portions allotted to the sanctuary, city, suburbs, and prince: as also the measure and gates of the new city.

Ver. 1. *FROM the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon.*] As the description of the limits, or boundaries of the land, began on the north side, (xlvii. 15, &c.) so the portion of that tribe, to whom the most northern lot fell, is first named, which is Dan.

For these are his sides, east and west.] These are the boundaries belonging to that tribe, from the east point near Mount Libanus and Gilead, to the west point, which is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea. (See xlvii. 15, &c.)

Ver. 2. *And by the border of Dan, from the east side to the west side, a portion for Asher.*] All along from the south side of Dan, measuring from east to west, shall the share of Asher be.

Ver. 7. *And by the border of Reuben—a portion for Judah.*] From the first verse to the seventh, the situation of

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seven of the twelve tribes is described, which were placed on the north side of the holy portion, the length of Judea, from north to south, being divided into twelve equal parts; (see xlvii. 14.) beside the allotment for the holy portion, and for the prince; and the city and temple being placed where they stood formerly, there must be seven shares on the north side of that allotment, and but five on the south side; for Jerusalem did not stand in the middle of the holy land, but more towards the south, as may appear to any one that consults the map of Judea.

But for the fuller explaining this difficulty, we may reasonably conclude, that Judah's portion lay nearest to that which was allotted for the priests and sanctuary, to be a barrier and defence to them against the invasion of Gog and Magog, or any other enemies.

It is the opinion of some learned men, that so particular a description of the several portions allotted to each tribe relates to the Jews' settlement in their own country after their conversion; several passages in the prophets looking that way (see the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh chapters of this prophecy): but without laying too great a stress upon this opinion, we may fairly suppose some mystical sense contained under this description. The twelve tribes denote the pure Christian church in the New Testament. (See Luke xxii. 30. Rev. vii. 4, &c.) Twelve is a hieroglyphical number in the same book, denoting the true church, built upon the doctrine of the twelve apostles. (See Rev. xii. 1. xxi. 14.) By the same analogy, the number of a *hundred and forty and four thousand*, Rev. vii. 4. xiv. 1. signifies the church of pure Christians, who continue steadfast in the apostolical doctrine, twelve being the square root, out of which that number ariseth: so this division of the land, among the twelve tribes, may imply, that all true Christians shall be equally sharers in the privileges of the gospel.

Ver. 8. *And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be the offering which ye shall offer of five-and-twenty thousand reeds in breadth.*] Next to the border of Judah, which runs in length from east to west, shall be the offering ye shall set apart for the service of God, (xlv. 1.) The word *reeds* is not in the original, either here or in that text; and we may more probably understand the measure in both places of cubits. (See the note there.)

And in length as one of the other parts [are] *from the east side to the west side.*] Which was likewise five-and-twenty thousand, according to the dimensions of the holy portion set down, xlv. 1. 6. For the oblation was to be four-square, consisting of five-and-twenty thousand, multiplied by five-and-twenty thousand. (See ver. 20. of this chapter.)

Ver. 9. *The oblation that ye shall offer unto the Lord shall be of five-and-twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth.*] This shall be set apart for the sanctuary, and the most holy place, and the priests' houses. (See xlv. 3, 4.)

Ver. 10. *Towards the north five-and-twenty thousand in length, and towards the west ten thousand in breadth,* &c.] The dimensions from east to west are called by the name of breadth here, but of length ver. 8. And so they truly are, as may appear from the plan of the whole, described in the notes upon the forty-fifth chapter: but if we suppose that space of ground, which is expressed by the breadth in one place, to be called by the name of length in another, there will be no impropriety in the expression; because in an exact square, as the whole compass of ground is here supposed to be, all sides are equal.

Ver. 11. *It shall be for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok.*] See xliv. 10. 15.

As the Levites went astray.] Or, *As the* other *Levites went astray:* so the word *other* is supplied ver. 8. The Levites denote, in general, the sons of Levi, so as to comprehend the priests too. (See ver. 22.) Many of these had defiled themselves with idolatry; for which crime they were to be degraded from the honours and privileges due to those priests who had continued faithful in their office. (See the note upon xliv. 10, 11.)

Ver. 12. *And this oblation—shall be unto them a thing most holy.*] As all things dedicated to God were. (See Lev. xxvii. 28.)

By the border of the Levites.] It shall lie next to the portion of the Levites, which lay southward, between the priests' and the city's portion. (See the scheme placed at the forty-fifth chapter.)

Ver. 13. *And over against the border of the priests, the Levites shall have five-and-twenty thousand in length,* &c.] It might be better translated, *just by the border of the priests,* or *beside the border of the priests,* as the word *leummath* is translated in our English Bible, x. 19. xi. 22. The words import, that the border of the Levites ran parallel to that of the priests: and to the same sense the word should be translated in the fifteenth, eighteenth, and twenty-first verses of this chapter. (See the note upon xl. 18.)

Ver. 14. *They shall not sell of it, neither exchange, nor alienate the first-fruits of the land,* &c.] It being God's portion, they were not to sell nor part with it upon any pretence of advantage, or greater convenience. This portion of land is called the *first-fruits,* as it is styled an *oblation,* ver. 8. 12. to denote that the whole land was God's property. (See the note upon xlv. 1.)

Ver. 15. *And the five thousand that are left in the breadth, over against* [or beside, see ver. 13.] *the five-and-twenty thousand.*] Which was the portion assigned to the Levites, ver. 13. This five thousand, added to the five-and-twenty thousand in length, and two ten thousands in breadth, mentioned ver. 10. makes up a square of five-and-twenty thousand every way. (See ver. 20.)

Shall be for a profane place for the city, &c.] See xlv. 6. It is called a profane place comparatively, because it was not so holy as the temple and the sanctuary. (See the note upon xlii. 20.)

And the city shall be in the midst thereof.] A square piece of ground, of four thousand and five hundred cubits on every side, shall be taken out of the middle of the five-and-twenty thousand cubits in length, for the area of the city, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 16. *And these shall be the measures thereof; the north side four thousand and five hundred,* &c.] It shall be an *equilateral square,* every side being exactly of the same measure, consisting in all of eighteen thousand measures. (See ver. 35.)

Ver. 17. *And the suburbs of the city shall be towards the north two hundred and fifty, and towards the south two hundred and fifty,* &c.] These dimensions of the suburbs, added to those of the city, make the whole area an *equilateral*

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square, of five thousand cubits on every side; adding five hundred in breadth, and five hundred in length, to the four thousand five hundred cubits, which was the compass of the city.

Ver. 18. *And the residue in length, over against* [or beside, see ver. 13.] *the oblation of the holy portion, shall be ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward.*] These two dimensions of ten thousand in length, both eastward and westward, remain on each side of the area, which is five thousand cubits square, and set apart for the site of the city.

It shall be over against [or beside] *the oblation of the holy portion.*] It shall join to the Levites' portion, both on the east and west side; and it shall lie parallel with the two portions belonging to the priests and Levites. (Consult the scheme placed above.)

And the increase thereof shall be for food to them that serve in the city.] That perform inferior offices in the city. The priests and Levites having a large portion already assigned for their sustenance.

Ver. 19. *And they that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel.*] This service being a burden, it is fit that all the tribes should bear their part in it.

Ver. 20. *All the oblation shall be five-and-twenty thousand by five-and-twenty thousand.*] Five-and-twenty thousand in length multiplied by five-and-twenty thousand in breadth. (See ver. 10.)

Ye shall offer the oblation four-square.] So the *heavenly* Jerusalem is described as lying *four-square*, Rev. xxi. 16. a square figure being the emblem of perpetuity, strength, and solidity. (Compare xlii. 16. 20.)

A great part of the wisdom of the eastern nations was wrapped up in hieroglyphical emblems and numbers. The symbols of Pythagoras are a remarkable instance of this sort of ancient learning. This method God hath thought fit to make use of to discover some mysterious truths in his word: such as perhaps he thinks not convenient to be more clearly revealed till its proper time and season: intending by such obscure hints to encourage men's searching into the more abstruse parts of the Scriptures, and to shew that all human knowledge may be made subservient to Divine.

The text before us, compared with its parallel in the forty-second chapter of this prophecy and in the Revelation, plainly shews that a square is an emblematical figure. In like manner the number twelve is a sacred number, as I observed upon ver. 7. and the learned Mr. Potter, in his book of the Number 666, hath with great acuteness reconciled the twelve thousand furlongs, the measure of the New Jerusalem in the Revelation, with the measures of Ezekiel here, by interpreting them of solid measures, and extracting the root of each of them.

With the possession of the city.] Or, the land assigned for the site of the city: which was a square of five thousand cubits; and being added to the portion of the priests and Levites, made their twice ten thousand to be five-and-twenty thousand in breadth. (See ver. 10. 15.)

Ver. 21. *And the residue shall be for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy oblation, and of the possession of the city.*] The prince's part shall be extended both on the east and west side of the several allotments belonging to the priests, the Levites, and the city. The particular extent of the prince's portion is not here specified, but it is computed by some to contain above four times as much as those allotments. (See the note upon ver. 22.)

Over against the five-and-twenty thousand of the oblation towards the east border, and westward over against the five-and-twenty thousand towards the west border.] The particle *el-pené*, translated *over against*, is rendered *before* in the parallel text, xlv. 7. and thus interpreted makes the sense clearer; the words then importing, that the prince's portion ran along eastward and westward, like a frontier before the holy portions. (See the forementioned scheme.)

Over against the portions for the prince: and it shall be the holy oblation, &c.] Our translation hath rendered the latter part of this verse very imperfectly: which should be thus translated: *Beside these* [or joining to these] *portions*, (so *leummath* signifies, see ver. 13.) *shall be that belonging to the prince: and this shall be the holy oblation, and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the midst thereof.* The last part of the sentence is only a recapitulation of what is said more at large, ver. 8.

Ver. 22. *Moreover, from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, being in the midst of that which is the prince's.*] The words might be more plainly translated thus, *Moreover beyond the possession of the Levites, and beyond the possession of the city*—to this sense: that the possession belonging to the priests, and Levites, (see ver. 11.) and the city, were bounded on the east and west side with the prince's portion: so those lay in the middle, and this beyond them. The Hebrew particle *min* signifies *beyond*, in several places: examples of which may be seen in Noldius, p. 564.

Between the border of Judah, and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince.] The border of Judah was extended from east to west, next to the holy portion on the north side, (see ver. 1. 8.) The portion of Benjamin lay from east to west next the allotment set apart for the city, on the south side, (ver. 23. 28.) The several portions allotted for the priests, the Levites, and the city, extended only to the length of five-and-twenty thousand cubits from east to west: so that whatever ground ran in a parallel line eastward and westward beyond that boundary, even to the land's-end, belonged to the prince: and supposing the whole country to be sixty miles in breadth (as St. Jerome reckons it from Joppa to Jordan, Epist. ad Dardanum), and the holy portion about seven miles square, (see the note upon xlv. 1.) there will remain above six-and-twenty miles both on the east and west side for the prince's share. (See the scheme placed at the forty-fifth chapter.)

Ver. 23. *As for the rest of the tribes, from east to west, Benjamin shall have a portion.*] The portion assigned to Judah was situate next to the holy portion on the north side. (See ver. 1. 8.) The portion assigned to Benjamin lay next to the ground allotted for the city on the south side. (See ver. 28.) All these allotments run from east to west in length, and from north to south in breadth.

Ver. 24—27. *And by the border of Benjamin*, &c.] In these verses the four remaining tribes have their allotments assigned them, lying on the south side of the holy portion. These appointments are not laid out with any regard to the division of the land made in Joshua's time; for here a platform of a new church and state is set forth.

Ver. 28. *And by the border of Gad, at the south side—the border shall be towards the great sea.*] This is a descrip-

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tion of the southermost borders of the land, extending by the south and west to the Mediterranean Sea. (See xlvii. 19.)

Ver. 29. *This is the land which ye shall divide by lot,* &c.] See xlvii. 14. 22.

Ver. 30. *And these are the goings out of the city, on the north side,* &c.] The same measures of the city are already set forth, (ver. 16.) beginning with those on the north side, as the general division of the land doth. (See ver. 1.)

Ver. 31. *And the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel.*] The same description is given of the gates of the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 12, 13. to signify that all true Israelites have their share in this heavenly city, and a right to enter into it, (Rev. xxii. 14.)

Ver. 35. *And it was round about eighteen thousand measures.*] See ver. 16.

And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there.] Jerusalem was formerly called the *city of God,* (Psal. lxxxvii. 3.) and the *city of the great King,* (Psal. xlviii. 2.) But in this New Jerusalem, God shall dwell in a more glorious manner, and make it the place of his perpetual residence. So that every part of that city shall be honoured with evident tokens of the Divine presence; and every member of it being dedicated to God's service, and becoming *a habitation of God through his Spirit,* shall have some degree of the holiness of the temple, where God *had placed his name,* (1 Kings viii. 29. compare with Rev. xxi. 22.) This is in a lower degree fulfilled in all good Christians, who are called *the temples of the living God,* 2 Cor. vi. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5. and *a habitation of God through the Spirit,* Eph. ii. 22.

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A

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL,

AND

THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS.

TO THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

WILLIAM,

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY;

PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, AND METROPOLITAN; AND ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY-COUNCIL.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

HAVING had the honour to offer some former parts of my Commentary upon the Prophets to your Grace, I beg leave to lay this last and finishing part of my design at your Grace's feet, humbly entreating your favourable acceptance of my sincere endeavours to give what light I could to this important part of the Holy Writings.

The obscurity which is found in some passages of these prophecies, particularly in those of Daniel, hath exercised the thoughts of inquisitive men, in the foregoing ages of the church. But we, *upon whom the ends of the world are come*, seem to have an advantage above those that went before us: forasmuch as it may be reasonably supposed, that the nearer the events foretold are to their accomplishment, the greater light several providential occurrences may afford to the predictions themselves.

The prophecy of Daniel is an undeniable proof of an *overruling Providence*, that *changes times and seasons*, that *removeth* one government, and *setteth up* another. For what foresight was able so exactly to describe the orderly succession of the *four great monarchies*, but that of the Eternal Mind, whose *wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly orders all things? Who declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which are not yet come to pass; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*

That holy Prophet was adorned with such extraordinary endowments, as seldom are found in one person: being not only honoured with the gift of prophecy, but likewise advanced to bear rule over kingdoms, by reason of that *excellent spirit which was found in him:* this might afford me a proper occasion to draw a parallel between his and your Grace's accomplishments, which have qualified you to sustain the highest office in the church, and the greatest trusts in the state. But I shall forbear pursuing this subject, being well assured that your Grace takes greater satisfaction in performing worthy deeds, than hearing the report of them proclaimed by others: and shall conclude with my hearty prayers, that your Grace may also resemble the felicity of Daniel, in enjoying a long and prosperous life here, and may then be translated to an endless happiness hereafter.

I am, may it please your Grace,

Your Grace's most dutiful and obedient servant,

WILLIAM LOWTH.

CONCERNING THE

AUTHOR AND THE SUBJECT

OF THE ENSUING

PROPHECY.

THE prophet Daniel was descended of the royal family of the kings of Judah; so that in the captivity of himself and his companions was fulfilled that prophecy of Isaiah, that the *king's issue should be eunuchs*, or officers, *to the king of Babylon.* (Isa. xxxix. 7.) The later Jews do not reckon Daniel among the prophets; but herein they contradict the sense of the more ancient ones, and particularly of Josephus, who calls him *one of the greatest of the prophets*, and saith, *that he did not only foretell future things, which was common*

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to him with other prophets, but also prefixed a time for their coming to pass. (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 12.) Our Saviour's authority is decisive in this matter, who expressly calls Daniel a prophet, Matt. xxiv. 15. wherein he likewise spoke the sense of the Jews of that time. And if we consider the important subject of some of his prophecies, wherein he plainly points out the time of *Christ's coming* and *sufferings*, and the large extent of others of them, giving an account of the succession of *four monarchies* unto the end of the world, he may justly be reckoned among the first of that order. Daniel and St. John had both of them the honour of being persons *greatly beloved* by God and Christ: (compare Dan. x. 11. with John xiii. 23.) so the latter, in his Revelation, doth more distinctly unfold those events which the former foretells in general terms, as Mr. Mede has observed. (See his Works, p. 787.)

This prophecy is writ partly in Hebrew, and partly in Chaldee: for which this reason may be assigned; that those parts of it in which the Babylonian empire was concerned were writ in their language, *viz.* from ii. 4. to the end of the seventh chapter; a great part of which was probably entered into their public registers. (See a like instance, Esth. ii. 23.)

St. Jerome tells us in the preface to his Commentary upon Daniel, that Porphyry had the boldness to affirm, that the prophecies of Daniel relating to the kings of Syria and Egypt, (chap. xi.) were written after the times of Antiochus Epiphanes: this was plainly granting the truth of the matters of fact therein contained, as St. Jerome observes; and the falsity of his assertion clearly appears from hence, that this prophecy was translated into Greek a hundred years before Antiochus's time, and that translation was in the hands of the Egyptians, who had no kindness either for the Jews or their religion. Nay, farther, the prophecies of Daniel foretelling the great successes of Alexander, (viii. 5. xi. 3.) were shewed to Alexander himself by the Jews, who thereupon obtained several privileges from him, as Josephus informs us, Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 8.

Daniel lived in great favour under Nebuchadnezzar and his successors in the Babylonian monarchy; his extraordinary merits continued him in the same degree of favour under Darius and Cyrus, the two first Persian monarchs: and, as Josephus observes *(ubi supra)*, "he was the only prophet that enjoyed a great share of worldly prosperity." He must needs have lived to a great age, it being near seventy years from the date of his first prophecy (ii. 1.) to that of his last, (x. 1.) Our learned chronologer, Bishop Lloyd, supposes him to have been carried into captivity, when he was about twenty years old: about ten years after we find him famed for his piety and wisdom, as appears from Ezek. xiv. 14. xxviii. 3. His last vision was in the third year of Cyrus, (Dan. x. 1.) at which time he was about ninety-four years of age, and it is not likely he lived much longer.

There need not any thing be said concerning the *three additions to Daniel*, viz. *The Song of the three Children*, the *History of Susannah*, and of *Bel and the Dragon:* since they manifestly appear to have been the productions of Hellenists of later times, and accordingly are rejected as apocryphal, by St. Jerome, in the prefaces to his translation, and to his Commentary on Daniel, and by other ancient writers.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The first chapter gives an account of the captivity of Daniel, and his companions, together with the manner of their education under the king of Babylon.

Ver. 1. *IN the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Jerusalem.*] The prophet Jeremiah makes the first year of Nebuchadnezzar coincident with the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and from thence begins the date of the seventy years' captivity: (see Jer. i. 11. xxv. 1.) but here Daniel speaks of Nebuchadnezzar as king of Babylon in the third year of Jehoiakim. To this objection Dr. Prideaux gives an easy answer: (Script. Connex. par. i. p. 60. edit. 8vo.) That Daniel begins his computation from the time that Nebuchadnezzar was sent by his father on the expedition against Pharaoh-Nechoh, king of Egypt, which was towards the latter end of the third year of Jehoiakim. In the beginning of the following year he conquered the Egyptians, which was the fourth year of Jehoiakim; (see Jer. xlvi. 2.) and in the latter end of the same year he came and besieged Jerusalem in the ninth month, according to the Jews' account, who to this day keep a fast, on the eighteenth day of that month, in memory of this taking of Jerusalem. At which time Jehoiakim became tributary to the king of Babylon, and consequently the seventy years of captivity and vassalage to Babylon began.

It has been observed in the notes upon Jer. xxv. 1. that the Scripture account of the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign anticipates the computation of Ptolemy's Canon two years, which two years Nebuchadnezzar reigned with his father, as Josephus informs us from Berosus, Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord gave Jehoiakim into his hand.*] He took Jehoiakim prisoner, and put him in chains, with a design to carry him to Babylon: but he having humbled himself, and submitted to become his tributary, he was restored to his kingdom. (Comp. 2 Kings xxiv. 1. 2 Chron. xxvi. 6.)

And part of the vessels of the house of God.] See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7. compared with Dan. v. 2, 3. Some of the vessels were still left, which Nebuchadnezzar seized when he carried Jeconiah captive. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 13. Jer. xxvii. 19, 20.)

Into the land of Shinar.] This was the original name of the country about Babylon, (Gen. xi. 2.) and it was still called by this name in some places of the prophets. (See Isa. xi. 11. Zech. v. 11.)

And he brought the vessels into the treasure-house of his god.] Of the idol Bel: (see Jer. l. 2.) from whence they were taken by Cyrus, and delivered to Zerubbabel, (Ezra i. 7, 8.) To this agrees the testimony of Berosus apud Josephum, (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11.) who tells us, "That Nebuchadnezzar adorned the temple of Bel with the spoils of war which he had taken in that expedition."

Ver. 3. *And the king spake unto Ashpenaz, master of the eunuchs.*] One of the chief officers of his palace; the officers that attended about the persons of the eastern kings being commonly eunuchs: a custom still practised in the Ottoman court.

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That he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, &c.] The words may be better translated, *even of the king's seed;* the conjunction copulative being often used by way of explication. (See Noldius's Concordance, p. 276. and the note upon Isa. li. 19.) And thus Isaiah's prophecy was punctually fulfilled, xxxix. 7. as hath been observed in the Preface.

Ver. 4. *Children in whom was no blemish,* &c.] He was directed to make choice of such as had the best accomplishments both of body and mind, and were fit to give attendance in a king's court. The word *yeladim, children,* is used in Scripture of such as are past the years of childhood, as we now distinguish the parts of man's life. It is applied to Rehoboam's counsellors, 1 Kings xii. 8. who cannot be thought mere children, since Rehoboam himself was of an advanced age. Nor can we suppose Daniel and his companions less than twenty years of age at this time, as may be concluded from their being put into considerable posts in the government in a short time after, (ii. 48, 49.)

Whom they might teach the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans.] Besides the study of politics and the art of war, the learning chiefly valued among them was astrology, or the knowledge of the heavenly motions, the interpretation of dreams, and architecture. (See the notes upon ver. 17. 20.)

The tongue of the Chaldeans.] The same was likewise called the Syrian language. (See ii. 4.)

Ver. 5. *And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat,* &c.] In like manner it was a custom of the Persian kings to feed their domestics with the remainder of their own tables. (See Athenæus, lib. iv. cap. 10.)

Ver. 7. *He gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar,* &c.] *According to the name of his god,* as Nebuchadnezzar himself derives the word, iv. 8. So the name was derived from *Bel,* the chief idol of Babylon, as Nebuchadnezzar had his own name from *Nebo,* another of their idols, mentioned Isa. xlvi. 1. and Evil-Merodach, his successor, was named from their idol Merodach, Jer. l. 2. It is probable that the other names imposed upon Daniel's companions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were derived from some of their idols. *Misael,* a word derived from *El,* the name of the true God, may probably have been changed into *Meshach,* because *Sac* was an idol worshipped by the Chaldeans. (See the note upon Jer. xxv. 26.)

Ver. 8. *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat,* &c.] It was the custom of most nations, before their meals, to make an oblation of some part of what they ate and drank to their gods, as a thankful acknowledgment, that every thing they enjoyed was their gift. These oblations were called *prosiciæ* and *libamina* among the Romans; so that every entertainment had something in it of the nature of a sacrifice. This practice generally prevailing, made Daniel and his friends look upon the provisions coming from the king's table as no better than meats offered to idols, and, by being so offered, to be accounted unclean and polluted. (See Ezek. iv. 13. Hos. ix. 3. compare with Acts xv. 20.) [*The portion of the king's meat.*] The word in the Hebrew is *path-bag:* from whence Scaliger derives the word ποτίβασις, mentioned in Athenæus as a dish served up to the table of the Persian kings, being a mixture of corn and wine together. See his notes upon Eusebius, p. 112.]

Ver. 9. *Now God had brought Daniel into favour with the prince of the eunuchs.*] See a like instance of God's care over Joseph, when he was a poor captive and prisoner, and destitute of all friends to support or comfort him: Gen. xxxix. 11. and compare Psal. cvi. 46.

Ver. 10. *Than the children of your sort.*] Or, *Of your age;* for so the word *gile* signifies in the Arabic, and to this sense the Greek translation understands it.

Ver. 12. *Let them give us pulse to eat.*] The Hebrew word *zeronim* signifies all sorts of garden roots or herbs. (See Isa. lxi. 11.)

Ver. 17. *God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom.*] In all sorts of learning and knowledge: so that it became a proverb, *Thou art wiser than Daniel,* Ezek. xxviii. 3. They were particularly skilful in those parts of the Chaldean learning which were really useful, and might recommend them to the favour of the kings both of Babylon and Persia, and qualify them for places of trust under them. So Moses's education in the Egyptian learning, (Acts vii. 22.) fitted him to be a ruler of God's people.

And Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.] It was an opinion generally received in the early ages of the world, that dreams, when they were attended with unusual circumstances, did portend or signify some future event. This subject Tully handles at large in his first book de Divinatione, and alleges some very remarkable instances of that kind. Homer speaks the general sense of his own age, when he saith, καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν: *even a dream comes from God.* The authority of Joseph is still more ancient, who saith, *Do not interpretations* [of dreams] *come from God?* (Gen. xli. 8.) The next evidence, in point of antiquity, is the book of Job, where Eliphaz relates a night-vision he himself had, which instructed him in a truth of great importance, (Job iv. 12, &c. xxxiii. 14, 15.) Elihu affirms, that *God speaks once, yea, twice to men—in a dream, in a vision of the night:* which, indeed, was the common way by which God revealed his will to the patriarchs of old, and afterward to the prophets. (See Gen. xxviii. 12, &c. xxxi. 11. Numb. xii. 6.) To descend to later times, the son of Sirach, when he discourses of the vanity of dreams, yet makes this exception, *Unless they be sent from the Most High,* (Ecclus. xxxiv. 1. 6.)

Ver. 18. *At the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in.*] At the end of three years. (See ver. 5.)

Ver. 19. *Therefore they stood before the king.*] They were in continual attendance in the king's court. So *Joseph stood before Pharaoh,* Gen. xli. 46. The same expression is used of Elijah and Jeremiah, as God's servants and messengers, 1 Kings xvii. 1. Jer. xv. 19. and the Levites are said to *stand before the congregation, to minister to them,* Numb. xvi. 9.

Ver. 20. *He found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.*] The words may be understood of those that employed themselves in the lawful search of natural causes and effects, and of the regular motions of the heavenly bodies. For when Daniel made intercession to the captain of the guard, that *the wise men of Babylon might not be slain,* (ii. 24.) we cannot suppose all of them were such as studied unlawful arts and

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sciences, since he himself was afterward made master or head over them: (ii. 48.) and if no part of the Chaldean learning might lawfully be studied, they that *would not defile themselves with the king's meat,* would have refused to be instructed in that way of education which he had appointed, as St. Jerome observes upon ver. 8. In like manner, the wise men mentioned Matt. ii. 1. called Μαγοὶ in the original, may be supposed such as employed themselves in observing the motions of the heavenly bodies, and might reasonably suppose that the new star they had seen, in that region of the heavens which the astrologers appropriated to Judea, did portend the birth of that Prince whom the Jews expected should be born about this time, and had spread such an expectation over a great part of the world: as a learned prelate hath lately shewed, in his Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, chap. 1.

[*Astrologers.*] The word in the Hebrew is *Assaphim,* which coming near in sound to the Greek Σοφοὶ, hath made some conjecture that it was derived from thence. But the true derivation of it is either from the verb *tsapha,* or *sapha,* signifying to view carefully, from whence comes the word *tsophim, watchmen,* a name given to the prophets: or else from *tsaphah,* to hide, from whence the author of Ecclesiasticus derives the Greek *sophia; wisdom,* saith he, *is according to her name, and she is not manifest unto many:* (vi. 22.) See the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield's Vindication, book i. chap. 1. sect. 2.]

Ver. 21. *And Daniel continued even to the first year of king Cyrus.*] He lived to see the overthrow of the Babylonish monarchy by Cyrus: which made way for the fulfilling of Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the *seventy weeks,* in the return of the Jews from their captivity; which was accomplished in the first year of king Cyrus: (Ezra i. 1.) for the accomplishment of which prophecy we find Daniel very solicitous, ix. 1, 2. This being so remarkable a year, the text takes notice that Daniel lived so long: not but that he lived longer, at least till the third year of Cyrus, as appears from x. 1. The word *unto,* or *until,* does not always exclude the time following the period mentioned. (See Psal. cx. 1. cxii. 8.)

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

An account of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the substance of which he had forgot, and the wise men of Chaldea could not relate to him: who are thereupon threatened with death: Daniel rescues them from that imminent danger, relates the dream to the king, and interprets it of the four great monarchies; and how, in the latter times of the fourth, God would set up the kingdom of the Messiah. Upon this the king advances him and his friends to considerable posts of honour.

Ver. 1. *AND in the second year of the reign of king Nebuchadnezzar.*] This was the fourth year of his reign, according to the Scripture computation: (see the note upon i. 1.) for above three years must have been expired since the time of Daniel's captivity. (See i. 5. 8.) But Daniel, writing the following history in Chaldee for the use of the Chaldeans, follows that computation of time which was in use among them.

Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams.] Though it was but one continued dream, it contained divers scenes of affairs; being a description of the succession of the four monarchies, which were to continue, under different forms, unto the end of the world.

And his sleep brake from him.] Or, *Went from him,* as a like phrase is rendered, vi. 18. The preposition *al,* sometimes signifies *from,* as Noldius shews in several instances, Concordance, p. 689.

Ver. 2. *Then the king commanded to call the magicians and the astrologers.*] See the note upon i. 20. Daniel and his companions did not appear among them: perhaps because the Chaldeans despised them as youths and strangers, and would not have them thought equal in knowledge with themselves.

And the sorcerers.] This word is always taken in an ill sense by the holy writers, for those that consult with evil spirits.

And the Chaldeans.] The Chaldeans were so much addicted to the study of the heavenly motions, and to make prognostications from thence, that the word Chaldean is used both in Greek and Latin writers for an astrologer.

Ver. 4. *Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac.*] The ancient Chaldee and the Syrian language were the same. (See Gen. xxxi. 47. 2 Kings xviii. 26. Ezra iv. 7.) This language is found in its greatest purity in the books of Daniel and Ezra. The Jews, in the time of their captivity, mixed several Hebrew words with the Chaldean language, and this is the Chaldee in which the Targums upon the law and the prophets are writ, and is called the Hebrew tongue in the New Testament. The language spoken in Antioch, and other parts of Syria, differs as a dialect from the two former, and, being written in a different character, is what we now call Syriac. (See Bishop Walton, Prolegom. xiii. ad Bibl. Polyglot. and Dr. Prideaux's Connex. par. ii. p. 539. edit. 8vo.)

The following part of the chapter from this verse is writ in Chaldee, and so on to the end of the seventh chapter: the reasons of which see in the Preface.

Ver. 5. *Ye shall be cut in pieces.*] A punishment, of which other places of Scripture make mention. (See 1 Sam. xv. 33. 1 Chron. xx. 3.) Our Saviour alludes to it, Matt. xxiv. 51.

And your house shall be made a dunghill.] That there might be no remains left of their memory. (See Ezra vi. 11.)

Ver. 6. *But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive gifts and rewards.*] Such as the king actually bestowed upon Daniel, after he had interpreted the dream, ver. 48. (Compare v. 16.)

Ver. 8. *I know of a certainty that you would gain the time.*] By importunately renewing your request that I would recollect my dream, you only protract the time, and delay the execution of the sentence pronounced against you, ver. 5. *Buying* or *redeeming the time* is a proverbial expression, denoting men's using their utmost endeavours to free themselves out of some imminent danger or difficulty: gaining time, being a considerable advantage to that purpose. (See the following verse.) In this sense St. Paul uses the phrase, Ephes. v. 16. Colos. iv. 5.

Ver. 9. *There is but one decree for you.*] The sentence of

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death already pronounced shall certainly be put in execution.

For you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed.] Ye have only contrived feigned excuses to protract the time, in hopes that circumstances might possibly alter, and so you might escape punishment.

Ver. 11. *And there is none other that can shew it before the king, except that God, whose dwelling is not with flesh.*] These Chaldeans undertook to foretell future events by their skill in the motions of the stars: and to explain dreams by some natural observations, such as are still to be seen in Artemidorus's Oneirocritics. Or if they pretended to have correspondence with spirits, they were the demons of a lower rank, who could not impart to them things so much above the compass of ordinary knowledge. (Compare ver. 28. and v. 11.)

Ver. 12. *For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.*] He might in his rage and fury not think of sending for Daniel; which made Daniel try to get admission to the king, (ver. 14, &c.) to prevent his own destruction, as well as that of the other wise men.

Ver. 13. *And they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.*] Though they had not been summoned with the wise men of Chaldea. (See ver. 2.)

Ver. 14. *Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard.*] With whom he was in favour. (See i. 9.) The Vulgar Latin translates the former part of the sentence thus; "Tunc Daniel requisivit de lege et sententia," *Daniel inquired concerning the law and decree*, which the king had made for destroying the wise men. The word *tenem*, translated here *wisdom*, usually signifies an edict, or public decree, set forth by authority.

Ver. 16. *Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time*, &c.] The king's anger was now abated, and withal the providence of God was visible, in inclining the king's heart to allow Daniel that favour which he had before denied to the magicians, (ver. 8.)

Ver. 18. *That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret.*] The danger equally threatened Daniel and his friends, therefore it was fit they should join in prayer for the averting of it.

Ver. 19. *Then was the secret revealed to Daniel in a night vision.*] The same with a dream. (See Job iv. 13. xxxiii. 15.)

Ver. 20. *For wisdom and might are his.*] His wisdom appears in ordering the great affairs of the world, and his might or power in bringing them to pass. To the same purpose Jeremy styles him, *great in counsel, and mighty in work*, Jer. xxxii. 19.

Ver. 21. *And he changeth the times and the seasons, he removeth kings, and setteth up kings.*] The great changes of the world are brought to pass by removing kings, and translating their dominions to others: by raising some empires, and pulling down others. Of this, Nebuchadnezzar's dream that was then revealed to Daniel was a signal instance: which contained the succession of the four great monarchies of the world. The prophet speaks of the disposal of governments as one of God's prerogatives, and the means whereby he brings to pass the most considerable changes which are wrought in the world. The Psalmist speaks to the same purpose, Psal. lxxv. 6, 7. This is a very good reason to persuade men to submit to such changes and revolutions being brought to pass by Providence for great and wise reasons. (See iv. 17. Jer. xxvii. 5, 6.)

Ver. 22. *He knoweth what is in darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*] He knoweth the most secret things, while they yet lie hid in their causes, and can discover and bring them to light. (Compare v. 11. 14.)

For thou hast made known unto us the king's matter.] See the note upon ver. 36.

Ver. 24. *Destroy not the wise men of Babylon.*] Some of them might probably employ themselves in laudable studies, and searches after knowledge. (See the note upon i. 20.) However, here was no just cause given for putting them to death.

Ver. 25. *I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known to the king the interpretation.*] Daniel undertook to do it of his own accord, (ver. 24.) but this officer, according to the manner of courtiers, takes this opportunity of ingratiating himself to the king, as if the discovery of Daniel's abilities in this kind was owing purely to his diligence.

Ver. 27. *The soothsayers.*] This word is not met with before among the several sorts of pretenders to wisdom among the Chaldeans, mentioned ver. 2. The Chaldee word is *gazerin*, which some think answers the Latin *aruspices:* who pretended to foretell events by tokens found in the entrails of the living creatures which they sacrificed.

The Greek translation which St. Jerome tells us was Theodotion's, retains the Chaldee word, and reads γαζαρηνῶν, which shews he did not understand the true import of that original.

Ver. 28. *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets.*] Daniel assumes nothing to himself, but gives the glory to God alone, whose knowledge, as he tells the king, infinitely exceeds that of all the wise men of Chaldea, and of the gods or demons which they consulted or worshipped.

And maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.] God only can certainly foreknow such future events as depend upon contingent causes, and the determination of man's free-will. (See Isa. xli. 22, 23.) The *latter days* very often signify the times of the Messias, called the *last times*, or age of the world; (see the note upon Isa. ii. 2.) and so the expression may be understood here; for the prophecy contained in this vision reaches to the times when the *kingdom of the Messias* shall be set up. (See ver. 44. and compare x. 14.)

Ver. 30. *As for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living.*] See ver. 28. 36.

But for their sakes who shall make known the interpretation to the king.] That this may be a means for myself and my three friends to gain an interest in your majesty, the better to promote the glory of God, and to do kindnesses to our brethren of the captivity. This is the sense of the words if we follow the common translation: but I take the marginal reading to be the better interpretation, *But for the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king.* The verb transitive is often used for the impersonal.

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(See the note upon Isa. xliv. 18.) Several instances of this kind are to be found in the book of Daniel: as iii. 4. iv. 16. 31. v. 20. xi. 21.

Ver. 31. *Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee.*] Grotius acutely observes, that this image appeared with a glorious lustre in the imagination of Nebuchadnezzar, whose mind was wholly taken up with admiration of worldly pomp and splendour: whereas the same monarchies were represented to Daniel under the shape of fierce and wild beasts, chap. vii. as being the great supporters of idolatry and tyranny in the world.

And the form thereof was terrible.] The success which accompanied their arms made them feared and dreaded by all the world.

Ver. 32. *This image's head was of fine gold.*] The Babylonian monarchy was arrived to the height of glory under Nebuchadnezzar: (see ver. 37, 38.) who likewise improved and adorned the city of Babylon to such a degree, as to make it one of the wonders of the world: as Dr. Prideaux shews at large, Connex. par. i. p. 94, &c. So this empire might justly be compared to a golden head.

His breasts and his arms of silver.] The second monarchy of the Medes and Persians will be inferior to the first; (see ver. 39.) probably in respect of its continuance: the Babylonian monarchy, if we date its beginning from Ninus, having lasted above seven hundred years.

Ibid. and Ver. 33. *And his thighs of brass, his legs of iron.*] These emblems denote the strength of the third and fourth monarchies, and the irresistible force with which they subdued their adversaries. *Iron* and *brass* are the emblems of strength in the prophetical writings. (See ver. 39, 40. iv. 15. vii. 19. Isa. xlv. 2. xlviii. 4.)

Ver. 33. *His feet part of iron, and part of clay.*] See ver. 41, 42.

Ver. 34. *Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet—and brake them to pieces.*] A very proper representation how the whole image was destroyed: *viz.* by a great stone's falling upon the feet of the image, and breaking them to pieces, whereby the whole image was overturned, and broken to pieces. In like manner the kingdom of Christ, a kingdom of God's own erecting, (see ver. 45.) shall break to pieces the fourth and last monarchy, in which the remainders of the other three were comprehended: and shall at length put an end to all earthly *rule, authority,* and *power,* 1 Cor. xv. 24.

The Jews unanimously agree, that by the *stone* is here meant the Messiah. (See the authorities collected in the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield's learned Defence of Christianity, p. 122.)

Ver. 35. *And became as the chaff of the summer threshing-floors—that no place was found for them.*] There was no sign or remainder left of their former greatness. (Compare Psal. i. 4. xxxvii. 10. Hos. xiii. 4.) The same expression is used by Isaiah, xli. 15. where speaking of the victory God will give to his church over its enemies, he saith, *Thou shalt thrash the mountains, and make the hills as chaff: thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall drive them away.* The expressions in both places allude to the thrashing-floors in the eastern countries, which were usually placed on the tops of hills. (See 2 Chron. iii. 1.)

And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.] This denotes the advancement and increase of Christ's kingdom, that it should from small beginnings proceed to fill the whole earth: as if a stone by degrees should grow to a mountain. Thus Christ is described as *going forth conquering, and to conquer,* Rev. vi. 2. Mr. Mede hath very judiciously observed, (see his Works, p. 743.) that this kingdom is described here under two states or forms; the one may be called by way of distinction the *kingdom of the stone,* the other the *kingdom of the mountain.* The first commenced upon the erection of the fourth kingdom, while the statue continued on its feet; the other was to be manifest under its last and weakest state. Christ, the foundation of the church, is often described as a *stone,* (see Isa. xxviii. 16. Zech. iii. 9.) and the church in its flourishing estate is represented as a mountain. (Isa. ii. 2. Ezek. xx. 40. Rev. xxi. 10.)

Ver. 36. *We will tell the interpretation to the king.*] An expression becoming the modesty of so good a man as Daniel: who allows his friends a share in the honour of interpreting the dream, because the interpretation was obtained by their joint prayers to God. (See ver. 18. 23.)

Ver. 37. *Thou, O king, art a king of kings.*] So Nebuchadnezzar is styled, Ezek. xxvi. 7. because he had kings for his vassals and tributaries: such were Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, the former kings of Judah, (2 Kings xxiv. 1. 17.) The same title was afterward given to Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra vii. 12.

Ver. 38. *And wheresoever the children of men dwell—hath he made thee ruler over them all.*] The great monarchs assumed to themselves the title of being lords of the world: (see vi. 25. viii. 5.) so the word Οἰκουμένη, the *world,* commonly signifies the Roman empire in the New Testament. (See Luke ii. 1. Acts xi. 29.)

The beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven hath he given into thine hand.] The Greek adds, *And the fish of the sea:* whatever right thy subjects can claim, either in their possessions, or in any perquisites thereto belonging, is all held of thee, as the supreme lord. (Compare Jer. xxvii. 6.)

Ver. 39. *And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee.*] See ver. 32.

And another third kingdom of brass, (see ver. 32.) *which shall reign over all the earth.*] The Grecian monarchy shall extend its conquests beyond the bounds of the preceding empires, even to those parts of the east, which none of the Persian monarchs had ever attempted to subdue.

Ver. 40. *And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron.*] So it is represented as having *great iron teeth,* vii. 7. 19. This fourth kingdom can be no other than the Roman empire. Some commentators, indeed, have reckoned the empire continued in Alexander's successors, as a distinct kingdom from that which was set up by himself. But no writer of the history of those times speaks of it as such: and this notion plainly contradicts the description which Daniel gives of that kingdom, chap. viii. There the prophet represents the third kingdom as it were set up by Alexander, and continued under his successors, under the figure of a *goat having one great horn,* and afterward, *four others which stood up in its stead,* (ver. 8.) and afterward expressly calls Alexander the first king, (ver. 21.) and farther tells us, (xi. 4.) that his kingdom shall be *broken and divided towards the four winds of heaven.* They that want farther satisfaction, may see more proofs of this point in

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Mr. Mede's dissertation upon this subject, p. 712. of his Works.

The reason why the Spirit of God takes notice of these monarchies rather than any others, is, because God's people were subjects to these monarchies as they succeeded one another: and in their succession, a line of time is carried on to the coming of Christ, who was to appear in the times of the fourth monarchy, and the countries belonging to it were to be the chief seat of Christ's kingdom: as Mr. Mede observes in the same dissertation.

And as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.] Or, *Even as iron that breaketh* (all things), *shall it break in pieces and bruise all these.*

Ver. 41. *And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided.*] The ten toes of the image signify the ten kings, who were in aftertimes to divide this kingdom among themselves: denoted by the *ten horns* of this fourth beast, mentioned vii. 7. compared with Rev. xvii. 12. This partition of the Roman empire will divide its strength, and by consequence be a diminution of its power.

Ver. 42. *And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.*] Or, brittle. The sense of the words is more fully explained in the following verse. Some interpreters explain them thus: That the chief power in these ten kingdoms shall be partly *secular*, and partly *ecclesiastical:* and the encroaching of the ecclesiastical power upon the secular, shall be the occasion of frequent clashings between them, to the weakening of both parties, and endangering their breaking to pieces.

Ver. 43. *And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another.*] These ten kingdoms shall be a medley of people of different nations, laws, and customs: and although the kings of the several nations shall try to strengthen themselves by marriage-alliances into one another's families, yet the different interests which they pursue will make them often engage in wars with each other, and thereby weaken the common strength.

Ver. 44. *And in the days of these kings.*] During the succession of these four monarchies, and in the times of the last of them. Compare ver. 34. where the *stone cut out without hands,* is said *to smite the image upon its feet,* which part of the image denotes the fourth monarchy.

The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.] The kingdom of Christ is described in Scripture as an everlasting kingdom: not like the kingdoms of this world, subject to change and dissolution, but like the Author of it, eternal and unchangeable. (See vii. 14. 27.)

But it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms.] See ver. 34.

Ver. 45. *Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron,* &c.] There should not have been a full stop placed at the end of the last verse, as our translation is commonly pointed: the particle *forasmuch* shewing, that the sense of this verse depends upon the foregoing words, as in ver. 40, 41. The words shew the correspondence between the several parts of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and the event thereby signified: that as the *stone cut out without hands* overturned the image, and broke it to pieces; so a kingdom of God's own erecting should put an end to all these earthly kingdoms.

The stone was cut out of the [or a] *mountain without hands.*] The phrase *without hands* denotes it to be an act of God's own immediate power, and brought to pass without the interposition of second causes. (Compare viii. 25.) So the heavenly body we are to receive at the resurrection, is called *a building not made with hands,* 2 Cor. v. 1. The same expression is used concerning the *heavenly tabernacle,* Heb. ix. 11. 24. in opposition to buildings of human structure. In like manner, Christ at his coming into the world had a *body prepared for him* by the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost.

The great God hath made known to the king, &c.] See ver. 28.

Ver. 46. *Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him.*] Doing reverence by prostration is not only an act of worship paid to God, but often given to kings and great men in the Old Testament, according to the custom of the eastern countries. (See 2 Sam. ix. 6. xiv. 33.) It was likewise an expression of reverence paid to prophets, on the account of the sanctity of their office, and not refused by them. (See 1 Kings xviii. 7.) Of this kind was probably the worship paid by the leper to Christ, (Matt. viii. 2.) whom he took for a prophet. But when other circumstances were added to it, which made it look like Divine worship, then it was refused to be accepted, as in the case of St. Peter, Acts x. 25. and of the angel, Rev. xix. 10. The adoration here described, seems to have been of the latter kind, being joined with offering incense, an act of worship peculiar to God alone. (See Ezra vi. 10.) For this reason it is highly probable that Daniel refused the honours offered to him, and put the king in mind that he should give God the glory, as we find he does in the following verse. Nebuchadnezzar seems in a sudden transport to have looked upon Daniel as having something more than human in him; (see iv. 8.) just as the barbarians thought of St. Paul, Acts xxviii. 6.

Ver. 47. *Of a truth it is that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings.*] Superior to all the gods or demons who are worshipped by men; the supreme Governor of the world, and Ruler of the kings and kingdoms in it. (See ver. 21.)

Ver. 48. *Then the king made Daniel—ruler over the whole province of Babylon.*] When the empire came under the government of the Medes and Persians, every province had a prince or ruler appointed over it, (vi. 1.) This might probably have been practised before, only afterward improved by the addition of three presidents over the rest. (Ibid. ver. 2. and v. 7.)

And chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.] See the note upon i. 20. and compare iv. 9. v. 11.

Ver. 49. *Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon.*] That they might be assisting to him, and partners in honour with him, by whose joint intercession this secret was revealed, (ver. 18.)

But Daniel sat in the gate of the king.] He was a constant attendant at the king's court. (See Esth. ii. 19. 21. iii. 2.)

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CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

The history of the miraculous deliverance of Daniel's three friends out of the fiery furnace, into which they were cast, because they refused to worship the golden image which king Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Ver. 1. *NEBUCHADNEZZAR made an image of gold, the height whereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth six cubits.*] This image was set up probably in honour of Bel, whom Nebuchadnezzar worshipped as his tutelar deity; and called Daniel after his name. (See i. 2. iv. 8.)

The proportion of this image shews it to have been a very irregular figure, no man's height being above six times his thickness. This makes interpreters generally understand these *sixty cubits* of the height of the image and pedestal taken both together: and suppose the image to have been thirty-six cubits, and the pedestal twenty-four. Diodorus Siculus, giving an account of the plunder Xerxes had taken out of the temple of Belus, mentions a statue of massy gold which was forty feet high, which Dr. Prideaux conjectures to have been this statue: and then the body of the image would hardly have been twenty-seven cubits high. (See his Script, Connex. par. i. p. 100, 101.)

The Greek interpreter supposes this remarkable story to have happened in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

Ver. 2. *Then Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the princes, the governors, and the captains,* &c.] It seems a needless task to undertake an exact description of these several officers and commanders, who cannot be distinguished with any certainty. From the first word *ahashdarpanaia, princes,* the word *satrapas* is derived, which is commonly taken for a word of Persian original, but was probably first used among the Assyrians or Babylonians, and from thence derived into the Persian language.

The treasurers.] In the Chaldee, *ghedabraia,* the same word with *ghizbar,* translated *treasurer,* Ezra i. 8. *Z* being often changed into *D,* in the Chaldee.

Ver. 3. *And they came and stood before the image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up.*] They made their personal appearance, and shewed themselves ready to perform the worship required of them.

Ver. 4. *O people, nations, and languages.*] Whatsoever parts of the empire ye come from, and whatever language you speak. (See ver. 29. and iv. 1.) This form of speech was designed to set forth the largeness and extent of the Babylonish empire, which had subjects of so many different languages. The same phrase was afterward used under the Medes and Persians. (See vi. 25. Esth. i. 22. iii. 12. viii. 9.)

Ver. 5. *That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, harp,* &c.] Some of the names of these musical instruments have a great affinity with the Greek words of the same signification: as the word *karna, the cornet,* with κέρας; *kithros,* the *harp,* with κίθαρα; *pesanterin,* the *psaltery,* with ψαλτήριον; and *symphonia,* translated *dulcimer,* with συμφωνία. This some account for, by supposing that the traffic managed by the Phœnicians with Greece, (see Ezek. xxvii. 13.) and the transplanting of the Eolian and Ionian colonies into Asia, which happened about an age after the destruction of Troy, brought these and other Greek words into the eastern parts of the world.

But it is more probable that these names should be transferred from the eastern languages into Greece. This is taken for granted in the word *sambuca,* derived into Greek from the Chaldee *sabca,* mentioned in the text. In like manner *kithros,* from whence *cithara* is derived, is probably taken from *citrus, i. e.* the citron-wood, of which the instrument is made, the best of which kind grew in Media. This opinion is confirmed by the testimony of Strabo, (lib. x. p. 471.) who saith, "That the names of musical instruments, such as *nablia, sambuca,* and *barbitos,* were derived from barbarous languages:" by which the Greeks denote the eastern tongues. The words of Athenæus are to the same purpose, lib. iv. cap. 23. and lib. xiv. cap. 5. where he saith, "That the Phrygian and Lydian harmony came from the barbarians, *i. e.* the eastern nations, to the Greeks."

There is but one objection against this opinion, which is, that the word *symphonia,* here mentioned, is a Greek compound. But Isidore, in his Origines, describes that instrument to be hollow, something like our drum, and covered with leather, which they played upon with a stick or a quill: from whence we may conclude, that the affinity between this and the Greek word of the same sound is purely accidental.

Ver. 6. *Shall the same hour.*] This is the first place in the Old Testament where we meet with the division of time into hours. The Greeks ascribe the invention of hours to Anaximander or Anaximenes; who probably learned it from the Chaldeans. (See Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 109.)

Be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.] Burning offenders alive was a punishment used among the Babylonians, (see Jer. xxix. 22.) and it may be in other eastern countries. (See Psal. xxi. 9.)

Ver. 7. *All the people—fell down and worshipped the golden image,* &c.] Paying Divine honours to the images of deified men was a piece of worship generally practised among the Chaldeans, as well as other heathens. (See Isa. xlvi. 1. Jer. x. 2. 11. l. 2.)

Ver. 12. *They serve not thy gods.*] Or rather, *Thy god:* for the image represented but one single object of worship: so the word is rendered i. 2. and so it should be translated Exod. xxxii. 4. *This is thy God, O Israel;* as the same words are rendered Nehem. ix. 18. For Aaron certainly designed to worship the true God by the emblem of the golden calf, and accordingly *proclaimed a feast to the Lord,* Exod. xxxii. 5.

Ver. 14. *Is it true, O Shadrach?* &c.] Or, *Is it on purpose?* so the word is used, Exod. xxi. 13.

Ver. 15. *Now if ye be ready,* &c.] The sentence is imperfect in the original, and is rightly supplied by our translators with the word *well;* see a like instance, Luke xiii. 9.

And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hand?] Thus Nebuchadnezzar exalted himself above God Almighty, as Sennacherib had done before him, (2 Kings xviii. 36.) notwithstanding that he had before made an ample confession of the true God, (ii. 47.)

Ver. 16. *We are not careful to answer thee in this matter.*] In so plain a case there is no room for deliberation: we

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have an answer ready at hand, *that we ought to obey God rather than man.*

Ver. 17. *Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us—and he will deliver us out of thine hand.*] As we are firmly persuaded of his power to deliver us, so we trust in his mercy and goodness that he will deliver us out of this imminent danger. This they speak out of a well-grounded hope, not from a certain foresight of being delivered; for such an assurance would have defeated the worth of their courage and constancy in despising the danger which threatened them.

Ver. 19. *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach,* &c.] He discovered in his looks the signs of his fierce anger against these three persons, whom he was incensed against, not only as guilty of disobedience, but likewise of the highest ingratitude towards him, who had preferred them to places of trust and honour.

Ver. 25. *And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.*] Like that of an angel. (See ver. 28.) Angels are called the sons of God, Job i. 6. xxxviii. 7.

Ver. 26. *Ye servants of the most high God.*] This miracle calls to the king's mind that confession he had formerly made of the true God, (ii. 47.)

Ver. 28. *Blessed be the God of Shadrach,* &c.] So Darius offers up his acknowledgments to the *God of Daniel,* (vi. 26.) looking upon him as superior to other gods, but not as the only true God.

Who hath sent his angel.] So Daniel ascribes his deliverance from the lions to an angel, vi. 22. (Compare Acts xii. 11.)

And have changed the king's word.] Have rendered his command of none effect, God himself having suspended the execution of it.

Ver. 29. *Shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill.*] See ii. 5.

Ver. 30. *Then the king promoted Shadrach,* &c.] Or *restored* them to their former places and dignities: so Lud. de Dieu explains the Chaldee verb *hatselach.* The Greek interpreter adds, at the end of the verse, *And he advanced them to be governors over all the Jews who were in his kingdom.*

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

A recital of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which foretold the loss of his kingly power, and his being driven from human society, as it was explained by Daniel, and fulfilled in the event.

Ver. 1. *NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king, unto all people, nations, and languages,* &c.] This chapter contains a recital of the very words of that edict or proclamation which Nebuchadnezzar published after his restoration, for the greater confirmation of the truth of the event here related.

Ver. 3. *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.*] He exercises an uncontrollable dominion over all the world, and even over the greatest princes. (See ver. 17. 34, 35.)

Ver. 4. *I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.*] I thought myself secure in my enjoyments, and at full ease and prosperity in my palace at Babylon, which was built with that state and magnificence, as to be reckoned one of the wonders of the world, (ver. 30.) God's particular judgment often resembles the general one, in their coming suddenly and unexpectedly, when men indulge themselves in their carnal security. (See Psal. xxx. 6, 7. Matt. xxiv. 43, 44. 1 Thess. v. 2, 3.)

Ver. 6. *Therefore I made a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me.*] As he did before upon a like occasion: (ii. 2.)

Ver. 8. *Whose name was Belteshazzar,* &c.] See the note upon i. 7.

And in whom is the spirit of the holy gods.] Who is enlightened by the gods, or heavenly powers, with a supernatural degree of knowledge, such as none of the wise men of Babylon can attain to. (See ii. 11. v. 11. 14.)

Ver. 9. *O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians.*] See ii. 48. and the note upon i. 20.

Tell me the vision of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.] Nebuchadnezzar tells the dream himself in the following words: so the meaning of this sentence must be, Tell me the dream, that is, the interpretation thereof; in which sense the copulative particle is often used. (See the note on i. 3.) The Greek translate it thus, *Hear the visions of my dream, and tell me the interpretation thereof.*

Ver. 10. *I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth.*] Princes and great men are often represented by fair and flourishing trees. So the king of Assyria is described, Ezek. xxxi. 3. 18. (Compare Isa. x. 34. Zech. xi. 2.)

Ver. 12. *The beasts of the field had shadow under it.*] All the subjects of that large empire thought themselves safe under his protection. (Compare Ezek. xvii. 23. xxxi. 6. Lam. iv. 20.)

Ver. 13. *Behold, a watcher and* [or even] *a holy one came from heaven.*] The conjunctive copulative is used here by way of explication. (See ver. 9.) The word *watcher* is understood of some principal angel: the angelical orders being described as always attending upon God's throne, to receive and execute his commands. (See Psal. ciii. 20. Matt. xviii. 10. and the notes upon Ezek. i. 11. 24.) For the same reason they are called *the eyes of the Lord,* Zech. iv. 10.) In the fragments of that ancient book, called The Prophecy of Enoch, quoted in the Epistle of St. Jude, the angels are called Ἐγρήγοροι, the Greek word which answers to *Eir* in the text; and some critics derive the *Iris* of the poets, whom they describe as the messenger of the gods, from the word *Eir:* though others take the word *Eir* to differ only in the Chaldee dialect from the Hebrew *Tseir,* a *messenger.* The word *holy one* denotes such of the angels who kept their station, and were not seduced from their obedience, when the evil angels fell. (See viii. 13.) In the same sense the word is taken, Jude ver. 14. *The Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,* or holy ones. (Compare Deut. xxxiii. 2. Zech. xiv. 5. 1 Thess. iii. 13.)

Ver. 14. *Let the beasts get away from under it,* &c.] Let his subjects not rely upon his protection. (Compare Ezek. xxxi. 12.)

Ver. 15. *Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth.*] As when the root of a tree is still alive, there is a possibility of its flourishing again: so there should still be hopes that the king may recover his former state and *dignity.* (See ver. 26.)

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With a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field.] To denote that while the king was deprived of his reason, and lived among the beasts of the field, he was bound with fetters and chains, as madmen usually are. (See Mark v. 4.)

Ver. 16. *Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him.*] Let him lose the use of his reason. (See ver. 34. 36.) Scaliger thinks this madness of Nebuchadnezzar is obscurely hinted in a fragment of Abydeneus, produced by Eusebius, Præp. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 41. where having represented the king from the Chaldean writers to have fallen into an ecstacy, and to have foretold the destruction of that empire by the Medes and Persians; the author adds, that *immediately after uttering this prophecy he disappeared,* which Scaliger expounds of his being driven from his kingly state and the society of men. (See Scaliger's notes upon the Ancient Fragments, in the appendix to his work de Emendatione Temporum.)

And let seven times pass over him.] That is, seven years: so the expression is taken xi. 13. where the Hebrew reads, *The king of the north shall come at the end of times,* that is, *years.* So the *time, times,* and *a half,* mentioned vii. 25. xii. 7. signify three years and a half; and are accordingly explained by *forty-two months,* Rev. xi. 2. and by *one thousand and sixty days,* Rev. xii. 7. both which reckonings of time are equivalent to *three years and a half.*

Ver. 17. *This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones.*] It is called *the decree of the Most High,* ver. 24. So the expression of the text is an allusion to the proceedings of earthly princes, who publish their decrees with the advice of their chief ministers. Thus God is described as summoning all the host of angels, and taking resolutions according to their advice, 1 Kings xxii. 19. and Christ is represented as attended with angels and saints as his assessors at the day of judgment. (See vii. 22. of this prophecy, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. 1 Tim. v. 21. Rev. xx. 4.) The words are capable of another sense; *viz.* that this sentence was pronounced at the request of those angels whom God had appointed to preside over the affairs of the Babylonish empire. (See the note upon x. 13.) *Watchers* and *holy ones* are here spoken of in the plural number, whereas the words are in the singular, ver. 13. which difference may thus be accounted for; that the sentence was pronounced at the joint request of many, but was to be put in execution by one single angel.

To the intent that the living may know the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, &c.] See ii. 21.

And setteth up over it the basest of men.] This regards Nebuchadnezzar, either with respect to his present condition, whose pride and cruelty rendered him as despicable in the sight of God, as his high estate made him appear honourable in the eyes of men; and therefore was justly doomed to so low a degree of abasement: or else it may be understood of his wonderful advancement and restoration, after he had been degraded from his dignity, and sent to herd with the beasts of the field. God thereby asserting that prerogative of his, of *bringing low and lifting up;* and of *raising the beggar from the dunghill, to set him among princes.* (1 Sam. ii. 8, 9. Psal. cxiii. 7, 8.)

Ver. 18. *For the spirit of the holy Gods is in thee.*] See ver. 8.

Ver. 19. *Then Daniel was astonished for one hour,* &c.] Both at the surprising circumstances of the judgment denounced against the king; and likewise out of a tender regard and respect for his person, who had bestowed so many favours upon him.

The dream be to them that hate thee, &c.] The words are spoken by the figure called *euphemismus,* when we would avert an ill *omen* from ourselves or friends, by wishing it may light upon our enemies. See a like instance, 1 Sam. xxv. 22. *So and more also do God unto the enemies of David.* At the same time, Daniel expresses his dutiful concern for the safety of the king's person and government. Jeremy had before advised the Jewish captives at Babylon to wish and pray for the prosperity of the government under which they lived, Jer. xxix. 7.

Ver. 22. *It is thou, O king—for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven.*] See ii. 38.

Ver. 25. *They shall drive thee from men,* &c.] See ver. 16.

Ver. 26. *After that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.*] *Heaven* is put for God, as Matt. xxi. 25. Luke xv. 18. 21.

Ver. 27. *Break off thy sins by righteousness,* &c.] Become a new man. The Greek translates it, *Redeem thy iniquities by alms-deeds:* making this sentence equivalent in sense to the following words: and it is true that *righteousness* is often taken for *mercy.* (See Psal. xxxi. 2. cxii. 9.) Nor does this sense of the words favour the doctrine of *merit,* any more than those words of Solomon, Prov. xvi. 6. *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged,* or expiated: as the Hebrew verb *caphar* properly signifies. To the same sense St. Peter saith, *Charity shall cover a multitude of sins,* 1 Pet. iv. 8. *viz.* as it is a testimony of unfeigned repentance or conversion. Thus Salvian, descanting upon this text, and speaking of works of charity, as proper evidences of true repentance, saith of the sinner, "Offerat cum compunctione, cum lacrymis: aliter quippe oblata non prosunt; quia non pretio, sed affectu placent." *We ought to make such oblations with all the signs of true contrition, or else they will not be accepted; because it is not the value of the things themselves, but the disposition of the giver, which renders them acceptable.* (Salvian. ad Eccles. Cathol. lib. i.)

It may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.] God sometimes defers his judgments upon men's shewing signs of repentance. (See 1 Kings xxi. 29.)

Ver. 30. *Is not this great Babylon, which I have built,* &c.] Though Babylon was one of the oldest cities in the world, yet Nebuchadnezzar had very much improved, and made it one of the wonders of the world, upon account of the largeness and height of its new walls, the temple of Belus, his own palace, and the hanging gardens belonging to it; the banks of the river, and the canals made for the draining of it: all which were the works of this king, and an exact description of them may be seen in Dr. Prideaux's Script. Connex. par. i. p. 94, &c.

The words of Nebuchadnezzar here recited savour of great pride and arrogance, and are therefore justly punished by that judgment pronounced upon him in the following verses. (Compare v. 20.)

Ver. 31. *While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven,* &c.] So Herod was struck immediately, because he gave not God the glory, (Acts xii. 23.)

Ver. 34. *At the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up*

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mine eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned unto me, &c.] At the end of seven years (see ver. 16.) I recovered the use of my reason, (ver. 36.) and became sensible of my dependance upon God, and lifted up mine eyes to heaven in a devout acknowledgment of his sovereign majesty, whose dominion alone is unchangeable, and endures for ever.

Ver. 35. *And all the inhabitants of the world are reputed as nothing,* &c.] The greatest monarchs, as well as persons of an inferior rank, are as nothing in his sight: and he disposes all things in heaven and earth by an irresistible power and authority. (Compare Isa. xl. 15. 17. xlv. 9.)

Ver. 36. *And, for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned to me.*] Or, *The glory of my kingdom,* (for the particle in the word *likar* is used for the nominative case, see Noldius, p. 463.) *mine honour, and countenance,* or comeliness, *returned to me.* The word *ziv* is translated *countenance,* v. 6. vii. 28. I recovered my former looks, was possessed of the same outward glory and majesty, and was honoured with the same attendance and retinue as I was before.

Ver. 37. *All whose works are truth, and his ways judgment.*] Who governs the world with equity and justice. (Compare Rev. xv. 3. xvi. 7.)

And those who walk in pride he is able to abase.] Of which Nebuchadnezzar himself was a remarkable instance, ver. 30, 31. and v. 20.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

A judgment is denounced against Belshazzar, for his sacrilege, by a hand-writing upon the wall, which Daniel reads: importing the downfall of the Babylonish monarchy, and translating the empire to the Medes and Persians: which sentence is fulfilled the same night.

Ver. 1. *BELSHAZZAR the king.*] This was the last king of the Babylonish race, and therefore must be the same who is called Nabonnedus by Berosus, and Naboandelus by Josephus, Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11. (See this clearly proved by Dr. Prideaux, Script. Connex. par. i. p. 114.)

Made a feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.] The king made a great feast to the principal officers and great men of his court, and was himself present at it. This feast was made at a time of public rejoicing, being an annual festival, when the whole night was spent in revelling: which season Cyrus took the advantage of to make himself master of the city, as Herodotus, lib. i. and Xenophon, lib. vii. relate, and was foretold by Jeremy, li. 39. 57.

Ver. 2. *Belshazzar commanded to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem.*] These vessels were carried by Nebuchadnezzar into the temple of his own god, (i. 2.) and set apart, as it seems, for religious uses. So this farther profanation of them was contrary to the rules of their own religion, and may be supposed to have been done out of a drunken frolic by Belshazzar.

Without question the vessels and other furniture with which Solomon adorned the temple were extraordinarily magnificent: since Nebuchadnezzar thought them worth carrying to Babylon, to furnish the temple he had built there for his god Belus, a structure that might be esteemed one of the wonders of the world. (See Dr. Prideaux, *ubi supra,* p. 98.) Some of these vessels were afterward carried in triumph to Rome by Titus, after he had conquered Jerusalem, as Josephus, an eye-witness, asserts: (Bell. Jud. lib. vii. p. 1306. edit. Oxon.) afterward, when Gisericus sacked Rome, he carried these away with the rest of his booty; but when Justinian conquered Africa, he recovered them again, and sent them for a present to the church of Jerusalem. (See Evagrius, lib. iv. cap. 17.)

Which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken.] Nebuchadnezzar was in truth his grandfather; for he was the son of Evil-Merodach by Nitocris his queen: so he was grandson to Nebuchadnezzar: and thus the prophecy of Jeremy was fulfilled, that *all nations should serve Nebuchadnezzar, and his son, and his son's son,* Jer. xxvii. 7. It is usual in Scripture to call the grandfather by the name of father. (See 2 Sam. ix. 7. 2 Kings viii. 26. compared with ver. 18.; 2 Chron. xv. 16. compared with xi. 20.; Zech. i. 1. with Ezra vi. 14.)

Ver. 4. *They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and of silver,* &c.] They sang praises to their false gods, who were fitly represented by senseless images; and this they did by way of triumph over the God of Israel, the vessels of whose temple they brought forth as so many trophies of their victory. (See ver. 23.)

Ver. 5. *In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand.*] Next to murder, no sin is so remarkably punished in this world as that of sacrilege, as appears by innumerable instances taken out of the histories of all ages, of heathens and infidels, as well as Jews and Christians. For to profess a religion to be true, and yet to offer violence to the places and utensils dedicated to the service of that religion, is downright impiety, and argues a contempt of all religion. Remarkable examples of this kind in the heathen story are, the miserable end of the Phoceans, who robbed the temple of Delphos, and were the occasion of that war, which was called from thence the *holy war;* an account of which may be seen in Petavius, Rationar. Temporum, par. i. p. 113.; the destruction of the Gauls in their attempt upon the same temple; and of Crassus, who plundered the temple of Jerusalem, and that of the Syrian goddess: these two last stories are very particularly related by Dr. Prideaux, par. ii. p. 26. 202.

Grotius's note upon this place is worth observing: "The heathens thought it a great impiety to convert sacred things to common uses; but now-a-days neither princes nor people think there is any harm in it: and can we expect that God should *not visit for these things?*"

And wrote over against the candlestick.] The feast was continued till late in the night, according to custom. (See the note upon ver. 1.)

Ver. 6. *Then the king's countenance was changed—so that the joints of his loins were loosed,* &c.] He discovered the disorder of his mind, by the shaking and trembling which seized his whole body. (Compare Psal. lxix. 23.)

Ver. 7. *The king cried aloud.*] Discovering thereby great fear and impatience.

To bring in the astrologers, &c.] See the note upon i. 20. ii. 2. iv. 6.

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And shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.] One of the three principal rulers. (See vi. 2.)

Ver. 8. *Then came in all the king's wise men, but they could not read the writing.*] It was probably writ in the old Hebrew letters, now called the Samaritan character, which the Chaldeans were ignorant of.

Ver. 10. *Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet-house.*] The king's *wives and concubines sat* with him at the feast, ver. 2. So the person here mentioned must be the queen-mother Nitocris; a lady famous for her wisdom, who had the chief management of the public affairs, and so is called *the queen*, by way of eminence. (See Dr. Prideaux, par. i. p. 122.)

Ver. 11. *There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy Gods.*] See the note upon iv. 8.

And in the days of thy father.] *i. e.* Thy grandfather Nebuchadnezzar. (See ver. 2.)

Ver. 13. *Art thou that Daniel?* &c.] Though his grandfather had advanced Daniel to considerable places of honour, (ver. 11.) yet Belshazzar knew nothing of him; which argues him to have been a weak and vicious prince, according to the character historians give of him, and that he left the care of the public affairs to his mother, minding nothing but his pleasures.

Ver. 17. *Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy reward to another.*] The prophet was not willing to receive any reward for interpreting a writing, which was to receive its accomplishment in the destruction of the king and the government.

Ver. 19. *And, for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him.*] See ii. 37, 38.

Ver. 20. *But when his heart was lifted up,* &c.] See iv. 30.

And they took his glory from him.] Or, *His glory was taken from him:* the verb transitive being often used for the impersonal. (See the note upon ii. 30.)

Ver. 23. *But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven,* &c.] See the note upon ver. 4.

And the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.] Thou hast not given due honour to that supreme Being, who hath an absolute disposal, not only of thy affairs, (compare Jer. x. 23.) but even of thy life itself.

Ver. 26. MENE; *God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.*] The determinate number of years which God hath appointed for the continuance of thy reign and the Babylonish monarchy is finished. So God is said to *number the months* of man's life, and to *appoint him bounds which he cannot pass,* Job xiv. 5. The word *Mene* is doubled in the foregoing verse, to shew that the *thing* is certain, and *established by God,* as Joseph tells Pharaoh in a like case, Gen. xli. 32.

Ver. 27. TEKEL; *thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting.*] Wicked men are often compared to silver adulterated, and alloyed with baser metals, which makes it too light when weighed in the balances. (See Jer. vi. 30. Ezek. xxii. 18.) Such was Belshazzar when weighed in the scales of Divine justice. (Compare Job xxxi. 6. Psal. xlii. 10.) The same comparison is used by Homer, when Hector's fatal day approaches, Iliad. xxii. and by Virgil at the death of Turnus, Æneid. xii.

Ver. 28. PERES; *thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.*] The verb *Paras,* from whence *Peres* is derived, as an appellative, signifies to divide, or break: it is likewise the proper name of the Persians, who were to be sharers in the division of the Babylonish empire. *Upharsin,* in the twenty-fifth verse, is a particle of the verb *Paras;* it literally signifies, *And they divide it.*

Ver. 29. *Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet,* &c.] The king thought himself bound in honour to perform the promise he had made, ver. 16. which yet it is likely could not take effect at that unseasonable time of night: so the words might better be thus translated; *Then commanded Belshazzar, that they should clothe Daniel with scarlet—and should make a proclamation concerning him,* &c. The particle *vau* is often put for the conjunction *that:* (see Noldius, p. 312.) so it is used in the second verse of this chapter.

Ver. 30. *In that night was Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans slain.*] He and all his nobles were slain together in the midst of their feasting and revelling, as Herodotus (lib. i.) and Xenophon inform us: the latter relates the story thus: (Cyropæd. lib. vii.) "That two deserters, Gadata and Gobryas, having assisted some of the Persian army to kill the guards, and seize upon the palace, they entered into the room where the king was, whom they found standing up in a posture of defence; but they soon dispatched him, and those that were with him." Thus the prophecy of Jeremy was accomplished, that Babylon should be taken at the time of a public feast, while *her princes and great men, her captains, her rulers, and mighty men, should be drunken, and should sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awaken:* (li. 39. 57.)

Ver. 31. *And Darius the Median took the kingdom.*] This Darius is said to be of the *seed of the Medes:* (ix. 1.) and is supposed by the most judicious chronologers to be the same with Cyaxares, the son of Astyages: him Cyrus made king of the Chaldeans, as being his uncle by the mother's side, and his partner in carrying on the war against the Babylonians, and left him the palace of the king of Babylon, to live there whenever he pleased, as Xenophon relates, Cyropæd. lib. viii. Darius succeeding in the empire, being Cyrus's gift, Ptolemy's Canon supposes Cyrus to be the immediate successor of Nabonnedus, or Belshazzar, and allots nine years to his reign: whereas Xenophon reckons two of these years to Darius, and seven to Cyrus: *ubi supra.* The Chaldee phrase rendered here, *took the kingdom,* is translated *possessed the kingdom,* vii. 18. and means the same with succeeding in the kingdom.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

Daniel being preferred by Darius above all the governors and princes of the provinces, they maliciously contrive an accusation against him; upon which he is cast into the lions' den, and from thence miraculously delivered.

Ver. 1. *IT pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes.*] According to the number of the provinces which were subject to the Medo-Persian empire. These were afterward enlarged to a hundred and twenty-seven by the victories of Cambyses and Darius Hystaspes. (See Esth. i. 1.)

Ver. 2. *And over these three presidents, of whom Daniel*

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was first.] He had been appointed one of the principal officers of state by Belshazzar, v. 29. Darius came not to Babylon, but tarried at Ecbatane in Media, whither he sent for Daniel, that he might be always near him: see Joseph. Antiq. lib. x. cap. 12. (*al.* 11.) where it is likely he received this new advancement. Josephus informs us, in the same place, that Daniel built an admirable structure at Ecbatane, probably by Darius's direction, which was afterward made the burial-place of the kings of Media and Persia, the care of which place was always committed to a Jewish priest.

Ver. 3. *Because that an excellent spirit was in him.*] Compare v. 11, 12. He had great experience in the public affairs, it being now sixty-five years ago since he was first advanced by Nebuchadnezzar, (ii. 48.)

Ver. 8. *According to the law of the Medes and Persians, that altereth not.*] After it is once enacted by the king, with the consent of his counsellors. So Diodorus Siculus tells us (lib. iv.) of Darius, the last king of Persia, that he would have pardoned Charidemus after he was condemned to death, but could not reverse the law that had passed against him. We may observe the difference of style between this text and that of Esth. i. 19. Here the words are, *the law of the Medes and Persians,* out of regard to the king, who was a Mede: there it is styled *the law of the Persians and Medes,* the king being a Persian at that time.

Ver. 10. *The windows being open in his chamber.*] *In his upper chamber,* as the Greek reads that text. It seems to have been customary among the devout persons of the Jewish nation, to set apart some upper room for their oratories, as places freest from noise and disturbance. So we read Tobit iii. 17. that *Sarah came down from her upper chamber,* when she had been at her devotions: and the apostles assembled together *in an upper room,* Acts i. 13. (See Bishop Pearson on that text, in his first Lecture upon the Acts.)

Towards Jerusalem.] According to that petition in Solomon's consecration-prayer, (1 Kings viii. 48.) *That if they were led away captive, and should pray to God towards the city which he had chosen, and the house which Solomon had built, then hear thou their prayer,* &c. (Compare Psal. v. 7. Jonah ii. 4.)

Three times a day.] Some learned writers tell us, out of Maimonides, that upon solemn days, such as were the third and fifth days of the week, the evening sacrifice was killed at half an hour after twelve; so the hour of prayer, which on other days was the ninth hour, or three in the afternoon, was then about noon; and the third hour of prayer must then be towards bed-time. (See Thorndike of Religious Assemblies, chap. 8. and Dr. Prideaux's Dissert. upon the Synagogue Service, par. i. book vi. of his Script. Connex.)

Ver. 13. *That Daniel, who is of the children of the captivity of Judah.*] Compare v. 13. This is added to aggravate his fault, that one who is a foreigner, and brought hither a captive, should offer a public affront to the laws of the king, whose favour and protection he enjoys.

Ver. 14. *Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself.*] Having too late discovered that the princes, in procuring him to sign this decree, had no other aim but to take advantage of it to the prejudice of Daniel.

Ver. 16. *Thy God, whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.*] The words express the king's hopes and good wishes, but no certain persuasion. (See ver. 20.)

Ver. 20. *O Daniel, servant of the living God.*] God sometimes makes the mouths of infidels instrumental in setting forth his praises. (See ii. 47. iii. 28.)

Ver. 22. *My God hath sent his angel.*] See iii. 28.

And also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.] Though I disobeyed thy decree, it was not done out of contumacy or stubbornness, but purely to preserve a good conscience, which is the only true principle of loyalty and obedience. (See Rom. xiii. 5.)

Ver. 24. *Them, their children, and their wives.*] According to the cruel laws and customs which prevailed in some countries, of involving whole families in the punishment due to particular persons: in opposition to which, that equitable law was ordained by Moses, that *the fathers should not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers,* Deut. xxiv. 16.

And the lions had the mastery of them, &c.] To shew that their sparing Daniel was miraculous.

Ver. 25. *Then Darius wrote to all people—that dwell on all the earth.*] See the note upon ii. 38.

Ver. 26, 27. *I make a decree, that—men fear and tremble before the God of Daniel,* &c.] He makes the same acknowledgment of the true God as Nebuchadnezzar had done before him. (See iii. 29. iv. 3. 34.)

Ver. 28. *In the reign of Cyrus the Persian.*] Who upon Darius's death took possession of the whole monarchy of the Medes and Persians, called from him the Persian monarchy. (See Ezra i. 2.)

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Daniel's vision concerning the four beasts, which an angel interprets of the four great monarchies, that were to continue successively unto the end of the world.

Ver. 1. *IN the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream.*] The prophet having related some remarkable passages concerning himself and his brethren in captivity, and given proofs of his skill in interpreting other men's dreams, proceeds to give an account of his own visions: and thereupon goes back to the first year of Belshazzar's reign, which was seventeen years before the history contained in the last chapter.

Ver. 2. *Behold, the four great winds of heaven strove upon the great sea.*] Denoting those commotions of the world, and that troublesome state of affairs, out of which empires and kingdoms commonly take their rise.

Ver. 3. *And four great beasts came up from the sea.*] They took their rise from wars and commotions, which end in setting up the conqueror to be a great monarch over those whom he hath subdued. (Compare Rev. xiii. 1.) The reason why these monarchies are represented by fierce and savage beasts, had been observed in the note upon ii. 31.

Ver. 4. *The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings.*] Warriors, especially conquerors, are compared to lions for their strength and cruelty, and to eagles for their swiftness. (See Deut. xxviii. 49. 2 Sam. i. 23. Jer. iv. 7. xlviii. 40. Habak. i. 8.)

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I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth.] Or rather, *Wherewith it was lifted up from the earth;* as the margin reads, the conjunction copulative sometimes supplying the place of a relative. (See Noldius, p. 296.) There was a stop put to the progress of its victories, by the frequent irruptions of the armies led by Cyrus and Darius, or Cyaxares, against the Babylonians, for twenty years together, before the final overthrow of that empire. See Dr. Prideaux's Script. Connex. from the first year of Neriglissar's reign, and so onwards.

And made stand upon the feet as a man, &c.] It became more tame and tractable.

Ver. 5. *And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side.*] This beast denotes the Persian empire, and its first beginning to advance itself and arrive at dominion. The margin reads, *And it raised up one dominion; i. e.* it made up one empire out of the joint powers of Media and Persia.

And it had three ribs in the mouth of it.] The learned Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, in the Vindication of his Defence of Christianity, vol. i. chap. 2. sect. 3. explains these three ribs to be Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt. It is certain that Lydia was conquered by Cyrus, from the famous story of Crœsus, the king thereof, whom he condemned to the fire: and as Egypt had been conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, (see Ezek. xxix. 19.) so it still continued tributary to Cyrus under the government of Amasis. (See the additional notes upon Ezek. xxix. 13. and Xenoph. Cyropæd. lib. vii. viii.)

And they said thus unto her, Arise, and devour much flesh.] Their success made them still more greedy of dominion.

Ver. 6. *After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had on the back of it four wings like a fowl: the beast had also four heads.*] This third beast denotes the Grecian empire, begun by Alexander, and continued in his four successors. (See viii. 8. 22.) The four wings signify the swiftness of its progress and victories. (See ver. 5. of that chapter.) A leopard is a creature of extraordinary swiftness, and jumps upon its prey, as naturalists observe.

And dominion was given to it.] By the swiftness of Alexander's progress, and the victories he obtained by small forces, it appeared that Providence gave him the empire of the world.

Ver. 7. *Behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly.*] And for that reason compared to iron, ii. 40. This must mean the Roman empire, as hath been fully proved in the note upon that place.

It subdued and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.] It subdued all the nations who had been subjects of the former empires. The latter part of the sentence alludes to the fury of the wild beasts, who stamp upon that part of their prey which they cannot devour. (Compare viii. 7. 10.) So those conquests which the Romans could not make use of themselves, they gave for a prey and a spoil to their allies.

And it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.] In this it was different from all the beasts or empires before it; that its dominion was to be divided into ten kingdoms or principalities, signified here by ten horns, and by the ten toes of the image, ii. 41. (See ver. 23, 24. of this chapter, and the notes there.)

Ver. 8. *There came up among them another little horn, before whom were three of the first horns plucked up,* &c.] See ver. 24, 25.

In this horn were eyes like the eyes of man.] Denoting great cunning and foresight.

A mouth speaking great things.] See the note upon ver. 25.

Ver. 9. *I beheld till the thrones were cast down.*] Or rather, *pitched down,* or *placed.* So the Greek interpreter understands it, and the verb in the text is used in the same sense in the Chaldee paraphrase upon Jer. i. 15. where our translation reads, *They shall set every one his throne.* The following words, *And the Ancient of days did sit,* justify this translation.

The thrones here mentioned import, first of all, the thrones of God and Christ; (see ver. 13, 14.) and then those of the saints, who shall be assessors with God and Christ at the day of judgment. (See ver. 22. and Rev. xx. 4.)

The fourth monarchy being to continue till the consummation of all things, the general judgment is described in this and the following verses, wherein sentence was to pass upon this fourth beast, and an end put to its dominion.

And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was as white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool.] The eternal Judge of the world, (see Rev. xvi. 5.) he *that was from the beginning,* (1 John ii. 14.) who is elsewhere described *covering himself with light as with a garment,* (Psal. civ. 2.) and as a clear and unspotted brightness, (1 John i. 5.)

In this Divine representation there is mention made of the *hair of the head,* as there is in that vouchsafed to Moses and the elders of Israel of the *feet,* Exod. xxiv. 10. yet we are not to suppose that in either place any determinate shape or figure like that of a man was represented. (See Deut. iv. 15.) The expressions only import that both the upper and the lower part of this Divine Schechinah was of an amazing inexpressible brightness.

His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as a burning fire.] God is described as coming to judgment in flames of fire, whereby the world and the wicked that are therein shall be destroyed. (See Psal. l. 3. 1 Cor. iii. 15. 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. 2 Pet. iii. 7. 10.) His throne is here described in the nature of a triumphal chariot, supported by angels, as so many fiery wheels. (See Psal. lxviii. 17. civ. 3, 4. Ezek. i. 13—15.)

Ver. 10. *A fiery stream issued and came forth before him.*] Lightnings and streams of fire were his harbingers, to give notice of his speedy approach. (Compare Psal. l. 3. xcvii. 3.)

Thousand thousands minister to him, &c.] His retinue was an *innumerable company of angels.* (See Deut. xxxiii. 2. Psal. lxviii. 17. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. v. 11.)

The judgment was set.] The court, God as the supreme judge, and the saints as his assessors, made their public appearance. (See ver. 9.) The expression alludes to the seats in the Jewish consistories, where the *abbith din,* or president of the court, had his assistants sitting with him; or, as some think, to the ancient custom among the Jews for the princes, or heads of the tribes, to sit with the king in the courts of justice.

And the books were opened.] The books both of God's laws and men's actions. The phrase is an allusion to the

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rolls and records belonging to courts of judicature. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 24. Psal. lvi. 8. Isa. lxv. 6. Mal. iii. 16.)

Ver. 11. *Because of the great words which the horn did speak.*] See ver. 25.

I beheld, even till the beast was slain.] The prophet here relates what was the final destruction of this fourth and last beast, and of that little horn belonging to it, and coming up after the rest of the horns, (ver. 24.)

And his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.] See Rev. xviii. 8. xix. 20.

Ver. 12. *As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.*] As to the three first monarchies, though the succeeding monarchy took away the dominion of that which went before, yet it was not done all at once, but by degrees: and the nations where those monarchies were seated, still had a being, though they changed their masters. Whereas the destruction of the last monarchy implied the putting an end to that empire, and to all other earthly governments: the kingdom of Christ being then immediately to take place. (See ver. 13, 14. and ii. 34.)

Ver. 13. *Behold, one like the Son of man came in the clouds of heaven.*] One in the shape and likeness of a man; but clothed with such ensigns of majesty, as shewed him to be an extraordinary person: (see the note upon Ezek. ii. 1. compare Rev. i. 13. xiv. 14.) indeed, no less than the Messias, as the description of him that follows doth declare. The two foregoing verses having explained why the fourth beast was destroyed, this part of the vision declares by whom it was done, represents Christ in his judicial capacity, and describes him by that title he often gives himself, *the Son of man*, in allusion to this place: particularly he alludes to this text, Matt. xxvi. 64. where he speaks of *his coming in the clouds of heaven*, by which expression he acknowledged himself to be the Messias here described; and gave a direct answer to the question there proposed to him, *Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed?* (Compare Mark xiv. 61, 62. Rev. i. 7.) Whereupon they condemned him as guilty of blasphemy. A learned prelate, in his Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, p. 131. observes, that *Anani*, the *clouds*, was a known name of the Messias among the Jewish writers, which shews that they understood this text as spoken of him.

And came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.] To signify that Christ received his kingdom from his Father. (See Matt. xi. 27. xxviii. 18. John iii. 35. 1 Cor. xv. 27. Eph. i. 21. Philip. ii. 9, 10. Rev. v. 7. compare Jer. xxx. 21.)

Ver. 14. *And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him.*] Upon the destruction of antichrist, the *little horn* of the fourth beast, the *stone* which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his first vision, was to become a great *mountain;* (ii. 35.) and then all the ancient prophecies are to be accomplished, which speak of the uninterrupted glory and universality of Christ's kingdom: (see Psal. ii. 7, 8. viii. 6. cx. 1. Isa. ii. 2—4.) and the universality of Christ's dominion will be illustriously displayed at the day of judgment, when all the world shall be summoned to appear before him. (See Rom. xiv. 10—12.)

His dominion is an everlasting dominion, &c.] See ver. 27.

Ver. 15. *I Daniel was grieved in my spirit.*] The terrible appearance of this vision made an extraordinary impression upon my spirits. (See ver. 28. viii. 27. x. 8.)

In the midst of my body.] The original reads, *In the midst of my sheath:* a metaphor used by several heathen writers, who call the body the *sheath* of the soul. (See Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. vii. chap. 52. and Seneca, epist. 92.)

Ver. 16. *I came near to one of them that stood by.*] To one of the angels, who always attended upon the throne of God and Christ: (ver. 9, 10.) several angels are represented as attending upon Daniel's visions. (See viii. 13. 16. x. 5, 6. 16. xii. 5, 6.)

Ver. 17. *These great beasts, which are four, are four kings.*] Four kingdoms, or monarchies: so the word *king* is used for kingdom, Isa. xxiii. 15. (See the note there.)

Which shall arise out of the earth.] Shall be of the *earth, earthy,* and have nothing of a heavenly spirit in them: whereas the kingdom of Christ is a heavenly kingdom, which the saints shall possess, as it follows.

Ver. 18. *But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom,* &c.] *Those earthly kingdoms being taken away,* or destroyed, as the Greek adds by way of explication, the succeeding kingdom shall be that of Christ and his saints. (See ver. 22.) Instead of the *Most High,* the margin reads *high ones,* from the Chaldee: sometimes the one true God is spoken of in the plural number, by way of eminence: see Josh. xxiv. 19. Eccles. v. 8. where it is in the Hebrew—*He is holy Gods.*

Ver. 20. *Whose look was more stout than his fellows.*] Or, *His appearance was more excellent than his fellows.* Though he was little at first, yet he afterward claimed a superiority above the other horns or principalities.

Ver. 21. *I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints.*] So antichrist is described as making war with the saints, and overcoming them for a time. (See Rev. xi. 7. 9. xiii. 7. xvii. 14.)

Ver. 22. *Until the Ancient of days came.*] Came to judgment, ver. 9.

And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.] They were to sit in judgment with God and Christ. (See the note upon ver. 9.)

And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.] The saints are described as reigning with Christ in his kingdom: 2 Tim. ii. 11. Rev. ii. 26, 27. iii. 21. xx. 4.

Ver. 23. *And the fourth beast—shall be diverse from all kingdoms.*] As being managed under different forms of government: having the form of a commonwealth at the beginning of its greatness, and afterward governed by kings and emperors; and in process of time being divided into ten kingdoms or principalities; and all of them under the direction of one spiritual head. (See Rev. xvii. 13. and compare ver. 7. of this chapter.)

Ver. 24. *And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise.*] A horn is an emblem of strength, so it comes to signify power and authority: (see Deut. xxxiii. 17. Psal. lxxxix. 17.) and from thence it is applied to denote sovereignty or dominion. (See viii. 21, 22. Rev. xvii. 12.) These ten horns or kingdoms arose out of the dissolution of the Roman empire, which came to pass about the year of Christ 476. And it was divided into the following principalities or kingdoms, according to Mr. Mede: (see his Works, p. 661.) 1. Britons. 2. Saxons. 3. Franks.

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4. Burgundians. 5. Wisigoths. 6. Suevians and Alans. 7. Vandals. 8. Almons. 9. Ostrogoths; succeeded by the Longobards, first in Pannonia, and then in Italy. 10. Greeks.

The late learned Bishop Lloyd hath given the following list of the ten kingdoms which arose out of the dissolution of the Roman empire, and the time of their rise.

1. Hunns, erected their kingdom in that part of Pannonia and Dacia, which from them was called Hungary, about A. D. 356.

2. Ostrogoths settled themselves in the countries that reach from Rhetia to Mæsia, even to Thrace, about 377. and afterward came into Italy under Alaricus in 410.

3. Wisigoths settled in the south parts of France, and in Catalonia, about 378.

4. Franks seized upon part of Germany and Gaul, 410.

5. Vandals settled in Spain, afterward set up their kingdom in Africa, 407.

Their king Gensericus sacked Rome, 455.

6. Suevians and Alans seized the western parts of Spain, 407. and invaded Italy, 457.

7. Burgundians came out of Germany into that part of Gaul, called from them Burgundy, 407.

8. Herules, Rugians, and Thoringians, settled in Italy, under Doacer, about 476.

9. Saxons made themselves masters of Great Britain about the same time, 476.

10. Longobards, called likewise Gopidæ, settled in Germany about Magdeburg, 383, and afterward succeeded the Heruli and Thuringi in Hungary, about the year 826.

And another shall arise after them.] The papacy took its rise from the same cause, but did not arrive at direct supremacy till the year 606, when pope Boniface usurped the title of *Universal Bishop*. Mr. Mede translates the words, *Another shall arise behind them: i. e.* in an unperceived manner, so as the other kings were not aware of his growing greatness till he overtopped them.

And he shall be diverse from the rest.] His authority will be ecclesiastical, yet so as to lay claim to temporal power too, and to assert a right of disposing of secular affairs.

And he shall subdue three kings.] Or, *kingdoms*, see ver. 17. Mr. Mede (p. 778, 779.) explains these three kingdoms to be, 1. The exarchate of Ravenna, which Charles the Great recovered from the Lombards, and gave to the pope. 2. The kingdoms of the Greeks in Italy, of which the emperor Leo Isaurus was deprived by the popes Gregory the Second and Third: and, 3. The kingdom of the Franks, or German emperors: from whom the popes wrested the election and investiture of themselves and other bishops, and by degrees took from them all the jurisdiction they had in Italy: which was the occasion of grievous wars for several ages, between the popes and the emperor Henry IV. and his successors. See a brief account of those encroachments of the popes, and the disturbances which followed upon them, in Bishop Stillingfleet's Disc. of the Idolatry of the Church of Rome, &c. chap. 5.

Ver. 25. *And he shall speak great words against the Most High.*] See ver. 8. 20. xi. 36. St. John plainly alludes to this text, Rev. xiii. 5, 6. where the beast is said to *open his mouth in blasphemy against God:* this he did by advancing his own authority above that of God's, and in derogation to his laws: (compare 2 Thess. ii. 4.) as also by setting up the worship of images, and other idolatrous practices, which the prophet Isaiah calls *reproaching* and *blaspheming* God, Isa. lxv. 7.

And shall wear out the saints of the Most High.] By raising wars and persecutions against them. (See ver. 21. Rev. xvii. 6. xviii. 24.)

And shall think to change times and laws.] To alter governments and their constitutions. (Compare ii. 21. 1 Chron. xxix. 30.) This the papacy hath done by claiming a power to depose kings, and set up others in their stead: and not only to abrogate human laws, but likewise to dispense with Divine ones.

And they were given into his hand (or power, see Rev. xiii. 7.) *until a time and times and the dividing of time.*] Or *half a time*, as the Hebrew expresseth it, xii. 7. from whence the expressions are taken by St. John, Rev. xii. 14. *i. e.* for three years and a half of prophetical time. (See the note upon iv. 16.) The same space of time is expressed in other places of the Revelation by *two-and-forty months*, and by *twelve hundred and threescore days*, xi. 2, 3.

These times of antichrist some learned men think to be typically represented in the persecution which Antiochus Epiphanes raised against the Jewish church, and his interdict of the public worship in the temple, which Josephus reckons to have lasted *three years and a half;* (Bell. Jud. lib. i. cap. 1. n. 3.) although, computing from the time that the idol altar was set up, that desolation continued but three years precisely: as appears from 1 Macc. i. 54. compared with iv. 52. (See Archbishop Usher's Annals, par. ii. p. 23. and Dr. Prideaux's Script. Connex. par. ii. ad A. C. 165. 168.)

Ver. 26. *But the judgment shall sit,* (see ver. 22.) *and shall take away his dominion.*] This being the last of the four earthly kingdoms or monarchies, when that is destroyed, there will be an end of the present state of things, when all human *rule, authority, and power,* shall cease, (1 Cor. xv. 24.) and the *kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ,* Rev. xi. 15.

Ver. 27. *And the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High,* &c.] This denotes the reign of Christ on earth, where the saints are described as reigning with him. (See ver. 18. 22. compared with Rev. v. 10. xx. 4.)

Ver. 28. *As for me, Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me.*] The extraordinary circumstances of the vision made a great impression upon my mind, (see ver. 15.) and it was matter of great trouble to me to foresee the profanation of God's laws and worship, and the persecutions and calamities which should come upon his church and people.

And my countenance changed in me.] The impressions this vision made upon me, weakened my spirits, and altered my complexion, as if I had a fit of sickness. (See viii. 18. 27.)

But I kept the matter in my heart.] I frequently meditated upon it: (compare Luke ii. 19.) and by that means was enabled to give an exact account of the vision and its interpretation in writing, for the use and benefit of after-ages. (See ver. 1.)

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

This vision, as it is interpreted by the angel, foretells the succession of the Persian and Grecian monarchies,

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and how, during the latter, Antiochus Epiphanes should grievously persecute the Jews, profane the temple, and take away the daily sacrifice there offered: wherein he should be a type or figure of those horrible desolations which antichrist should make in the church of God.

Ver. 1. *IN the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar.*] The foregoing prophecy was writ in Chaldee, being a farther explication of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, interpreted chap. ii. This vision that follows is writ in Hebrew, because that part of it which relates to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes did chiefly concern the Jews.

A vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first.] Or, *In the beginning of Belshazzar's reign:* (vii. 1.) or the sentence may be translated, *After that which appeared to me before:* as the word *batechillah* signifies, ix. 21.

Ver. 2. *I saw in a vision.*] When I was awake, and had the use of my bodily senses. (See ver. 3. compare x. 4, 5.)

I was at Shushan in the palace, (or, the palace, compare Esth. i. 1.) *which is in the province of Elam.*] The province of Elam, or Persia, properly so called, was taken from Astyages king of Media by Nebuchadnezzar, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah against Elam, xlix. 34. So it was subject to the king of Babylon when Daniel saw this vision; though afterward the viceroy of that country revolted to Cyrus, and joined with him in taking Babylon: as hath been observed in the note upon that place. Daniel's residing in the palace of Shushan, shews that he still continued in those posts of honour to which Nebuchadnezzar had advanced him. (See ver. 27. of this chapter.)

And I was by the river Ulai.] This river divides Susiana from the province of Elam, properly so called: (see Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 27.) though Elam is often taken in a larger sense, so as to comprehend Susiana under it. It was usual for the prophets to see visions by river-sides: of which Daniel gives us another instance, x. 4. and Ezekiel saw his first vision by the river Chebar; (Ezek. i. 3.) such places being proper for retirement and contemplation.

Ver. 3. *Behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the horns were high.*] Horns are an emblem of power and dominion. (See vii. 24.) So this ram with two horns denotes the kingdoms of Media and Persia united into one government. The Hebrew reads, *one ram*: but the adjective *one* means no more than an article prefixed to a noun substantive: and so it is used x. 5. 1 Sam. i. 1. The ram was the royal ensign of the Persians, as Amm. Marcellinus observes, (lib. xix.) and rams' heads with horns, the one higher, and the other lower, are still to be seen among the remains of the ruins of Persepolis, as Sir John Chardin takes notice in his Travels.

But one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last.] To denote that the Persian kingdom, though it was of a later date, should overtop that of the Medes, and make a greater figure in the world, as it did from the times of Cyrus. (See the note upon Jer. li. 11.)

Ver. 4. *I saw the ram pushing westward.*] Persia lay eastward of Babylon: so all the conquests of Cyrus over Syria and the adjacent countries enlarged his dominions westward. But we may probably include under this head Cyrus's conquests in the lesser Asia, particularly over Crœsus, whereby he carried on his victories as far as the Ægean Sea. And his successors were for some time masters of a great part of Greece, called the *west* in the following verse.

And northward.] In the conquests over the Iberians, Albanians, those of Colchos and Armenia, and the adjacent countries.

And southward.] This chiefly relates to Cambyses's conquests over Egypt and Ethiopia, together with those of Darius Hystaspes over India, whence Ahasuerus, king of Persia, is said to *have reigned from India to Ethiopia,* Esth. i. 1.

But he did according to his will.] Nobody being able to oppose him. (See v. 19. xi. 3. 15.)

Ver. 5. *And as I was considering, behold, a he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth.*] A he-goat was anciently the emblem of princes or great commanders: see Prov. xxx. 31. Isa. xiv. 9. Zech. x. 3. where the word translated *chief ones,* signifies in the Hebrew *great goats.*

The goat is described here as coming from the west, that is, from Greece, on the face of the whole earth; *i. e.* carrying all before him as he went: denoting thereby the uninterrupted success of Alexander the Great. A goat was the emblem, or arms, of Macedon, as we now-a-days express it, ever since their king Caranus. (See Justin's Hist. lib. viii.)

And touched not the ground.] Hereby is signified the swiftness of his conquests: for which he is here described as *having four wings of a fowl,* vii. 6. having in eight years' time conquered all the countries that lay between the Ægean Sea and the river Hypanis in India. (See Dr. Prideaux, par. i. p. 503.)

And the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.] See ver. 21.

Ver. 7. *And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns.*] He made a quick and furious onset upon the Medo-Persian empire, and utterly broke it in two engagements, the first at Issus, the second at Arbela.

He cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him.] See vii. 7. This prophecy of Alexander's success, Jaddus the high-priest shewed to him when he came to Jerusalem, and thereby encouraged him to go on in his expedition. (See Josephus, Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 8.)

Ver. 8. *Therefore the he-goat waxed very great: and, when he was strong, the great horn was broken.*] Alexander died in the height of his triumphs and prosperity. (See ver. 21, 22.)

And for it came up four notable ones, towards the four winds of heaven.] This the angel explains by *four kingdoms standing up* instead of it, ver. 22. (See likewise xi. 4.) Dr. Prideaux (*ubi supra,* p. 557.) shews, that this prophecy had its exact completion upon the partition of the Grecian empire after the battle of Ipsus, where Antigonus was killed. There were, indeed, partitions of it into provinces under the brother and son of Alexander; but this was a partition of it into kingdoms, among so many kings or independent governors, represented here by *horns,* and by *heads,* vii. 6. And these four kings were, 1. Ptolemy, king of Egypt, Lybia, Palestine, Arabia, and Cœlo-Syria, which may be called the southern part of the empire. 2. Cassander of Macedonia and Greece, which was the western part of it. 3. Ly-

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simachus of Thrace and Asia, which was the northern part: and, 4. Seleucus of Syria and the eastern countries.

From the description here given of the empire of Alexander and his four successors, it is plain that the prophet represents it as one and the same empire: and as the third in order of four great monarchies. For it is represented under the emblem of one and the same he-goat, having first one notable horn in its forehead, which is expressly called the *first king*, ver. 21. and afterward four growing up in the room of it. This is a confirmation of what is observed before upon ii. 40. that the fourth kingdom must be the Roman empire.

Ver. 9. *And out of one of them came forth a little horn.*] From one of these four successors of Alexander came forth Antiochus, afterward called *Epiphanes*, or *Illustrious*, by his flatterers, but was, indeed, *a vile person, to whom the honour of the kingdom did not belong*, as the angel gives his character, xi. 21. Demetrius, his elder brother's son, being the rightful heir.

This *little horn* belonging to the third head, or monarchy, must not be confounded with the *little horn* belonging to the fourth, mentioned vii. 8. 20. although this here spoken of may be allowed to be a type or figure of the latter.

Which waxed exceeding great towards the south.] He took advantage of the youth of Ptolemy Philometor, (see 1 Macc. i. 16. 19.) and made himself master of Egypt, called *the south* in several places of the twelfth chapter of this prophecy.

And towards the east.] Towards Armenia and Persia. (See the note on xi. 44.)

And towards the pleasant land.] Judea is so called by the holy writers, as being made choice of by God to place his people there, and to make it the seat of his peculiar residence. (See Psal. xlviii. 2. Ezek. xx. 6. and compare xi. 16. 41. 45.) It is often described as a land *flowing with milk and honey*. The cruelties which Antiochus Epiphanes exercised in Judea, are the subject of the following verses. (Compare xi. 31, &c.)

Ver. 10. *And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven,*] As the faithful are heirs of the kingdom of heaven, so the names and titles of the heavenly church are sometimes given to that on earth. The Christian church is called *the Jerusalem which is above*, Gal. iv. 26. and the governors of it are styled *angels*, Rev. i. 20. In like manner the *host of heaven* means here the Jewish church, and particularly the priests and Levites, who are called the *host of heaven*, a title proper to angels, from their continual attendance on God's service in the temple, in imitation of the angelical office. The word *tsaba, host*, is applied to the attendance in the sanctuary: Exod. xxxviii. 8. Numb. iv. 23.

And it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground.] Persons of principal dignity in the church are called *stars*, Rev. i. 20. so here the words import, either that Antiochus should put an end to the priests' ministration in the service of God, by *taking away the daily sacrifice*, (ver. 12.) or else that he seduce some of them by threats and flatteries to turn apostates. (See xi. 32. and compare Rev. xi. 1.)

And stamped upon them.] Utterly subdued or destroyed them. (See vii. 7.)

Ver. 11. *Yea, he magnified himself even to* [or against] *the prince of the host.*] This some understand of the high-priest Onias, (compare xi. 22.) whom Antiochus deprived of his office, and put in his room Jason, an ungodly wretch, who set up heathen rites in the place of God's worship: (2 Macc. iv. 13. 17.) but it may more probably be understood of God himself, the Lord whom the Jews served, (compare ver. 25.) or else of Christ *the High-priest over the house of God*, whose *sanctuary* the temple is called in the following words.

And by him the daily sacrifice was taken away.] The sacrifice which was offered in the name of the whole nation every morning and evening. (See Numb. xxviii. 3.) This was taken away by Antiochus, and both altar and temple profaned. (See 1 Macc. i. 44. 64.)

And the place of his sanctuary was cast down.] Or, *cast out*, as profane. (Compare Rev. xi. 2.) It was deprived of the honour and privileges belonging to a holy place, as if the enclosures had been thrown down, which separated it from common ground.

Ver. 12. *And a host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression*, &c.] Antiochus prospered so far in his attempts against the Jews and their religion, that he built a citadel in the city of David, and placed a garrison of soldiers there, to disturb those that should come to worship God at the temple. (See 1 Macc. i. 33. 36.) This God permitted as a just punishment for the sins of his people; and particularly of those who professed a willingness to forsake the worship of God, and to join with the heathens in their idolatry. (See 1 Macc. i. 11, &c. 2 Macc. iv. 13. 17.) Some translate the words, *And a set time was appointed against the daily sacrifice:* for the word *tsaba, host*, signifies likewise a *set time*. (See x. 1.)

And it cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised and prospered.] He prospered so far in his attempts against the truth, as to suppress it for a time, and hinder the open profession of it. (See ver. 24. and xi. 28. 32.)

Ver. 13. *Then I heard one saint speaking.*] The word *saint* is equivalent to *angel*. (See iv. 13.) What this saint or angel said is not expressed: no more than the words spoken by that illustrious person who appeared to Daniel x. 5. are recorded.

And another saint said to that certain saint which spake.] Several angels are introduced in Daniel's visions: see ver. 15, 16. x. 6. 10. 16. xii. 5, 6. and so in Zecharias, i. 13, 14. iii. 2. 4. The word rendered here *certain saint*, is translated in the margin, *the numberer of secrets*, or *the wonderful numberer:* and must mean a person of extraordinary rank, as being able to unfold those secrets which were hid from other angels: and is therefore justly supposed to mean the Son of God, called the *wonderful Counsellor*, Isa. ix. 6. as being acquainted with all God's purposes and designs. (Compare John i. 18.) The participle *medabber, speaking*, used here twice with relation to this person, may denote him to be the Logos, or *Word of God*.

How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice? &c.] The words may be rendered more agreeably to the Hebrew thus; *For how long a time shall the vision last, the daily sacrifice* be taken away, *and the transgression of desolation* continue? The *transgression of desolation*, or *making desolate*, is the same with the *abomination that maketh desolate*, xi. 31. and applying the expression to the persecution raised by Antiochus, denotes the *idol* which

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he caused to be set upon God's altar, and there to be worshipped. (See 1 Macc. i. 54. compared with ver. 59.)

Ver. 14. *And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.*] This computation of time, in its obvious sense, contains something more than *six years and four months*, reckoning *three hundred and sixty days* to a year: and, if we explain it with relation to the persecution set on foot by Antiochus, we must date it, not from the height of that persecution, when the *daily sacrifice* was actually taken away, for that continued but just three years; (compare 1 Macc. i. 54. with iv. 52.) but we must date the rise of it from those transgressions which occasioned the desolation: (see 1 Macc. i. 11, &c.) and so we may reasonably suppose the *two thousand three hundred days* to commence some time before Antiochus's first invasion of Judea, and his pillaging the sanctuary, mentioned 1 Macc. i. 20—22. which invasion was above two years before the entire abolishing of God's worship in the temple, as appears from the twenty-ninth verse of the same chapter.

But since it is generally agreed, that the persecution of Antiochus was a type, or an imperfect representation, of a greater desolation which antichrist should make in the church of God: (compare ver. 13. here with xii. 11.) it is the opinion of some learned men, that these *two thousand three hundred days* are a line of time that is to be extended to the end of the times of antichrist: taking each *day* for a *year*, according to the genius of the prophetical writings: (see Numb. xiv. 34. Ezek. iv. 6.) according to which sense the *three years and a half*, mentioned vii. 25. and the *seventy weeks* in the ninth chapter, are explained by most interpreters. According to this opinion these *two thousand and three hundred days* will be commensurate to the one thousand two hundred and ninety, or one thousand three hundred and thirty-five prophetical days, or years, mentioned xii. 11, 12. and *then the sanctuary will be* thoroughly *cleansed*, and God's *indignation will come* perfectly *to an end*, as it is expressed ver. 19.

The phrase here translated *two thousand three hundred days*, is in the original *two thousand three hundred mornings* [and] *evenings:* which is the Hebrew way of expressing a natural day. (See Gen. i. 5.) According to this way of speaking, Christ is said to be *three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*, Matt. xii. 40. *i. e.* part of three natural days. And perhaps the phrase may be here used, in allusion to the daily sacrifice, which was to be offered every morning and evening: the taking away of which is here foretold.

Ver. 15. *When I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning.*] Compare xii. 8.

Ver. 16. *I heard a man's voice—which called and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.*] The person who utters this voice seems to be the same who is called the *wonderful numberer*, ver. 13. because he speaks as one that had authority over the angel Gabriel.

Ver. 17. *When he came I was afraid, and fell upon my face.*] Being struck with fear and astonishment. (Compare x. 7, 8. Ezek. i. 28. Rev. i. 17.)

But he said unto me, Understand, O son of man.] This is a title given to none of the prophets but Ezekiel and Daniel, who had more frequent converse with angels than any of the rest: and is given to the prophet here, either to put him in mind that he was but flesh and blood, that he might not be exalted for having these heavenly visions imparted to him; or else it may be interpreted for a mark or title of honour, as implying something more than an ordinary man, even such a one that was highly favoured and beloved of God. (See ix. 23. x. 11. and the note upon Ezek. ii. 1.)

For at the time of the end shall be the vision.] Or, *To the time of the end; i. e.* there is a precise time determined for the accomplishment of the vision, when it shall certainly be fulfilled. (See ver. 19. and compare ix. 27. xi. 35, 36. Habak. ii. 3.)

Ver. 18. *Now while he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep on my face towards the ground.*] As one that faints away, and falls into a swoon through fear and astonishment. (See ver. 27. x. 7—10. 16.)

But he touched me, and set me upright.] See x. 10. Ezek. ii. 2.

Ver. 19. *I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation.*] Or, *To the last end of the indignation:* I will explain to thee the whole series of God's judgments upon his people to the end and conclusion of them. (See xii. 8.)

For at the time appointed the end shall be.] God will not continue his anger for ever, but there is a fixed period appointed for it. (See ver. 17.)

Ver. 20—22.] See the notes upon ver. 3. 5. 8.

Ver. 22. *Four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.*] Four kingdoms shall be set up by Alexander's generals, who shall be of the same nation with him, although not of his posterity: nor shall they have that power or extent of dominion which he possessed. (See xi. 4.)

Ver. 23. *And in the latter end of their kingdom.*] Greece was the chief province of this empire, from whence it had its original and its name: the bringing this country into subjection to the Roman power was a manifest indication of the declension of the third monarchy, and the advancement of the fourth: this was remarkably brought to pass when Æmilius the Roman consul vanquished Perseus king of Macedon, and thereby brought all Greece under the power of the Romans: and this happened much about the time when Antiochus set up the *abomination of desolation* in the temple of Jerusalem. (See Mr. Mede's Works, p. 654. and Dr. Prideaux, *ubi supra*, ad A. C. 168.)

When the transgressions are come to the full.] When many of the Jews shall be disposed to cast off the true religion, and embrace the gentile idolatries. (See 1 Macc. i. 11. 15. 43. ii. 15. 18.) God spares sinners for a time to give them space for repentance, till their iniquities come to their full height, and are ripe for judgment. (See Gen. xv. 16. Matt. xxiii. 32. 1 Thess. ii. 16.)

A king of a fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.] One of a fierce and untractable temper, without pity or compassion; (compare Deut. xxviii. 50.) one practised in craft and policy: (see ver. 25.) especially in the arts of inveigling men, and seducing them from their religion. This character may be justly applied to Antiochus Epiphanes: though in other respects he behaved himself so unaccountably, that he might more fitly be called Epimanes the Madman, than Epiphanes the Illustrious, as Polybius observes. (See the Fragments of his twenty-sixth book; and Dr. Prideaux, par. ii. book iii. at the beginning.) This makes some interpreters think that the character here

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given to Antiochus, more properly belongs to antichrist, whose type he was: an observation that may be applied to some other expressions in the following verses.

Ver. 24. *And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power.*] He shall subdue Judea, Egypt, and several other countries. (See ver. 9. xi. 41—43.) It is added here, that he shall not effect this *by his own power:* which they that apply to Antiochus understand either, first, of the assistance which Eumenes king of Pergamus, and his brother Attalus, gave him in keeping the kingly power he had usurped: (see xi. 21, 22.) or, secondly, we may understand the words of the wickedness of Jason and Menelaus, the high-priests, who joined with an irreligious party among the Jews, and forwarded Antiochus's designs to establish gentilism among them: (1 Macc. i. 11, &c. 2 Macc. iv. 7, &c.) or, thirdly, the place may be understood of God's prospering his attempts, as a punishment for the transgressions of his people, (ver. 23.) But the expression may be more fitly applied to antichrist, of whom Antiochus was the type, who grew great, and carried on his designs, not so much by his own strength, as by the power of the *ten kings,* who afforded him their arms and assistance. (See Rev. xvii. 13. 17.)

And shall prosper, and practise.] See ver. 12.

And shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.] That people, who, being set apart for God's service, (see ix. 16.) were under his peculiar protection, by virtue whereof they were formerly victorious over all their enemies. Antiochus, in his first invasion of Judea, slew and led captive *eighty thousand* Jews, (2 Macc. v. 14.) and two years afterward sent Apollonius with an army of two-and-twenty thousand men, to destroy those that assembled in the synagogue on the sabbath. (See 1 Macc. i. 29, 30. 2 Macc. v. 24.)

Ver. 25. *And through his policy also shall he cause craft to prevail in his hands.*] He first of all obtained the kingdom *by flatteries:* (xi. 21.) then after he had made leagues and covenants, he *wrought deceitfully,* and under pretence of peace and friendship, he invaded and spoiled both Egypt and Judea: (xi. 24. 27. 1 Macc. i. 30, &c. 2 Macc. v. 25.) The same thing is foretold in the following words, *By peace he shall destroy many.*

And he shall magnify himself in his heart.] See ver. 11. xi. 36. 2 Macc. ix. 4. 7, 8. 11.

He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes.] He shall exalt himself against the true God, the Lord of heaven and earth, (compare ver. 11. xi. 36.) abolishing his worship, and setting up idolatry in its stead. (See 1 Macc. i. 21. 24. 44. 54.)

But he shall be broken without hand.] By an immediate judgment of God. (Compare Job xxxiv. 20. and see the note upon ii. 45.) God struck him with a noisome disease, attended with horrible torments both of body and mind. See 1 Macc. vi. 8. 13. 2 Macc. ix. from the fifth verse to the end. The history those two writers give of his death agrees in many particulars with Polybius's account of it, p. 1453. of Gronovius's edition.

Ver. 26. *And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true.*] The vision of the *two thousand three hundred* evenings and mornings, mentioned ver. 14. is certain. (See x. 1.)

Wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.] The same thing is expressed by *shutting up the words,* and *sealing the book,* xii. 4. The expression in both places denotes the concealing the sense of it from common understandings; or deferring the accomplishment of the events therein foretold. So we find *shutting and opening, sealing and unfolding,* are opposed in the prophetical language, and import the same as *concealing* and *revealing; delaying* the accomplishment of a prophecy, and *bringing it into effect.* (See Isa. xxix. 11. Rev. v. 1. 5. xxii. 10.) The words instruct us that prophecies are never fully understood till they are accomplished; and the nearer the time approaches of their accomplishment, the more light shall diligent searchers have for the explaining them. (See xii. 4.)

For yet the vision is for many days.] See x. 1. 14.

Ver. 27. *And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days.*] See the note on ver. 18.

Afterward I rose up, and did the king's business.] See the note upon ver. 2.

And I was astonished at the vision.] The calamities which it foreshewed should come upon God's people, filled me with melancholy and desponding thoughts. (See vii. 28.)

But none understood it.] Daniel himself had but an imperfect apprehension of it, just as when men view things at a distance, though the angel did impart to him the general meaning of it, (ver. 16. 17.) and afterward he had a more particular revelation of several things relating to it. (See the note upon x. 1.) But still it remained unintelligible to common capacities. (See the foregoing verse.)

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

Daniel having thoroughly considered the prophecies of Jeremy relating to the seventy years' captivity, and being satisfied that that term of years was near expiring, humbles himself in prayer for the sins of his people, and earnestly begs of God the restoration of Jerusalem. In answer to his prayers, the angel Gabriel informs him, that the city should be rebuilt, and peopled as in former times, and should so continue for seventy weeks of years, *i. e.* for four hundred and ninety years; and then should be utterly destroyed for putting the Messias to death.

Ver. 1. *IN the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes.*] See v. 31. This is the same person who is called Cyaxares, the son of Astyages, by the heathen historians, with whom Josephus agrees. His father Astyages had the name of Ahasuerus among the Jews, as appears by a passage in Tobit, xiv. 15. where the taking of Nineveh is ascribed to Nebuchadonosor and Assuerus, who were the same with Nabupolassar, Nebuchadnezzar's father, and Astyages: Nebuchadnezzar being a name common to all the Babylonian kings, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt. (See Dr. Prideaux's Script. Connex. ad A. C. 612.)

We need not wonder to find the same persons called by such different names, especially in different countries: the Scripture affords several instances of this kind: so Daniel was called Belteshazzar by Nebuchadnezzar, who changed the names of his three companions, i. 7. Zerubbabel was called Shezbazzar, Ezra i. 8. Esther, Hadassah, Esth. ii. 7.

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I Daniel understood by books.] The several prophecies of Jeremiah are called so many books. (See Jer. xxv. 13. xxix. 1.) We may observe from hence, that the prophets studied the writings of those prophets who were before them, for the more perfect understanding of the times when their prophecies were to be fulfilled. The same they did by several of their own prophecies. (See 1 Pet. i. 11, 12.)

That he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.] See Jer. xxv. 11, 12. xxix. 10. The *seventy years* mentioned both here and in Jeremy, are to be dated from the end of the third, or beginning of the fourth, year of Jehoiakim: (compare Jer. xxv. 1. with Dan. i. 1.) from which time to the first year of Cyrus, according to the Scripture account, are just seventy years. These desolations began from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when the city was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, (see i. 1.) at which time the king of Judah became tributary to the king of Babylon: and they were from time to time increasing, till the eleventh year of Zedekiah, when they were fully accomplished in the burning of the city and temple; after which time it continued desolate till the end of the captivity, (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.)

Ver. 3. *And I set my face unto the Lord God.*] I directed my face towards the place where the temple stood. (See vi. 10.)

To seek [him] *by prayer and supplications.*] The promises of God are generally conditional, and the promise of restoring the Jews' captivity after seventy years, had this condition particularly expressed in it, that they should *call upon him, and pray unto him,* and then he would *hearken unto them,* Jer. xxix. 12.

With fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.] The soul and body are so nearly related, that the humiliation of both is necessary to make our repentance complete. (See James iv. 9, 10.)

Ver. 4. *And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession.*] Both acknowledging his justice and holiness, and my own and my people's iniquity. The better men are, the greater is the sense of their guilt, and the deeper is their humiliation. (See Job xlii. 6. 1 Tim. i. 15.)

Keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, &c.] The prophet does not insist upon any right the people had in those gracious promises made to their fathers, because the condition of their obedience, whenever it was not expressly mentioned, yet was tacitly implied. (Compare Nehem. i. 5.)

Ver. 5. *We have sinned, and have committed iniquity,* &c.] Daniel uses the same confession that is prescribed in Solomon's consecration prayer to be used by the Jews *in the land of their captivity:* with a promise subjoined of a favourable answer, that God would make to their supplications, presented to him upon that occasion. (See 1 Kings viii. 48—50. and compare Nehem. i. 7. Psal. cvi. 6.)

Ver. 7. *And to all Israel that are near, and that are far off.*] Some of the Jews were carried captive, or went voluntary exiles, upon foreseeing the calamities which were coming upon their country, into the neighbouring countries of Edom, Moab, and Ammon: (see the note upon Jer. xii. 14.) as others went down into Egypt. (See Jer. xliii. xliv.) Those were not removed to such a distance from their own country, as those that were carried to Babylon.

Ver. 10. *To walk in his laws which he set before us by his servants the prophets.*] By Moses, and the succession of the prophets that followed him: who reinforced the law of Moses, and gave the people new instructions from God upon emergent occasions.

Ver. 11. *And the oath that is written in the law of Moses.*] Those solemn denunciations of God's judgments declared against impenitent sinners, Lev. xxvi. Deut. xxviii. xxix. 20. The Hebrew word *Shebunah,* is taken here for an imprecation, as it is used, Numb. v. 21. the forms of swearing or adjuration, implying an imprecation upon those that forswear themselves. For which reason the Hebrew *alah* signifies both swearing and cursing. (See the note upon Jer. xxiii. 10.)

Ver. 12. *And against our judges that judged us.*] Judges here signify any princes or rulers. (Compare Job xii. 17. Psal. ii. 10. cxlviii. 12. Prov. viii. 16.)

For under the whole heaven hath not been done, as hath been done unto Jerusalem.] See Lam. i. 12. ii. 13. Ezek. v. 9.

Ver. 13. *As it is written in the law of Moses, all this is come upon us.*] A devout acknowledgment of God's justice and providence, in making his judgments exactly fulfil the threatenings denounced many ages before by Moses. (See Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c.)

Ver. 14. *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil.*] The same expression is used by the prophet Jeremy in his threatenings against the Jews, xxxi. 28. xliv. 27.

Ver. 15. *And now, O Lord our God, who hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt,* &c.] A form of supplication used in several places of Scripture, whereby devout persons entreat God to continue his favours, by recounting his former mercies towards them. (See Exod. xxxii. 11. 13. Nehem. ix. 10. Jer. xxxii. 20.) This the Latin tongue expresses by the word *obsecratio:* of which kind is that form of supplication used in our Litany, *By the mystery of thy holy incarnation,* &c. which some men's ignorance or prejudice hath misinterpreted, as if it were a sort of conjuration.

We have sinned, we have done wickedly.] The entire sense is, Although we have sinned, and are unworthy of the continuance of thy mercies, yet deal with us according to all thy righteousness, as it follows.

Ver. 16. *O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from the city Jerusalem.*] The word *righteousness* is in many places of Scripture equivalent to mercy. (See 1 Sam. xii. 7. Psal. xxxi. 1. cxliii. 1. Micah vi. 5. and Dr. Hammond upon Matt. i. 19.)

Thy holy mountain.] The temple. (See ver. 20. and the note upon Isa. ii. 2.)

Ver. 17. *Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary which is desolate, for the Lord's sake.*] For the sake of the Messias, known by the title of the Lord among the Jews: (see Psal. cx. 1.) and called *Messiah the Prince,* ver. 25. of this chapter. All God's promises are fulfilled in and for the sake of Christ, (2 Cor. i. 20.) To this sense some interpret Psal. lxxx. 14. 16. *Behold, and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, even for the sake of the Son, whom thou madest strong for thyself:* expressed afterward by *the Son of man,* ver. 18.

Ver. 19. *Defer not for thy own sake, O my God,* &c.] The seventy years of our captivity are near being expired: (see ver. 2.) therefore I beseech thee not to defer the

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accomplishment of the promise thou hast made to restore us to our own country, and the free exercise of our religion. So remarkable a turn of providence will very much redound to the honour of thy name. (See Psal. lxxix. 9, 10. cii. 15, 16.)

Ver. 21. *The man Gabriel.*] The angel Gabriel appearing under the shape of a man. (Compare x. 16.)

Whom I had seen at the beginning.] Or *before.* (See viii. 16.) The word *batechillah* signifies *before,* viii. 1.

Being caused to fly swiftly.] The angels are commonly described as having wings, with respect to their appearance in a bodily shape, to signify their readiness to execute the Divine commands. (See Isa. vi. 2. Ezek. i. 11.)

Touched me [see viii. 18. x. 10.] *about the time of the evening oblation.*] There were *three hours* of prayer: (see vi. 10.) but the two most solemn seasons of it were at the time of the *morning and evening oblation,* that solemn service which was offered daily in the temple in the name of the whole nation. (See viii. 11.) This service was performed at the third and ninth hours of the day, answering to our nine of the clock in the morning and three in the afternoon. Devout persons that could not attend the temple service, set apart those hours for their private devotions: and we find Elijah made that solemn prayer and sacrifice recorded 1 Kings xviii. 36. *at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice.* But upon their solemn days of fasting and humiliation, they continued their devotions from the time of the morning sacrifice till that of the evening was finished. Such was this of Daniel, and that of Cornelius, mentioned Acts x. 30. This custom was continued among the primitive Christians, who did not conclude their prayers or fasts on their stationary days till three in the afternoon. (See Mr. Bingham, Eccles. Antiq. book xxi. chap. 3.)

Ver. 23. *At the beginning of the supplication the commandment came forth.*] God's command to me to instruct thee farther in what should hereafter befal the city and temple of Jerusalem, in whose behalf thou didst pour forth thy supplications. Here was a remarkable completion of that promise, Isa. lxv. 24. *While they are yet speaking I will hear.*

For thou art greatly beloved.] Learned men have observed a near affinity between the prophecy of Daniel and the Revelation of St. John; and we may take notice, that much the same title is given to them both. Daniel is styled *a man greatly beloved,* here and x. 11. 19. and the character given to St. John is, that of *the disciple whom Jesus loved,* John xxi. 20. 24.

Therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.] Apply thy mind carefully to what is said, for this prophecy contains in it truths of the greatest importance. Our Saviour plainly refers to these words, which are repeated ver. 25. when, explaining the latter part of this prophecy of the final destruction of Jerusalem, he adds, *Let him that readeth understand,* Matt. xxiv. 15.

Ver. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city.*] To recite all the different methods chronologers have taken of computing these seventy weeks, would be too large a work for a commentary. I shall only take notice of three opinions, which seem most agreeable to the text. The first is, that of Petavius Rationar. Tem. par. ii. p. 154. and Archbishop Usher, Annal. V. T. ad An. P. J. 4260. These two learned authors date the beginning of this prophecy from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, when he gave his commission to Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem; (Nehem. ii. 1.) from which time they reckon *half of the week* here specified, (ver. 27.) to be completed at the death of Christ. But then these authors suppose Artaxerxes to have begun his reign nine years sooner than the historians commonly date it. The second opinion is that of Dr. Prideaux, Connex. of Script. par. i. ad an. A. C. 458. who fixes the date of this prophecy to the seventh year of Artaxerxes, when he gave a commission to Ezra, to settle the state of the Jews at Jerusalem, to which sense he understands the *commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem:* from which time he computes four hundred and ninety years to the death of Christ.

The third opinion is that of the late right reverend and learned Bishop Lloyd, which may be seen in the Chronological Tables, published by his direction, Numb. 3, 4. He supposes the years here specified to consist of three hundred and sixty days: such years he affirms the Scripture always makes use of in the computation of time: as appears in the history of Noah's flood, Gen. vii. 11. compared with ver. 24. and viii. 4. and from Rev. xii. 6. compared with ver. 14. and xiii. 5. where twelve hundred and sixty days are reckoned equivalent to *three years and a half,* and to *forty and two months.* The same computation of years was generally made use of in ancient times by all nations, particularly by the Chaldeans, where Daniel now lived. The reasons of this opinion are at large set forth by Mr. Marshal, in his treatise upon the Seventy Weeks, par. ii. chap. 4. The bishop, proceeding upon this hypothesis, computes the date of this prophecy from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, and reckons sixty-nine weeks of years, or four hundred and eighty-three years, from thence to the year before Christ's death. But then the last or single week that remains to make up the number of seventy he separates from the rest, and begins it from the year of Christ 63. in the latter half of which the *sacrifice and oblation were to cease, and the city and sanctuary to be destroyed by the Romans:* all which was fulfilled in the seventieth year after Christ.

The difference of these three opinions as to the main point, the completion of this prophecy, is not very great; for, as the learned Bishop Chandler hath judiciously observed, (Answer to Grounds and Reasons, p. 139.) "The commencement of the weeks must be either from the seventh of Artaxerxes, which falls upon the four hundred and fifty-seventh year before Anno Domini, or from the twentieth of Artaxerxes. Add to four hundred and fifty-seven years before Christ, twenty-six years after Christ (which is the number that four hundred and eighty-three years, or sixty-nine weeks, exceeds four hundred and fifty-seven years), and you are brought to the beginning of John the Baptist's preaching up the advent of the Messias: add seven years, or one week, to the former, and you come to the thirty-third year of Anno Domini, which was the year of Jesus Christ's death. Or else compute four hundred and ninety years, the whole seventy weeks, from the seventh of Artaxerxes; by subtracting four hundred and fifty-seven years (the space of time between that year and the beginning of Anno Domini) from four hundred and ninety, and there remains thirty-three, the year of our Lord's death. Let the twentieth of Artaxerxes be the date

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of the seventy weeks, which is the four hundred and forty-fifth year before A. D. and reckon sixty-nine weeks of Chaldean years; seventy Chaldee years being equal to sixty-nine Julian; and so four hundred and seventy-eight Julian years making four hundred and eighty-three Chaldee years, and the end in the thirty-third year after Christ, or the Passover following. Any of these reckonings (adds this learned author) are sufficient for our purpose. It is rather to be wondered, how, at this distance of time, learned men have been able to come to any exactness in these matters."

Seventy weeks are determined.] By *seventy weeks* are to be understood *seventy weeks of years,* or *seventy times seven years; i. e.* four hundred and ninety years: each day being accounted for a year, according to the prophetical way of reckoning. (See Numb. xiv. 34. Ezek. iv. 6.) Daniel distinguisheth between these weeks and the weeks after the common reckoning, by calling the latter *weeks of days,* x. 2. according to the sense of the Hebrew, expressed in the margin. And Isaiah distinguisheth a natural year from a prophetical one, by calling it *the year of a hireling,* Isa. xvi. 14. xxi. 16.

The Jews numbered their time by sevens of years: every seventh year was a year of release, and after seven times seven years, *i. e.* forty-nine years, came the year of jubilee. So the computation of time here made use of alludes to Lev. xxv. 8. *Thou shalt number seven sabbaths* [or rather weeks] *of years, seven times seven years;* the Hebrew word *sabbath* signifying the number seven, as it is rendered Ἑβδομὰς by the LXX. in the latter part of the verse: and so the Greek word Σάββατον is used in Luke xviii. 12. xxiv. 1. Daniel, by examining the prophecy of Jeremiah, had discovered how the seventy years of the captivity were near expiring: and here the angel discovers to him another line of time, importing, that after the restoration of Jerusalem it should continue for a period of time, consisting of *seventy times seven years,* which being expired, it should be finally destroyed. Seventy weeks contain ten jubilees, and ten being the number of perfection, these seventy weeks denote the bringing in the most complete jubilee, or *remission,* as the LXX. render that word: when all former trespasses should be cancelled, and men should be restored to that heavenly inheritance they had forfeited, by the death of the Messias.

Upon thy people, and thy holy city.] Daniel in his prayer to God speaking of the Jews and Jerusalem, had used these expressions, *Thy people, and thy holy city,* ver. 18, 19. as if their title to God's favour were indefeasible. To correct this mistake, the angel, directing his discourse to Daniel, returns him his own expressions, as if the *people* and the *city* were rather his than God's. In the same phrase God speaks to Moses, after the sin of the Israelites in making the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 7. At the twenty-sixth verse of this prophecy, the angel tells Daniel how they ceased to be God's people.

To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.] This the Messiah did by making an atonement for sin, and absolving men from the guilt of it: by giving men the best rules and assistances for the promoting true and inward righteousness; called here *everlasting righteousness,* in opposition to the righteousness of the law, a great part of which consisted in external ordinances, *imposed on them* for a season *till the time of reformation,* Heb. ix. 10. where the English text reads, *to make an end of sin;* the margin translates it, *to seal up sin,* following a various reading in the Hebrew: but the sense comes all to one, for the verb which signifies to *seal up,* denotes likewise the *accomplishing* of any thing, and is applied to sin, or the punishment of it, Lam. iv. 22. (See likewise the following note.)

To seal up the vision and prophecy.] To fulfil the prophecies of foregoing ages concerning the Messias, and to confirm them, by making the event to answer the prediction, as the setting of a seal confirms the authenticalness of any writing. Thus the rabbins upon the text interpret the words, *All the prophecies* (say they) *shall be fulfilled at the coming of the Messias.* Bishop Lloyd explains the sentence of the finishing and completing the prophetical writings of the Old Testament, which he supposes to have been done forty-nine years after the commencement of this prophecy. (See the note upon the following verse.)

And to anoint the most Holy.] The word *anoint* plainly alludes to the name of Messiah, expressed in the following verse, which signifies in Hebrew, *the Anointed,* and is translated *Christ* in Greek. (See John i. 41.) To *anoint* is the same here as to consecrate the Messiah to be a priest, prophet, and king, all which offices were conveyed by the ceremony of anointing. The Messiah is styled here *the most Holy,* upon the account of his unspotted original, as well as his unblamable life. (See Luke i. 35. Acts iii. 14. Heb. vii. 26. Rev. iii. 7.) The words may be literally translated, *To anoint the holy of holies:* an expression which usually signifies the inner sanctuary, called *the holiest of all,* Heb. ix. 3. and it is very properly applied to the Messias, who was *greater than the temple,* Matt. xii. 6. because *in him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead,* Coloss. ii. 9. whereupon he calls his body the *temple,* John ii. 21.

Ver. 25. *Know therefore and understand.*] See ver. 23.

From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.] Or, *To build again Jerusalem,* as the margin reads, and so the verb *shub* is translated in the latter part of the verse, and see xi. 10. Daniel had besought God to *behold their desolations, and the ruins of the city which is called by his name,* ver. 18. In answer to this his supplication, the angel acquaints him that the city, both the streets and the wall thereof, should be rebuilt. These expressions do very much confirm their interpretation, who date this prophecy from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, when he gave a commission to Nehemiah to rebuild the city and its walls; (Nehem. ii. 1.) whereas Dr. Prideaux, who dates this prophecy from the seventh year of Artaxerxes, is forced to understand these expressions in a metaphorical sense, for restoring and establishing the church and state of the Jews. Now it is a received rule, that a *literal sense is always to be preferred,* if it be consistent with the main scope of the text.

Unto Messiah the Prince.] Anointing being the ancient ceremony of investing persons in the highest offices and dignities, the name of *Messias,* or *Anointed,* was in an eminent manner appropriated to him that *was sanctified,* or set apart, and *sent into the world* under the highest character of being the Redeemer of it. By that name he was commonly known unto the Jews, John i. 41. iv. 25. and that title was chiefly given to him from the authority of this pro-

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phecy. He is called here the *Prince*, or *Ruler*, a title often given to David; (see 1 Sam. ix. 16. 2 Sam. v. 2. vii. 8.) and applied to the Messiah himself, spoken of under the name of David, Isa. lv. 4. The author of the first book of Chronicles probably alludes to this place of Daniel, v. 2. *Judah prevailed over his brethren, and of him was the chief Ruler* (the *nagid* here in the text) *to come:* as the words may best be translated. The Messiah was commonly known under the title of *King of Israel*, or *King of the Jews*. (See Matt. ii. 2. Luke xxiii. 2, 3. John i. 49. xix. 19.)

Shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks.] A colon should be placed at the end of this sentence, which is wrong placed in the middle of it in our English Bibles. *Seven weeks and threescore and two weeks* put together, make *sixty-nine weeks of years*, or four hundred and eighty-three years. As the cutting off the Messiah is appropriated to the period of threescore and two weeks in the following verse, so the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, here mentioned, must in all probability be assigned to the building of *the street and the wall*, whether we understand it literally, or metaphorically with Dr. Prideaux, for the restoring and settling the Jewish church and state. (See Dr. Prideaux, *ubi supra*, and ad an. A. C. 409.)

Bishop Lloyd, who reckons the date of this prophecy from the twentieth of Artaxerxes, concludes the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, in the eighth year of Artaxerxes Mnemon, at which time he supposes Malachi to have writ his prophecy, and thereby finished the Old Testament Canon, or *sealed up the vision and prophecy*, after whom the Jews were to look for no other prophet till John Baptist. (See Mal. iv. 4, 5. compared with Matt. xi. 13, 14.)

The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.] When the Jews were sorely assaulted by their adversaries, who did all they could to hinder them from rebuilding the city, and fortifying it with a new wall. (See Nehem. iv. 7, &c. vi. 15.) These words, taken in their obvious sense, plainly fix the date of this prophecy to the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, who then gave Nehemiah a commission to repair the city, and raise up the walls and ramparts of it. (See Nehem. chap. ii.—iv. compared with Ecclus. xlix. 13.) Before which time the Jews, that returned from captivity, lived in the cities where their inheritance lay. (See Ezra ii. 70. Nehem. vii. 4.) "The word *haruts*, translated *wall*, properly signifies the circuit bounding out the limits of the city, whereon the wall was built, and anciently used to be marked out with a plough making a furrow round about," as Mr. Mede observes; (Works, p. 700.) and by *rechob*, the *street*, or *broad place*, he understands the *area*, or plat of ground whereon the city was to be built: or else we may suppose the *singular* put for the *plural*, an enallage very common in Scripture.

Ver. 26. *And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off.*] Or, *After those threescore and two weeks*—for the *he* prefixed to the word *shebuuim*, is *emphatical*, as the grammarians express it. The common interpretation of the word is, that in the seventieth or last week the Messiah should be put to death. The Hebrew verb here translated *cut off*, is by the Jewish rabbins interpreted of a death inflicted by the sentence of a judge, which sense they confirm by the use of it in a parallel place, Lev. xvii. 14. to which we may add 1 Sam. xxviii. 9. Our Saviour plainly refers to this text, among others, Luke xxiv. 26. 46.

Bishop Lloyd, who makes a break between the sixty-nine weeks and the seventieth, supposes the sixty-nine to expire in May, A. D. 32. which was the year before our Saviour's passion. In correspondence with this prophecy, our Lord could not survive a whole year after the sixty-nine weeks were expired: nor did he: but since he was to be CUT OFF at the Passover, himself being the true paschal Lamb, he died in the following year in the month Nisan, answering to our April, the very same day and hour that the paschal lamb was wont to be killed. (See the Chronological Tables abovementioned.)

But not for himself.] *The just suffering for the unjust*, 1 Pet. iii. 18. The Vulgar Latin renders the words to this sense, *And the people that deny him shall be no longer his.* The Hebrew phrase is used in the same sense, xi. 17. Job xxxix. 16. To confirm this interpretation, we are to suppose the word *people*, which follows, to be understood here, and may with Bishop Lloyd translate this and the following sentence thus: *And the people that deny him shall be no longer his, but the Prince's (i. e.* the Messiah's, ver. 25.) *future people shall destroy*, &c. And then the Jews will properly be called *Lo-ammi, not my people*, Hos. i. 9.

But the people of the prince that shall come.] The Romans, under the conduct of Vespasian and his son Titus, who were the generals in that war, and both of them dignified with the title of Prince or Cæsar. Bishop Lloyd corrects the common translation thus, *The Prince's (i. e.* the Messiah's) *future people:* the Hebrew word *haba*, as the Greek ἐρχόμενος, which answers it, often signifying the future, or that which is to come. (See Isa. xxvii. 6. xliv. 7. Mark x. 30. Rev. i. 4.) This people that learned prelate understands to be the Romans and their empire, which was the seat of the Christian church. So when our Saviour tells us, that before *the end* of the Jewish nation *come, the gospel shall be preached in all the world*, Matt. xxiv. 14. and St. Paul speaks to the same purpose, Rom. x. 16. Coloss. i. 6. 23. we are there to understand *the world* of the extent of the Roman empire. And our Lord, speaking of the final destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans, expresseth it by sending forth *his armies to destroy those murderers, and burn up their city:* (Matt. xxii. 7.) which exactly agrees with the words here following.

Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.] After that the Romans had burnt both city and sanctuary, they so entirely destroyed them, that it could *scarce be perceived the place had ever been inhabited*, as Josephus relates (de Bello, lib. vii. cap. 1. edit. Hudson): and the Jews relate that a plough was drawn over the ground where they both stood: (see Dr. Lightfoot upon Matt. xxiv. 2.) which were evident accomplishments of our Saviour's prediction, that one stone should not stand upon another, with respect either to the city, (Luke xix. 44.) or to the sanctuary, (Matt. xxiii. 38. xxiv. 2.)

And the end thereof shall be with a flood.] The desolations made by an army are often compared to the inundations of a flood, whose violence nothing is able to withstand. (Compare xi. 10. Isa. viii. 7, 8.)

And unto the end of the war desolations are determined.] Or, *decreed*. That war shall make an utter destruction both of the city and the nation.

Ver. 27. *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.*] The former part of the verse may be literally

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translated thus: *One week shall confirm the covenant with many, and the midst of* (or *the half part of*) *the week shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease.* Most interpreters suppose the seventy weeks to be completed at the death of Christ, or at least one half of the seventieth and last of them: accordingly they understand the *confirming the covenant* of the new covenant, and the terms of salvation therein proposed, first by John Baptist, as the forerunner of Christ, and then by Christ himself. (Compare Isa. xlii. 6. lv. 3. Jer. xxxi. 31. Ezek. xvi. 60—62.) They that confine the promulgation of the new covenant to the first half of the seventieth week, understand it of Christ's preaching for three years and a half, and then suffering in the midst of that week.

They that understand the confirming the covenant to be of the same extent with the seventieth week, suppose John Baptist's preaching to have taken up three years and a half, before Christ entered on his prophetical office, and translate the following words, *In the half part of the week.* (See the next note but one.)

With many.] The same expression is elsewhere used of the universal redemption, or general promulgation of pardon, by the gospel-covenant. (See Isa. liii. 11. Matt. xx. 28. Rom. v. 15. 19. Heb. ix. 28.)

And in the midst of the week.] Our translation of the words follows their opinion who place the death of Christ in the middle of the last week: (see Archbishop Usher's Annals, par. ii. p. 569.) whereas they that suppose the whole seventy weeks completed at our Saviour's passion, translate the sentence thus, *In the half part of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease;* understanding it of the latter half. (See Dr. Prideaux, *ubi supra.)* The Hebrew word *chatsi,* signifies properly *the half part,* and is commonly translated by Ἥμισυ in the Septuagint. [In this sense it is to be understood by our translation, xii. 7. of this prophecy.]

He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease.] Christ, by his *one oblation of himself once offered,* shall put an end to all the sacrifices and oblations made in the Jewish temple. (Compare Heb. x. 5, &c.) Thus the words are expounded by those that suppose the seventy weeks to have been finished at our Saviour's death. To confirm this exposition, we may observe, that the putting an end to the temple service by violence, such as was threatened under Antiochus Epiphanes, is expressed in a different manner; *viz.* by *taking away the daily sacrifice,* viii. 11, 12. xi. 31.

Others understand these words of the final destruction of the Jewish temple and worship by the Romans; and it may be observed, that the word *mincha, oblation,* is sometimes used for the daily sacrifice. (See 1 Kings xviii. 29. 36.) Bishop Lloyd explains the words to this sense: he separates this *single,* or *odd week* (so he translates *shabua echad, one week),* from the other sixty-nine; and makes it commence in the sixty-third year after Christ, and to end in the final destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, which came to pass A. C. 70. It must be granted, that this interpretation agrees better with the letter of the text than the former: and the *abomination of desolation* immediately following it, they may both be reasonably thought the express characters of one and the same week, *viz.* the seventieth, *determined upon Daniel's people* and *city.*

The same learned prelate understands the words, *He shall confirm the covenant with many—of the prince's future people,* mentioned in the foregoing verse, *viz.* the Romans: who, by their general Corbulo, made a peace with the Parthians, Medes, and Armenians, that they might be better at leisure to make an entire conquest of Judea: of which Tacitus speaking, saith, *There never was so firm a peace as now,* (Annal. lib. xv.)

There is one difficulty which attends this explication; *viz.* that instead of setting forth one continued *line of time,* from the *going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem,* to the conclusion of the events here foretold, it makes a considerable break, or interval of time, between the fulfilling one part of the prophecy and the other. Whereas the other interpretations suppose the destruction of the city and temple to run beyond the computation of the seventy weeks, and to be immediately subjoined to the death of Christ, as we see they are, ver. 26. to shew what shall be the *catastrophe,* or final punishment, which shall attend so great a wickedness.

And for the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate.] Mr. Mede translates the words thus, *And being a desolator,* he shall command *over a wing of abominations.* (Works, p. 407.) Bishop Lloyd, with some little variation, renders them, *And upon the battlements* shall be *the idols of the desolator.* They both understand by the phrase the Roman army, which is the interpretation Christ himself gives of it. (Luke xxi. 20. compared with Matt. xxiv. 15.) The word *kenaph,* translated in the English *overspreading,* properly signifies a *wing,* and may either signify an army, as it is used, Isa. viii. 8. or else stand for the battlements of the temple, as the Greek Πτερύγιον, which answers to it, plainly does Matt. iv. 5. Here the Romans, after they had set the temple on fire, placed the idolatrous ensigns of their army over against the eastern gate of the temple, and offered sacrifice to them, as Josephus expressly tells us, (Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 6. edit. Hudson.) The word *shikutsim, abominations,* is commonly used for idols: (see 1 Kings xi. 5. 7. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.) and the *abomination of desolation* set upon the altar by Antiochus, (1 Macc. i. 54.) is explained by the *idol-altar,* ibid. ver. 59. So the abominations here spoken of do very properly signify the ensigns, or standards, of the Roman legions; each standard having stamped upon it the image of the tutelar god of that legion, to whom they offered sacrifice. Tacitus calls the eagle, and the other ensigns, "Propria legionum numina," the *deities which were peculiar to their legions.* (Annal. lib. ii.) Tertullian's words are to the same purpose: "Religio tota castrensis signa veneratur, signa jurat, et Diis omnibus præponit:" *All the religion of the army consists in paying Divine worship to their standards, in swearing by them, and preferring them before all other deities.* (Apol. cap. 16.)

Even until the consummation.] Till God's indignation be accomplished, as the same sense is expressed, xi. 36.

And that determined [or which is decreed] *shall be poured upon the desolate.*] Compare ver. 11. of this chapter. Mr. Mede translates it, *shall continue upon the desolate,* p. 709. The words briefly declare those terrible calamities which made an entire destruction of that city and people, and were executed upon them in the most dreadful manner that any nation ever suffered, and with the most evident tokens of a Divine vengeance upon them, according to the relation of their own historian Josephus, who was an eye-wit-

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ness of these desolations. And ever since their posterity have been dispersed all the world over, living only upon sufferance in their several dispersions, and very often exposed to grievous oppressions and persecutions, enough to have extinguished their race, unless they had been preserved by Providence, on purpose to verify the truth of those prophecies which foretold these calamities: and particularly those words of Christ, which have a plain aspect upon the text before us, (Luke xxi. 22—24.) *These be the days of vengeance: that all things that are written may be fulfilled—for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people: and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive unto all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the gentiles, until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled: i. e.* till the times of the fourth monarchy, spoken of chap. ii. vii. are expired. (See the note upon xii. 7.)

Bishop Lloyd renders the last word *shomem, desolate,* in an active sense, *the desolator,* or him that makes desolate: in which sense the word is plainly taken, viii. 13. xii. 11. The sense he gives of the sentence is much the same with the former: *viz.* that the Divine vengeance shall continue upon the Jews, till it be returned upon the author of their desolations, which he interprets of the Roman government, as it was exercised under the seventh head. (See Rev. xvii. 11.)

Having given a particular account of the most probable expositions of this famous prophecy, I need not take any notice of Sir John Marsham's explication of it in his Chronicus Canon, p. 568. since a learned writer, Mr. Marshal, in his treatise upon the Seventy Weeks, lately published, hath shewed it to be inconsistent with itself, as well as with the undoubted monuments both of sacred and profane history. The late author of Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion, hath thought fit to mention Sir J. M.'s hypothesis with approbation: but it is to be presumed that this writer took it upon trust, without ever examining it, and was glad to find an opinion prejudicial to Christianity countenanced by so great a name.

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The three following chapters contain the last vision of Daniel's prophecy, wherein the several successions, both of the Persian and Grecian monarchies, are represented, together with the wars that should be raised between the kings of Syria and Egypt under the latter monarchy, as far as the times of Antiochus Epiphanes: who being the type and forerunner of antichrist, (as hath been observed upon chap. viii.) the latter part of the vision from xi. 36. seems chiefly to relate to the persecutions of the church in the times of antichrist, till its being finally cleansed from all those profanations, as the temple of Jerusalem was purified from the pollutions of Antiochus: after which will follow that *kingdom* of the *saints* mentioned vii. 18. 27. of this prophecy.

Ver. 1. *IN the third year of Cyrus king of Persia.*] Daniel must now have been above ninety years of age; he could not be less than twenty when he was carried captive (see the Preface to this Commentary), and that was seventy-three years before the date of this vision: which was the last Daniel saw, and it is not likely he himself survived it long.

Whose name was Belteshazzar.] See i. 7.

And the thing was true.] Or certain. (See ver. 21. xi. 2. and compare viii. 26. Rev. xix. 9.)

But the time appointed was long.] See ver. 14. and the note upon xii. 4.

And he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.] He had a clear view of the succession of the Persian and Grecian monarchies, and of the series of the kings of Syria and Egypt under the latter of them: although the remaining parts of the vision were obscure, especially with respect to their final event. (See xii. 8.)

Ver. 2. *In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.*] The reason of Daniel's fasting and mourning seems to be, because the adversaries of the Jews began to obstruct the building of the temple. (See Ezra iv. 4, 5.) This made Daniel deprecate God's judgments in so solemn a manner.

Three full weeks.] The Hebrew reads, *Three weeks of days.* So we read of *a month of days,* Gen. xxix. 14. Numb. xi. 20. where the English reads, *a whole month.* But the phrase may be used here to distinguish them from the weeks of years prophesied of in the ninth chapter.

Ver. 3. *I ate no pleasant bread,* &c.] This is expressed by *chastening himself,* ver. 11. and by *afflicting the soul* with fasting, Lev. xvi. 29. xxiii. 27. Isa. lviii. 3.

Neither did I anoint myself at all.] As the Persians used to do constantly. (See Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xiii. cap. 1.)

Ver. 4. *In the four-and-twentieth day of the first month.*] According to the Jewish computation, which was the month Nisan, beginning about our 10th of March. The commentators observe from hence, that Daniel's fast fell upon the time of the paschal solemnity; and therefore the Jews did not think themselves obliged to keep their solemn festivals any where but in their own country, and at the place appointed by God for that purpose.

I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel.] The same with Tigris. (See Gen. ii. 14.) This was near Shushan, where Daniel probably resided. (See the note upon viii. 2.)

Ver. 5. *I lifted up mine eyes.*] Being by the river-side in a deep contemplation, I looked up and saw a person appear before me, placed in the air above the waters, or hovering over them. (See xii. 6. and compare Rev. x. 2. 5.)

Behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girt about with fine gold of Uphaz.] He appeared in the habit of a high-priest. (See Exod. xxviii. 4. 39. xxix. 5.) The description St. John gives of Christ as high-priest of the church, Rev. i. 15. seems to be taken from this place of Daniel, which proves that the person here described can be no other than *the Son of God:* which may be farther confirmed by comparing the person described here, and xii. 5, 6. with Rev. x. 2. 5, 6. who is there represented as *setting his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the land,* as sovereign Lord of both elements. (Compare Matt. xxviii. 19.)

Concerning the *fine gold of Uphaz,* see the note upon Jer. x. 9.

Ver. 6. *His body was like the beryl.*] Of an azure, or sky-colour, mixed with a bright green. (See Ezek. i. 16.)

His arms and his feet were in colour like to polished brass.]

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Of a bright flaming colour. (See Psal. civ. 4. Ezek. i. 7. Rev. i. 15. x. 1.)

And the voice of his words, as the voice of a multitude.] Great and powerful. (Compare Ezek. i. 24. Rev. i. 15. x. 3.)

Ver. 7. *The men that were with me saw not the vision, but a great quaking fell upon them,* &c.] They were seized with such terror and astonishment, that they made what haste they could to get out of the reach of such an amazing sight. (Compare Acts ix. 7.)

Ver. 8. *There remained no strength in me.*] I fell into a swoon or fainting fit. (See ver. 9.)

My comeliness was turned in me into corruption.] Or, *my vigour,* as the margin reads to a better sense. So the word is used Prov. v. 9. where our translation renders it, *thine honour,* but it should be translated *thy strength,* or *vigour,* as appears by comparing that verse with the parallel text, Prov. xxxi. 3.

Ver. 9. *When I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face.*] The very sound of his words put me into a fainting fit. (See viii. 18.)

Ver. 10. *And, behold, a hand touched me,* &c.] This seems to be a distinct appearance from that described ver. 5. not so terrible, but nearer approaching to a human form: (see ver. 16.) and may probably be supposed to be the angel Gabriel, who had been sent to Daniel upon the like occasions. (See viii. 17, 18. ix. 21.) The Logos, or Son of God, in the representations made of him in the Old Testament, usually appears with a retinue of angels attending him. (See Gen. xviii. 2.) And in this prophecy (viii. 13, &c.) we have a vision of several angels attending upon one principal one. (Compare xii. 5.) The same retinue of angels may be observed in Zechary's visions, i. 8—10. 12, 13. ii. 3, 4. 8. iii. 2. 4. 7. The angel who now appeared to Daniel, *putting forth his hand,* raised him from the ground, and restored him to his former strength in some degree. (See viii. 18. ix. 21. Jer. i. 9. Ezek. ii. 2. Rev. i. 17.)

Ver. 11. *O Daniel, a man greatly beloved.*] See ix. 23.

Understand the words that I speak unto thee—for unto thee am I now sent.] Though this angel was inferior to that eminent person described ver. 5. yet he being the angel that informs Daniel of all those matters contained in the following chapter, and the beginning of the twelfth, *(the man clothed in linen,* speaking nothing but what is related xii. 7.) he may properly take the whole business of the vision upon himself, as he does here and in the following verse.

And I am come for thy words.] To give an answer to thy requests, by the direction of that Divine person, (ver. 5.) upon whom I attend. (Compare viii. 15—17. ix. 22.)

Ver. 12. *From the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard,* &c.] As God graciously answered those prayers thou madest in thy former humiliation occasioned by thy searching out the time allotted for the captivity of thy people: (see ix. 2. 22, 23.) so now God is pleased, in answer to thy repeated humiliation and solicitous concern for thy people, to send me to inform thee what shall be their state and condition in after times.

Ver. 13. *But the princes of the kingdom of Persia withstood me.*] The princes of the kingdom of Persia and Grecia, mentioned here and ver. 20. are generally supposed to be the guardian or tutelar angels of those several countries. That there were such tutelar angels, not only over private persons, (see Acts xii. 15.) but likewise over provinces and kingdoms, was an opinion generally received. The *four spirits* mentioned Zech. vi. 5. seem to be the guardian angels of the four great empires. Every heathen nation thought their country under the peculiar protection of some tutelar deity: and they looked upon the God of the Jews to be no other than that Deity who presided over that nation. (See 1 Sam. iv. 8. 1 Kings xx. 23. 28. 2 Kings xviii. 33—35. Isa. x. 10, 11.) This notion was very much countenanced by a passage in Deuteronomy, xxxii. 8. where the Septuagint translate the text thus: *When the Most High divided the nations their inheritance —he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the angels of God, for the Lord's portion is his people.* As if the sense were, That the government of other nations was committed to so many tutelar angels, whereas Israel was under the immediate care and government of God himself. The opinion I have been hitherto explaining supposes the presiding angels here mentioned to have been good angels: from whence it follows, that the occasion of their contention was because neither party was as yet acquainted with the Divine will, to which they were already to submit. (See this point largely treated of by Petavius, Dogm. Theolog. tom. iii. lib. ii. de Angelis, cap. 8.)

But others suppose those princes or angels who opposed Michael and Gabriel to be evil spirits, such as are described by St. Paul under the names of the *rulers of the darkness of this world,* having their residence in the lower regions of *the air,* (Ephes. ii. 2. vi. 12.) These evil spirits are sometimes represented as part of the heavenly host, both in respect to their original station, and because these are the instruments of Providence, and have a command over the inferior world, as far as God thinks fit to permit. (See 1 Kings xxii. 19, &c. Job i. 6. 12, &c.) They are likewise represented as accusers of good men before God, and as aggravating their faults, in order to have them delivered over to them, as the executioners of God's judgments. (See Job i. 11. ii. 5. Zech. iii. 1. Rev. xii. 10.) If we follow this opinion, the contest here will be of the same nature with that of the angel and Satan, Zech. iii. 1. and with the dispute that Michael the archangel had with the devil *about the body of Moses,* mentioned in St. Jude's Epistle, ver. 9.

The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one-and-twenty days.] The Persians, upon the solicitation of the Jews' enemies, had put a stop to the building of the temple, all the time of Daniel's humiliation. (See the note upon ver. 2.) And the tutelar genius of that empire still insisted that they might be kept under those hardships, while the angel Gabriel was doing them all the good offices he could. In like manner, Satan is represented as eagerly opposing the rebuilding the temple, and the restoration of the Jewish nation, Zech. iii. 1, 2.

But, lo! Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me.] Michael is styled an archangel by St. Jude, ver. 9. and *a great prince that stands up for the children of thy people,* xii. 1. of this prophecy. Christ himself, as he is often represented under the character of an angel, so he is described under the name of Michael, Rev. xii. 7. But in

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this and the parallel texts of Daniel, the name rather denotes some principal angel, whom the Jews looked upon as the guardian angel of their nation. (See ver. 21. and xii. 1.)

And remained there with the kings of Persia.] I still continued to oppose any motions the tutelar genii of Persia might make in prejudice of the Jews. The word *king* is equivalent in Hebrew to *prince* or governor. (See vii. 17. Jer. xxv. 20, &c. 1 Kings xxii. 47.)

Ver. 14. *Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befal thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.*] Daniel was solicitous about the present state of his people. (See ver. 2.) The vision informs him, first, that the empire shall be translated from the Persians to the Greeks, (xi. 3.) and then what should be the condition of the Jews under Alexander's successors, the kings of Syria and Egypt; one of which, *viz.* Antiochus Epiphanes, should be a figure of antichrist, who should disturb the state of the Christian church in the latter times of the world. (See ver. 1. and compare xii. 4. 8.)

Ver. 15. *I set my face towards the ground, and I became dumb.*] I was perfectly astonished, and deprived of all sense. (See ver. 16, 17. and compare viii. 18.)

Ver. 16. *Then one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips.*] One that appeared in a human form, the same angel that touched me with his hand before, (see ver. 10.) restored my speech to me, which my fright and concern had quite deprived me of.

Then I opened my mouth, and said unto him that stood before me.] Compare viii. 15. This angel stood upon the earth near Daniel, not above the waters of the river, as the person did whose appearance was so glorious: ver. 5.

O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, &c.] See ver. 8.

Ver. 17. *How can the servant of this my lord, talk with this my lord.*] How can thy servant, a poor mortal man, maintain a discourse with a person of your rank and dignity? (See Noldius, p. 353.) The words may be translated thus, *How can the servant of this my lord, talk with that my lord? i. e.* with the other person that first appeared to me with so majestic a presence; at whose sight I was perfectly confounded: (ver. 5. 9.) the pronoun *zeh*, when it is doubled, often signifies two distinct persons or things. (See Exod. xiv. 20. Eccles. vi. 3. vii. 14. 18. Isa. vi. 3.)

Ver. 19. *O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee.*] Thou needest not be under such terrible apprehensions, as if this vision did portend thee some mischief; (see Judg. vi. 22. xiii. 22.) for it is a peculiar token of God's favour to thee. (See ver. 11.)

Ver. 20. *Knowest thou wherefore I am come to thee?*] viz. *To make thee understand what shall befal thy people in the latter days:* (ver. 14.)

Now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia.] Or, *I shall again fight,* or contend, *with the prince of Persia:* in which sense the verb *shub, return,* is often used. (See ix. 25.)

And when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.] When I am gone forth from the Divine presence, the tutelar angel of the Grecian empire will appear in the court of heaven, and offer his reasons for translating the empire from the Persians to the Greeks, that the Jews may enjoy the benefits of their dominion: as a government that will be more favourable to them than the Persian emperors were. Alexander and some of his successors bestowed many favours upon the Jews, as may be seen in Josephus's Antiq. lib. xi. cap. *ult.* lib. xii. cap. 2, 3.

Ver. 21. *But I will shew thee that which is noted in the Scripture of truth.*] Or, *In the writing of truth: i. e.* what is certain and irrevocable. God's decrees are spoken of as if they were committed to writing, and registered in a book. (See Deut. xxxii. 34. Psal. lvi. 8. Isa. lxv. 6. Mal. iii. 16.)

And there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.] None of the guardian or tutelary angels, who have the care and presidency of other nations committed to them, join with me in defending the cause of the Jewish nation, but Michael your prince and protector. (See xii. 1.) St. Jerome, in his commentary upon the thirteenth verse, supposes the prince of Persia to oppose the Jews upon account of their sins, which reason may be applied to other guardian angels or ministering spirits.

CHAP. XI.

See the Argument of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 1. *ALSO I, in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and strengthen him.*] This verse should have been joined to the last chapter: the angel adds, that as he now joins with Michael in defending the cause of the Jewish nation; so, at the time of the overthrow of the Babylonish empire, he assisted Michael in advancing Darius to the succession, which was the occasion of restoring the Jewish captivity. The word *him* may relate either to Michael or Darius, and the sense, taking it either way, is much the same.

Ver. 2. *And now I will shew thee the truth.*] What is contained *in the Scripture,* or writing, *of truth,* x. 21. Or, I will shew thee the succession of the Persian and Grecian empire in plain and naked truth, not in symbolical or figurative representations, as it was shewed before, chap. viii.

There shall stand up yet three kings in Persia.] After Cyrus shall succeed Cambyses, Smerdis, and Darius Hystaspes. So Ezra mentions two kings, whom he calls Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes (names which were common to most of the Persian kings in the Jewish history), who reigned between Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes, (Ezra iv. 6, 7.)

And the fourth shall be far richer than they all, &c.] This plainly means Xerxes, who brought together an army of above four millions, according to Herodotus's account: of eight millions, as others say, to overrun the whole country of Greece. These wars, carried on by Xerxes's successors, ended at last in the conquest of the Persian monarchy by Alexander the Great. Upon this account the angel passes over the rest of the Persian kings; and proceeds immediately to relate the successes of Alexander: it being the chief design of the former part of this vision to foretell the translation of the empire from the Persians to the Greeks. (See x. 20.) St. Jerome rightly observes upon the fifth verse of this chapter, "That it was not the design of the Scripture to give us an historical narrative of the actions of heathen princes any farther than the affairs of the Jewish nation were concerned in them." In like manner, at the thirty-sixth verse, the angel breaks off the

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succession of the Syrian kings after Antiochus, to describe antichrist, of whom the former was the type and forerunner. [So viii. 9. the prophet passes over all the successors of Alexander to Antiochus Epiphanes, whose reign had a particular influence upon the Jewish affairs.]

Ver. 3. *And a mighty king shall stand up, and do according to his will.*] Compare ver. 16. This denotes Alexander the Great, whose success was so uninterrupted, that no body was able to put a stop to the progress of his victories. (See viii. 5.)

Ver. 4. *And when he shall stand up.*] When he shall be in the height of his prosperity.

His kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven.] See the notes upon viii. 8.

And not to his posterity.] Alexander had a brother, Aridæus, and two sons, Alexander and Hercules: these were all cut off in a few years after his death, to make way for his generals, who divided his empire among themselves.

Nor according to his dominion which he ruled.] They did not immediately take upon them the title of kings: (see Dr. Prideaux, ad an. A. C. 301.) and his dominion being divided, lost much of that strength and power which the empire had when it was united in the person of Alexander. (See viii. 22.)

For his kingdom shall be plucked up, for others beside those.] Alexander's four great successors were Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus: (see the note upon viii. 8.) but others beside them came in for a share of his dominions, such as Eumenes, Philotas, and others. The word translated *plucked up*, is the same as *rooted up*, or destroyed, and is opposed to *planting*, or making to thrive; Jer. i. 10. xxiv. 6. xxxi. 28. or the phrase may allude to the feathers of a bird being plucked and scattered abroad. (Compare vii. 4.)

Ver. 5. *And the king of the south shall be strong.*] By the *king of the south*, in this and the following verses, is meant the king of Egypt: and by the *king of the north*, the king of Syria. These two kings came at length to have the principal share of Alexander's dominions, and make the greatest figure among his successors. But the reason why they are only mentioned here, is, because they only were concerned in the affairs of the Jews: Judea bordering upon each of their dominions, and sometimes belonging to one, and sometimes to the other, of those princes. The *king of the south* mentioned in this verse, denotes Ptolemy the First, the son of Lagus, called, by way of distinction, Ptolemy Soter. The texth saith of him, that he should be *strong:* for he had all Egypt and the adjacent parts of Lybia under his dominion, besides Palestine, Cœlo-Syria, and most of the maritime provinces of the lesser Asia.

And one of his princes, and [or even] *he shall be strong above him, and have dominion.*] Another of the successors of Alexander, who took upon them the style of kings, or princes. (See the note on ver. 4.) This was Seleucus Nicator, the first king of the north, or of Syria: who, by the conquest of Lysimachus king of Thrace, and Demetrius king of Macedon, obtained the name of *Nicator, i. e.* conqueror.

His dominion shall be a great dominion.] He had under his dominion all the countries of the east, from Mount Taurus to the River Indus: and from thence westward to the Ægean Sea: whereupon Appianus the historian reckons him the most potent of all Alexander's successors.

Ver. 6. *And in the end of years, they shall join themselves together.*] In process of time the successors of these two kings, *viz.* Ptolemy Philadelphus, the son of the former Ptolemy, and Antiochus Theus, the grandson of Seleucus Nicator, shall enter into a league or confederacy with each other.

For the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement.] This league shall be concluded by the marriage of Berenice, daughter to Ptolemy Philadelphus, with Antiochus Theus king of Syria, although he had another wife Laodice, and two children by her, Seleucus Callinicus and Antiochus.

But she shall not retain the power of the arm.] She shall not be able to keep her power or interest with Antiochus: for as soon as her father Ptolemy was dead, Antiochus divorced her, and recalled his former wife Laodice and her children.

Neither shall he stand, nor his arm.] Nor shall Antiochus himself long survive, for Laodice, being jealous of his fickle temper, procured him to be poisoned, and concealed his death till her son Seleucus had secured the succession.

But she shall be given up, and they that brought her.] Berenice, after she had shut herself up in the asylum, or place of sanctuary, at Daphne, was betrayed into her enemies' hands, and basely murdered with all those that attended her out of Egypt.

And he that begat her.] If we follow this translation, see the explication of it in the next note: but the marginal reading gives the better sense, *He whom she brought forth;* her son who was slain with her: the Hebrew, *yoled,* is in the form of the participle active; but the same form is sometimes used in a passive sense: of which we may produce an instance from ix. 27. of this prophecy, where the word *shomem* is rendered, in a passive sense, *desolate,* by most interpreters.

And he that strengthened her in these times.] Her father, who should have supported her with his interest under these difficulties, but died himself a little before.

All these particulars, and what are mentioned in the following notes, are fully related in the historical accounts of those times, as may be seen by those who will consult the authors referred to by St. Jerome, in his commentaries upon Daniel, and Dr. Prideaux, in the second part of his Script. Connexion.

Ver. 7. *But out of a branch of her root shall stand up one in his estate, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north.*] One of the same stock or original with Berenice; *viz.* her brother, Ptolemy Euergetes, shall succeed his father in the government of Egypt, and shall revenge his sister's quarrel, by invading the frontiers or territories (see ver. 10.) of Seleucus, and prevail against him.

Ver. 8. *And he shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes,* &c.] St. Jerome tells us out of writers extant in his time, that Ptolemy made himself master of all Syria and Cilicia, and passing the Euphrates, conquered as far as Babylon: and carried back into Egypt vast plunder from all the conquered provinces, together with two thousand five hundred Egyptian idols, which Cambyses upon his conquering Egypt had carried into Persia. This action of his so highly obliged the Egyptians,

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that they gave him the title of *Euergetes*, or, the *Benefactor*.

And he shall continue more years than the king of the north.] Ptolemy outlived Seleucus the space of four years.

Ver. 9. *So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom*, &c.] Ptolemy shall return home without molestation, and quietly enjoy what he had gotten by his victories.

Ver. 10. *But his sons shall be stirred up, and assemble a multitude of great forces.*] The sons of Seleucus, Seleucus Ceraunus, and Antiochus, called afterward the *Great*, shall assemble a mighty army, in order to recover all that their father had lost.

And one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass over.] Antiochus shall certainly overrun Judea and Cœlo-Syria, with other provinces belonging to the king of Egypt; taking the advantage of Ptolemy Euergetes's death, and the succession of his son Ptolemy Philopator, a weak and profligate prince; under whose reign he attempted the recovery of Syria. We may observe the text here speaks only of a single person, *viz.* Antiochus, for his brother Seleucus died in the beginning of this enterprise, having scarce reigned three years. The devastations of an army are fitly compared to inundations. (See ver. 22. 40. and ix. 26.)

Then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress.] Or, *He shall again be stirred up*, &c. (See the note upon ix. 25.) At the spring of the next year he shall take the field again, and encamp at Raphia, a frontier town upon the borders of Egypt. (See the history of this engagement in Polybius, lib. v. p. 573. edit. 8vo.)

Ver. 11. *And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north.*] Ptolemy Philopator, the young king of Egypt, being enraged at the attempts of Antiochus, shall come with a great army to encounter him.

And he shall set forth a great multitude.] If we understand the words of Ptolemy's army, that consisted of seventy thousand foot, five thousand horse, and seventy-three elephants; Antiochus's was little inferior to his, for he had sixty-two thousand foot, six thousand horse, and sixty-two elephants.

But the multitude shall be delivered into his hand.] The army of Antiochus was discomfited by Ptolemy, ten thousand being slain, and four thousand taken prisoners. The author of the third book of Maccabees ascribes this victory to the passionate importunity of Arsinoë, Ptolemy's sister, who ran about the army with her hair about her shoulders, and by promises and entreaties engaged the soldiers to fight with more than ordinary resolution.

Ver. 12. *His heart shall be lifted up.*] So far as to offer to force his passage into the holiest part of the Jewish temple, when he came to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices there, after his victory: the story is related at large in the forementioned third book of the Maccabees, chap. i.

And he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it.] Or, *Though he shall cast down— he shall not be strengthened by it.* He shall content himself with recovering the provinces of Cœlo-Syria and Palestine, and make no farther advantages of his victory; being willing to agree to a peace, that he might securely follow his pleasures. (See Dr. Prideaux, par. ii. ad. ann. A. C. 217.)

Ver. 13. *For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come (after certain years) with a great army*, &c.] Fourteen years after the ending of the former war, upon the death of Philopator, and the succeeding of his infant son Ptolemy Epiphanes, Antiochus the king of the north shall return into Cœlo-Syria and Palestine, for the recovery of those provinces, and shall bring with him a greater army than he had in the former war, the same which he brought out of the east, at his late return from thence.

After certain years.] The Hebrew reads, *At the end of times, even years:* which expression confirms the interpretation given before of the word *times* in this prophecy. (See the note upon iv. 16.)

And with much riches.] With abundant supply of all necessary provisions for an army: and especially with beasts of burden for removing their baggage: for that is the proper sense of the word *recush.*

Ver. 14. *And in those times many shall stand up against the king of the south.*] Antiochus, king of Syria, and Philip, king of Macedon, entered into a league, to divide the dominions of Ptolemy Epiphanes, king of Egypt, being then an infant of six years of age. Agathoclea his father's concubine, and her brother Agathocles, who managed every thing under Ptolemy Philopator, were framing projects to keep the regency in their own hands during the minority of this prince. And Scopas, one of his generals, some time afterward formed a design of usurping the sovereignty over Egypt.

Also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.] The apostates from the Jewish law shall exalt themselves under the favour of the king of Egypt and his ministers, to accomplish what is said in the writings of the prophets concerning the persecutions that should befal God's people, and the punishments that should at length overtake those that forsake the truth. These apostates accordingly did fall, and were cut off by Antiochus; for in the ninth year of Epiphanes's reign, Antiochus made himself master of Jerusalem, and cut off or drove from thence all those Jews that were of Ptolemy's party, and bestowed particular favours upon those that persevered in the observance of the law. Josephus, Antiq. lib. xii. chap. 3. gives us a copy of Antiochus's decree in favour of their temple, and the service therein performed, and to secure it from being profaned.

Ver. 15. *So the king of the north shall come, and take the most fenced cities.*] Antiochus having vanquished the king of Egypt's army under Scopas at Paneas, near the fountain-head of the river Jordan, he besieged and took first Zidon and Gaza, then all the other cities of that district, *viz.* Abila, Samaria, and Gadara: and afterward became master of the whole country. The word *sollelah*, translated a *mount*, does likewise signify battering engines for throwing stones, and such-like offensive artillery. (See 2 Kings xix. 32. Jer. xxxii. 24. xxxiii. 4.)

And the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people.] Neither the king of Egypt's best generals, such as Scopas and others that came to relieve him, nor his choicest troops, shall prevail or be able to withstand Antiochus.

Ver. 16. *But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will*, &c.] Nobody being able to oppose him in Cœlo-Syria or Palestine. (Compare viii. 4. 7. and ver. 36. of this chapter.)

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And he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.] He shall make himself master of Judea, (see the note upon viii. 9.) which shall be consumed by the foraging and plundering of his soldiers; Jerusalem itself receiving great damages during the siege of the garrison which Scopas left there: as appears by Antiochus's decree for repairing the ruins of the city, in Josephus, *ubi supra.* In the contests between the kings of Syria and Egypt, Judea lying in the middle between them, whoever were conquerors, that country was sure to suffer: Josephus compares its condition to that of a ship in a storm, which is beaten by the waves on both sides. (Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 3. *init.*) The Greek interpreter renders the former part of the sentence, *And he shall stand in the land of Sabi:* which Dr. More in his notes upon the place, supposes to be a name of the God of Israel: and I have offered some arguments to support that conjecture, in the notes upon Jer. iii. 19.

Ver. 17. *He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom.*] Antiochus will likewise design to invade Egypt with all his forces, and make an entire conquest of it.

And upright ones with him.] Or rather, And he shall make *agreements with him: yesharim* here probably signifying the same as *mesharim* does ver. 6. *i. e.* he shall make proposals of concluding a marriage between his own daughter Cleopatra and king Ptolemy, to be consummated when they come of age: which offer made by Eucles of Rhodes was accepted, and a contract fully agreed between them.

Thus shall he do.] Or, *He shall succeed,* as the word is taken, ver. 28. 32. He shall succeed in this his proposal.

Giving him the daughter of women, corrupting her.] In making this proposal of marriage, his intent was that she should betray her husband to him, and by that means become master of Egypt. She is called the *daughter of women,* κατ' ἐξοχήν, by way of excellence, either upon the account of her quality, or else because of her great beauty.

But she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him.] When she was married to Ptolemy, she forsook the interest of her father, and embraced that of her husband: and we find her joining with him in an embassy to the Romans, to congratulate the victory they had obtained over her own father, as Dr. Prideaux observes out of Livy, lib. xxxvii. (See Script. Connex. par. ii. ad ann. C. 187.)

Ver. 18. *After this he shall turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many.*] Antiochus shall set out a great fleet for reducing the lesser Asia, which sailing along the coasts of Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lycia, and Caria, took a great many of the maritime cities of those provinces, and the islands adjoining. All countries lying upon the sea-coasts are called *islands,* in the Hebrew dialect, as hath been observed in the notes upon Isa. xi. 11.

But a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease: without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him.] Or, *But a prince shall cause to cease his* [i. e. Antiochus's] *reproach against him: moreover, he shall cause his reproach to return upon him.* (Compare Hos. xii. 14.) The particle *bilti,* translated *without,* signifies likewise *moreover.* (See Noldius, p. 202.) Lucius Scipio, the Roman consul, made the reproach which Antiochus had offered to the Romans by that invasion, to return upon his own head, by overthrowing him in battle at Mount Sipylus, and forcing him to quit all the conquests he had made in the lesser Asia. From this great victory, whereby Asia was delivered out of the hands of Antiochus, this Scipio had the surname of Asiaticus: this action is at large related by Livy, in the thirty-seventh book of his history.

Ver. 19. *Then he shall turn his face towards the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble, and fall.*] After this great defeat, Antiochus returned back to Antioch, the chief seat and fortress of his kingdom. From whence going into the eastern provinces, to raise the money he was by agreement to pay to the Romans, and attempting to rob the temple at Elymais, for that purpose, he was slain there, and never returned again into Syria.

And not be found.] An expression, denoting utter destruction. (See Job xx. 8. Psal. xxxvii. 36. Ezek. xxvi. 21.)

Ver. 20. *Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom.*] Seleucus Philopator, the son of Antiochus, shall succeed in the kingdom of Syria. (Compare ver. 7.) His father by the treaty of peace was obliged to pay a thousand talents for twelve years together to the Romans: and it was the main business of his son's reign to raise this money upon his subjects. His necessities put him upon offering to seize the treasures which were laid up in the temple at Jerusalem; for which attempt his treasurer Heliodorus was miraculously punished, as the story is told at large, 2 Macc. iii. 4, &c.

But within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle.] Dr. Prideaux, par. ii. Script. Connex. at the end of the second book, translates this sentence, *Within few years he shall be destroyed:* the word *yamim, days,* often signifying years: which sense suits better with the event here foretold. For Seleucus reigned but eleven years, which may properly be called a *few,* in comparison of the thirty-seven years of his father's reign: and he came to his end neither by war abroad, nor by a sedition at home, but was poisoned by Heliodorus his treasurer, who designed to usurp the kingdom to himself, as Appian relates it.

Ver. 21. *And in his estate* [or place] *shall stand up a vile person.*] This is a description of Antiochus Epiphanes, the great persecutor of the Jewish nation and religion. He is called here a *vile person,* not for any want of wit or parts, but for the extravagance of his life and actions, which made many doubt whether he had more of the fool or the madman in him: so, instead of *Epiphanes, the Illustrious,* they called him *Epimanes, the Madman.* (See the Fragments of the twenty-sixth book of Polybius, p. 1492. of the Leyden edition.)

To whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.] The right of succession did belong to Demetrius, the son of Seleucus Philopator, and nephew to Antiochus: but he being sent a hostage to Rome by his father, Antiochus took advantage of his absence, and by courting Eumenes king of Pergamus, and Attalus his brother, with flattering speeches and great promises of friendship and assistance against the Romans, prevailed with them to stand by him against the usurper Heliodorus, and so came peaceably into the possession of the kingdom.

Ver. 22. *And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken.*] Compare ver.

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10. Antiochus, by the assistance of Enmenes and Attalus, shall vanquish all the forces that opposed his pretensions, both those raised by the usurper Heliodorus, and those which Cleopatra, mother to Ptolemy Philometor, had got together to assist her son's right, as being nephew to the deceased king Seleucus.

Yea, also the prince of the covenant.] Onias the high-priest, as several interpret it, whom they suppose to be meant by the *prince of the host*, viii. 11. where the prophet speaks of the persecution of the Jews, of which the same Antiochus was the author. This Onias was deposed and banished by him, and afterward murdered by one of his lieutenants, (2 Macc. iv. 10. 34.) But the following verse inclines me to think, that Ptolemy Philometor is meant here, for he it is with whom *the league* there mentioned is made; and he was the principal person that opposed Antiochus chiefly in his pretension to Cœlo-Syria and Palestine: in whose name a war was carried on against Antiochus, the success of which is foretold in the following verses.

Ver. 23. *And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully*, &c.] This league was made between Ptolemy Philometor and Antiochus, in the lifetime of Cleopatra his sister, and mother of Ptolemy. But when the king of Egypt's ministers demanded the restitution of Cœlo-Syria and Palestine, as belonging to the king of Egypt, by virtue of the marriage-articles between Ptolemy Epiphanes and Cleopatra, Antiochus, without any regard to the league he had made with Philometor his nephew, marched his army towards the frontiers of Egypt, and having obtained a victory over the Egyptian army in a battle fought between Mount Casius and Pelusium, he the next year made himself master of the greatest part of Egypt, Philometor himself falling into his hands: whom he pretended to take care of as his nephew, and to manage his affairs as his tutor and guardian. But this belongs to his second expedition, mentioned ver. 25.

And shall become strong with a small people.] His forces then were but small, as St. Jerome observes out of Sutorius, an historian extant in his time: at least in comparison of those he brought with him in his second expedition. (See the note upon ver. 25.)

Ver. 24. *He shall enter peaceably into the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches.*] By his clemency towards the Egyptians, and civil treatment of Philometor, he shall succeed in his attempts upon Egypt, beyond all his predecessors, the former kings of Syria: *viz.* Antiochus Theus, Seleucus Callinicus, and Antiochus, surnamed the Great, whose actions are specified in the foregoing part of the chapter: all these had a design of getting Egypt into their hands, but none of them ever succeeded so far in the attempts upon it as Epiphanes: who miserably plundered the whole country, and divided the riches of it among his followers. (See 1 Macc. i. 19. St. Jerome in his notes upon the place, and Athenæus, Deipnosophist. lib. v. and x.) Epiphanes was in himself of a profuse and prodigal temper, as the author of the first book of Maccabees, iii. 30. and several other historians agree in giving his character, from whence he gained the name of Munificent and Liberal, as Josephus informs us, Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 11.

And he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds.] He shall not only seize upon the richest parts of Egypt, but shall likewise make himself master of the chief places of strength in that country, keeping Pelusium in his hands, which was the key of Egypt, and laying siege unto Alexandria.

Even for a time.] See ver. 27.

Ver. 25. *And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army*, &c.] The preparations here described belong to Antiochus's second expedition into Egypt, as the author of the second book of Maccabees rightly calls it, v. 1. when he invaded that country with great forces both by sea and land, as that expedition is described, 1 Macc. i. 17, 18. where the historian adds, that *Ptolemy fled from him, and many of his army were wounded to death: thus they got the strong cities in the land of Egypt, and he took the spoils thereof.* After which victory Ptolemy Philometor surrendered himself into Antiochus's hands, as was observed before: whereupon the Alexandrians set up his brother upon the throne, whom they surnamed Euergetes.

Ibid. and Ver. 26. *But he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him. Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him.*] The ill success of Philometor's expedition was chiefly owing to the maleadministration of Lenæus, Eulæus, and other ministers and officers employed under him, and to the treachery of Ptolemy Macron, who forsook Philometor's interest, and went over to Antiochus.

And his army shall overflow.] The arms of Antiochus shall overrun the whole kingdom of Egypt, like a sudden inundation. (See ver. 10. 22.)

Ver. 27. *And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper.*] These two kings shall meet at Memphis, and frequently eat at the same table as friends; Antiochus pretending to take care of the interests of his nephew Philometor, especially after the Alexandrians had proclaimed his brother Euergetes king: and Philometor seemingly confiding in his uncle's protection. But herein they both designed to impose upon each other; Antiochus's design being to seize the kingdom of Egypt to himself, and Philometor's to disappoint those designs of his, by coming to an agreement with Euergetes and the Alexandrians. So this pretended friendship broke out into open war, wherein Antiochus subdued all the country as far as Memphis, and marched to Alexandria to besiege that city.

For yet the end shall be at the time appointed.] These wars and calamities are not yet come to an end, but shall be determined at the time of God's appointment. (See ver. 29. 35, 36. viii. 19.)

Ver. 28. *Then shall he return into his land with great riches.*] Having *taken the spoils of Egypt*, 1 Macc. i. 19. (See the note upon ver. 24.) This return of Antiochus into his own dominions, is the same which is again mentioned at the end of the verse: so the sense might be more clearly expressed thus: *Then shall he return into his land with great riches, having had his heart stirred up against the holy covenant, and having finished his designs, he shall even return into his own land.*

And his heart shall be against the holy covenant.] While Antiochus was in Egypt, a false report was spread over Judea that he was dead, whereupon Jason with his party

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made himself master of Jerusalem, in order to regain the office of high-priest, from which he had been turned out by the fraud of his brother Menelaus. Upon this, Antiochus, supposing the whole nation had revolted from him, marched with all haste out of Egypt into Judea to quell this rebellion: and taking Jerusalem by force of arms, he slew forty thousand of the inhabitants in three days' time, profaned the temple, and took away all its ornaments and treasures. (See 1 Macc. i. 20. 28. 2 Macc. iv. 23, 24. v. 11. 20.)

And he shall do exploits, and return into his own land.] Or, *Having finished* his designs, *he shall return*, &c. (See the last note but one, and compare ver. 30. 32. viii. 12.) After having satisfied his revenge upon the Jews, he shall return to Antioch, the chief seat of his empire, with the spoils of the temple at Jerusalem (besides those of Egypt), amounting to eighteen hundred talents, (2 Macc. v. 21.)

Ver. 29. *At the time appointed he shall return, and come towards the south: but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter.*] Antiochus shall make a third expedition into Egypt, in order to reduce Alexandria: but this attempt shall not be attended with the same success as the two former, for the reason mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 30. *For ships of Chittim shall come against him, therefore he shall be grieved, and return.*] The ambassadors Popilius Lænas and his companions, coming in ships from the coasts of Macedonia and Greece, shall come to him, bringing peremptory demands from the Romans, that he should desist from making war against Egypt, otherwise they would denounce war against him. This message will make him, to his great grief, return out of Egypt, and quit his designs upon that country. *The isles of Chittim*, Jer. ii. 10. Ezek. xxvii. 6. signify the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, so as to comprehend both Italy and Greece.

And have indignation against the holy covenant.] Being enraged at this disappointment, he shall vent his fury and indignation against the Jewish church and nation; and send Apollonius with an army of seventy-two thousand men to lay Jerusalem waste, and cause the temple-worship to cease there: this happened two years after the first taking of Jerusalem by Antiochus. (Compare 1 Macc. i. 29. 40. with 2 Macc. v. 24—26.)

So shall he do, [or, he shall prosper in his undertakings: see ver. 28.] *and shall return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.*] At his return from Egypt, he shall practise with the deserters of the Jewish religion, such as Menelaus and the like apostates, and make use of them as instruments in making converts to heathenism. (See 1 Macc. i. 43. 52. 2 Macc. v. 15.)

Ver. 31. *And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall profane the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice.*] His arms shall so prevail, as to make an entire conquest over the Jews, to profane the temple, and cause the service daily performed there to cease. (Compare viii. 11. 1 Macc. i. 39, &c. 2 Macc. v. 2. 5.) The temple is called the *sanctuary of strength*, because it was a token of the Divine protection, being the place of God's especial residence. (See Psal. lxxxviii. 61. xcvi. 6. Ezek. xxiv. 21. 25.)

And they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.] Idols are commonly called *abominations* in Scripture, as hath been observed upon ix. 27. In agreement with that usage of the word, *the abomination of desolation* must signify the *idol* which was placed upon the altar of burnt-offerings. (See 1 Macc. i. 54. 59.) As the temple itself was dedicated by the heathen to Jupiter Olympius, 2 Macc. vi. 2. so the idol was probably the image of Jupiter. This idol is said to *make desolate*, because it banished the true worship of God and his worshippers from the place. (See 1 Macc. iv. 38.)

Ver. 32. *And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall be corrupt by flatteries.*] Such as Jason and Menelaus, who had bought the high-priesthood of him, and became his instruments in spoiling and profaning the temple, (see 2 Macc. iv. 13, 14. v. 15.) and such other apostates whom the king by fair words and promises brought over to comply with his designs. (See 1 Macc. i. 52. 2 Macc. vi. 21.)

But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.] Or, *shall prosper.* (See ver. 28. 30.) They that have a sense of their duty shall courageously resist these attempts, and behave themselves valiantly. (See 1 Macc. i. 62. ii. 41—43. iii. 43, &c. 2 Macc. v. 27.)

Ver. 33. *They that understand among the people shall instruct many.*] They that know their duty, and are zealous in doing it, will arm others against the temptations whereby the wicked would persuade them to forsake the true religion. Such were Mattathias and his family, 1 Macc. ii. 1, &c. Eleazar, 2 Macc. vi. 18, 19. and the mother and her seven children, 2 Macc. vii.

Yet they shall fall by the sword.] It was death for any person to observe the law, and disobey the king's command: and accordingly many suffered for their constancy in adhering to their religion. (See 1 Macc. i. 50. 63. 2 Macc. vi. 9—11. 19. 30. vii. 1, &c.)

And by flame.] This was remarkably verified in the torments inflicted upon the seven *brethren* recorded 2 Macc. vii. 3. 5. Burning alive was a punishment usual in those countries. (See iii. 6.)

By captivity and by spoil.] By banishment and loss of goods.

Many days.] For three years and a half, as the time is computed by Josephus, reckoning from the first beginning of the persecution till the sanctuary was cleansed. (See the note upon vii. 25.) The persecution may be enlarged to a longer time, if we date it from the beginning of this apostacy. (See the note upon viii. 14.)

Ver. 34. *Now, when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help.*] That of Judas Maccabeus and his followers. (See 1 Macc. iii. 10, &c. iv. 14. 2 Macc. viii. 1.)

But many shall cleave to them with flatteries.] Not sincerely: such were Joseph and Azarias, who engaged in the common cause out of ambition, and a desire of fame: (1 Macc. v. 56. 62.) such were they who after their death were found with idols consecrated under their clothes, 2 Macc. xii. 40. Such was Rhodocus, who disclosed their secrets to the enemy, ibid. xiii. 21.

Ver. 35. *And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white.*] Some of the principal men for piety and knowledge shall fall under this persecution, (see ver. 33.) for the trial of their faith and patience, and to purge them from lesser corruptions, which are the usual effects of prosperity. (Compare 1 Pet.

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i. 7.) The persecutions which shall befal the church under antichrist, are designed for the same purpose, as appears by comparing xii. 10. with the words here: Antiochus's persecution being a type and figure of that under antichrist. (See the note upon viii. 14. 23, 24. and the thirty-first verse here, with xii. 11.)

Even to the time of the end: for it is yet for a time appointed.] Till the time appointed by God for an end of those calamities shall come. (Compare ver. 27. viii. 19.) Mr. Mede refers the latter part of the sentence to the following verse, and so connects the following prophecy with what went before, to this sense: "This persecution shall last to the time of the end: for as yet for a time appointed a king shall do according to his will." (See his Works, p. 903.) [To the same sense the Vulgar Latin translates it, *Quia adhuc aliud tempus erit.*]

Ver. 36. *And the king shall do according to his will.*] Antiochus was a type and forerunner of antichrist, as hath been observed: so the angel makes a sudden transition from the type to the antitype, or the description of antichrist himself: the words in the four following verses being not at all applicable to Antiochus. And several passages in the twelfth chapter shew that some parts of this prophecy belong to the *latter times*, or ages, of the world. (See Dr. Prideaux, par. ii. book iii. towards the end.) We may observe such a sudden transition in our Saviour's discourse, Matt. xxiv. from a prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, to a description of the general judgment.

The [or, *a*] *king shall do according to his will;* [see ver. 16.] *and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods.*] Compare vii. 25. viii. 11. 25. St. Paul describes antichrist almost in the same words, 2 Thess. ii. 4. *Who exalteth himself above all that is called God.* (Compare Rev. xiii. 5, 6.)

And shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished, &c.] He shall succeed in his attempts of aggrandizing himself, and asserting his own supremacy, till the time of God's indignation be accomplished; (compare ver. 27. 35.) *i. e. for a time, times, and a half,* as it is expressed, vii. 25. xii. 7.

Ver. 37. *Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers.*] Antichrist is described as the seventh head of the Roman empire, Rev. xvii. 11. and as the sixth head revived, Rev. xiii. 3. 14. But before he arrived at his dominion, the worship of the heathen gods, which had prevailed under the sixth head, was destroyed by the Christian emperors.

Nor the desire of women.] Mr. Mede hath observed in his Works, p. 668. that the expression properly signifies *a desire of wives, i. e.* of a married state, which should be discountenanced by the king here described. In like manner, *forbidding to marry* is a character of some antichristian teachers, 1 Tim. iv. 3. The word *desire* signifies that affection which married persons have for each other. (See Gen. iii. 16. Cant. vii. 10. Ezek. xxiv. 16.)

Nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.] He will dispense with the laws of God, and make religion subservient to his own greatness and interest.

Ver. 38. *But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces.*] I prefer Mr. Mede's translation of this and the following verse, as giving a clearer sense and more agreeable to the original: this verse he thus interprets: *But* (or for) *together with God in his seat shall he honour Mauzzims.* This last word, both the Greek, the Vulgar Latin, and several other translations, retain without interpreting it. The word imports protection, or a protector, the abstract being often used for the concrete, (see Psal. xxvii. 1. xxviii. 8. xxxi. 3. 5.) and is often rendered ὑπερασπιστὴς, by the LXX. The same learned person supposes the word here to denote saints and angels, in whom the votaries of the church of Rome place a great trust and confidence, and fly to their protection in their distress, and assign to some of them the patronage of whole countries, as is more fully expressed in the following verse. To these, saith this interpretation of the text, shall *the king* here described give honour and worship in the places dedicated to the service of that God whom his fathers knew not, as it follows.

And a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, &c.] Mr. Mede translates the sentence thus: *Even together with the god whom his fathers knew not* (see ver. 37.) *shall he honour* [*them*] *with gold and silver;* &c. *i. e.* with the most costly ornaments.

And pleasant things.] The Hebrew word *hamudoth,* is used by the prophet Isaiah, (xliv. 9.) to signify the costly ornaments wherewith the heathens decked their images.

Grotius and some others explain this verse of Antiochus's setting up the statue of Jupiter Olympius within the precincts of the temple, (1 Macc. i. 54. 2 Macc. vi. 1.) But I do not apprehend how he can be called *a god whom Antiochus's father knew not,* since he was worshipped under the name of Baal by the Phœnicians many ages before.

Ver. 39. *Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god.*] According to Mr. Mede, the words should be thus translated: *And he shall make the strong holds* [or fortresses] *of the Mauzzims jointly with* [or to] *the strange* [or foreign] *god: i. e.* He shall consecrate his temples and religious places jointly to the honour of God and of his saints. Temples may fitly be called *strong holds,* or places of defence, as being, in the opinion of those that pay their devotions there, the earnests of that protection which they expect in answer to their prayers. So the Jewish temple is called *the sanctuary of strength,* ver. 31. of this chapter, the word *Mauz* being used in both places. (Compare Psal. xxvii. 5.)

A *strange god* in the Old Testament, usually signifies a false god: but the phrase being here used in opposition to the gods who were worshipped by the gentile ancestors of the Romans, it may properly denote the true God, whom the Athenians called by the name of a strange God, Acts xvii. 23. For the entire inscription of that altar St. Paul takes notice of there, is supposed to be, *To the unknown and strange God:* whom St. Paul tells them, *they ignorantly worshipped,* as not knowing him to be the one supreme God.

And he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.] Or, *Distribute the earth for a reward: i. e.* he shall assign whole provinces and kingdoms to the protection of several saints and angels, to whom they may have recourse as their patrons: and shall give them suitable titles and honour, as a reward of their care and protection.

Ver. 40. *And at the time of the end.*] At God's appointed time; (see ver. 35.) or, in the latter days. (See xii. 8.)

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Shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him.] They that understand this and the following verses of Antiochus Epiphanes and Ptolemy Philometor, suppose that the angel recapitulates what he said before at large, from ver. 23. It is certain these and the following words cannot be explained of any farther wars between the kings of Egypt and Syria: for Antiochus never made any farther attempt upon Egypt, after that peremptory demand of the Roman ambassador, requiring him to desist from that enterprise, mentioned ver. 30. Whereupon venting all his indignation against the Jews upon that disappointment, he afterward took a journey into Persia, where he died. (1 Macc. vi. 1. 6. 2 Macc. ix. 1. 28.)

These difficulties attending the common interpretation, Mr. Mede, p. 674. and 816. by the *king of the south* understands the Saracens, and by the *king of the north* the Turks, who should both at different times afflict the western parts of the world, where he supposes the seat of antichrist to be: the former being denoted by the *locusts*, Rev. ix 3. and the latter by the *Euphratean horsemen* described in the same chapter, ver. 15, &c. as *two woes* or *plagues* sent to chastise the corrupt part of Christendom, ver. 12. The Saracen is called the *king of the south*, because that people were inhabitants of Arabia Felix, which lay southward of Palestine, whereas the Turks were originally Tartars or Scythians.

Shall come against him as a whirlwind.] Compare Isa. xxi. 1. Zech. ix. 14.

With chariots and horsemen.] This answers the description given of them in the forementioned place, Rev. ix. 16. And the army of Gog and Magog, which may probably mean the Turks, is described as consisting principally of horsemen, Ezek. xxxviii. 4. 15. the strength of the Turkish armies consists chiefly in the number of their cavalry: which makes them carry a horse-tail before their chief officers, as an ensign of honour.

And shall overflow and pass over.] See ver. 10. 22.

Ver. 41. *He shall also enter into the glorious land.*] The land of Judea. (See ver. 16. and viii. 9.) If we understand this of Antiochus Epiphanes, his invasion of Judea hath been described at large, ver. 31, &c. If we expound it of the Turk, with Mr. Mede, he hath had possession of the Holy Land for several ages.

But these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.] Grotius expounds the words to this sense; That Antiochus did not make war upon these people, because they readily complied with his commands, and joined with him against the Jews: for which cause Judas Maccabeus made war upon them, 1 Macc. v. 3, 4. Mr. Mede understands the words of Arabia Petræa, whose inhabitants were never subdued by the Turks.

Ver. 42, 43. *And the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt.*] If we understand this of Antiochus, the notes upon ver. 24. shew how it has been completed. Mr. Mede expounds the words of the final conquest of Egypt by the Turks, A. C. 1517. after it had held out against them for a great while under the Mamalukes.

Ver. 43. *And the Lybians and Ethiopians shall be at his steps.*] Shall readily obey him, and follow his commands. (Compare Exod. xi. 8. Judg. iv. 10. 1 Kings xx. 10.) Cushim is here rightly translated Ethiopians, being joined with Lybians or Africans, as they are in some other places. (See 2 Chron. xii. 3. xvi. 8. and the note upon Jer. xiii. 23.) St. Jerome observes upon the place, that it is not recorded of Antiochus Epiphanes, that he ever marched so far as into these countries, or had any footing there. So Mr. Mede more probably expounds the place of the Turks, who have extended their dominions into these parts of the world.

Ver. 44. *But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him.*] This Dr. Prideaux explains of Antiochus thus: That in the east, *i. e.* in Persia, his taxes were not duly paid, which engaged him to take a journey into Persia, to gather up the arrears due to him there: and in the north Artaxias, king of Armenia, had revolted from him. They that understand the words of later times, suppose them not yet fulfilled, and so not capable of a certain interpretation.

Ver. 45. *And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain.*] If we apply the words to Antiochus, the sense will be, that he shall place the ensigns of his sovereignty as a conqueror at Jerusalem: (compare ver. 41. and Psal. xlviii. 2.) which city was placed upon a mountainous situation, between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Sodom, near the middle of Judea, which had those two seas for its boundaries. (See Joel ii. 20. Zech. xiv. 8.) To *plant the tabernacle of his palace* or pavilion at Jerusalem, is an expression denoting an entire conquest, and is applied to Nebuchadnezzar in that sense, Jer. xliii. 10. where the Hebrew word *shaphrir*, translated *pavilion*, is expounded in the Chaldee paraphrase by *apadan*, the word used in the text here. The *holy mountain* oftentimes denotes the Christian church in the prophetical writings: (see the note upon Isa. ii. 2.) and if we apply this text to antichrist, we may compare it with the boasts of that proud prince, who is supposed to be the figure of antichrist, Isa. xiv. 13. where he saith, *I will sit in the midst of the congregation, in the sides of the north:* and we may explain both these texts by those words of St. Paul, who describes antichrist as *sitting in the temple of God*, 2 Thess. ii. 4. meaning the Christian church, as that phrase commonly signifies in St. Paul's writings. (See 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 20. 1 Tim. iii. 15.)

Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.] He *shall be broken without hand: i. e.* by a judgment immediately inflicted by God, as is said of Antiochus, viii. 25. The like judgment is denounced against antichrist, 2 Thess. ii. 8.

CHAP. XII.

See the Argument of the tenth chapter.

Ver. 1. *AT that time shall Michael stand up, that great prince that standeth for the children of thy people.*] See x. 13. 21. He, as the protector of the Jewish nation, *contended with the devil about the body of Moses*, as St. Jude informs us from some ancient writing or tradition, Jude ver. 9. He is probably that archangel who shall make that awful summons to the day of judgment, mentioned 1 Thess. iv. 16. and as several angels will be em-

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ployed *in gathering together God's elect*, Matt. xxiv. 31. so we may collect from this place of Daniel, that it will be his province to assemble those of the Jewish nation.

And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.] The Scriptures speak of the extraordinary appearances of God's kingdom, as ushered in by great tribulations: (see Isa. xxvi. 20, 21. Jer. xxx. 7. Matt. xxiv. 21.) so the saints are said to have *come out of great tribulation*, Rev. vi. 14. This some learned men suppose to relate to the times of the *last vial*, Rev. xvi. 18. when *there was a great earthquake*, saith the text, *such as was not since men were upon the earth.*

And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.] That is, in the book of life. (Compare Exod. xxxii. 32. Psal. lxix. 28. Ezek. xiii. 9. Philip. iv. 3. Rev. iii. 5. xiii. 5. xx. 12.) The phrase alludes to the registers that used to be kept of the members of any city or corporation: the privileges of which society none can lay a claim to but those whose names are found in such registers.

Ver. 2. *And many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake*, &c.] A plain description of the general resurrection both of the just and unjust: the belief of which St. Paul speaks of, as grounded upon the writings of the law and the prophets, Acts xxiv. 15, 16. xxvi. 6—8. and there is no text so full to that purpose as this before us. The word *many* is sometimes equivalent to *all*, as hath been observed in the notes upon ix. 27.

And some to shame and everlasting contempt.] In this life men may so far harden themselves in sin as to be past shame: but this shame shall be doubled upon them in the world to come, when they shall be convicted of their sins in such a manner, as neither to be able to deny or excuse them; and shall thereupon become objects of scorn and contempt to God and all his saints. And *as a thief is ashamed when he is found*, or taken in the very fact, *so shall the wicked be ashamed* and confounded at that time, as the prophet Jeremiah makes the comparison, Jer. ii. 26.

Ver. 3. *And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament*, &c.] The words allude to xi. 33. 35. and import, that they who have been the great *lights* of the world, who have instructed others by their doctrine, and confirmed them in the truth by their sufferings and example, shall have an eminently glorious reward at the day of judgment. So the martyrs are described as having a share in the *first resurrection*, Rev. xx. 4. Our Saviour's words plainly allude to this text, Matt. xiii. 43.

Ver. 4. *But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.*] To *shut up* a book, and to *seal it*, is the same with *concealing* the sense of it, and hiding its meaning from common understandings, as hath been observed upon viii. 26. And the same reason is assigned in both places for this command, *viz.* because there would be a long interval of time between the date of the prophecy and the final accomplishment of it. (Compare x. 1. with both these texts.) But the nearer that time approached, the more light should men have for understanding the prophecy itself, as is implied in the following words.

Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.] Many shall be inquisitive after truth, and keep correspondence with others for their better information: and the gradual completion of this and other prophecies, shall direct observing readers to form a judgment concerning those particulars which are yet to be fulfilled.

From hence we may learn the reason of the obscurity of several prophecies in Scripture: and it may be observed, that generally those prophecies are most obscure, the time of whose completion is farthest off. For the same reason, in interpreting the prophecies relating to the *latter times* of the world, the judgment of the *latter* writers is to be preferred before that of the *ancients;* because the moderns living nearer the times when the events were to be fulfilled, had surer marks to guide them in their expositions. Bishop Andrews hath a remarkable passage to this purpose, in his Tortura Torti, p. 186. in the following words: "Neque vero mirum, si ista quæ dixi [de Roma sede antichristi], tam vel claram, vel certam interpretationem in scriptis patrum non habeant. Signatus adhuc erat liber prophetiæ: verissimum autem verbum est, ænigma esse prophetiam omnem, cum nondum completa est: ut quamvis prisci illi omni genere charismatum, vitæ vero sanctimonia longo nos intervallo superarint, mirari tamen non debeat quis, si non illis tum adeo explicita omnia fuerint, quam nobis per Dei gratiam jam sunt, qui consummatam jam prophetiam illam quotidie oculis usurpamus." *It is no wonder that what I have said concerning Rome's being the seat of antichrist, described by St. John, is not clearly asserted in the commentaries of the ancient fathers upon the Revelation; that book of prophecy was then sealed: and it is a certain rule, that every prophecy is a riddle before its completion: so that though we grant those ancient worthies to have far exceeded us, both in gifts and in holiness, yet it is not to be wondered if they had not such clear apprehensions concerning this matter, as we of later times have, by the grace of God, attained, who see this prophecy every day fulfilled in our sight.*

Ver. 5. *Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two*, &c.] I saw two other angels on the bank side of the river Hiddekel, attending upon that supreme angel, or the Son of God, who appeared in that glorious form described x. 4, 5. (See the note upon x. 10.)

Ver. 6. *And one* [of them] *said to the man clothed with linen, which was upon the waters of the river.*] Or rather, *Above the waters of the river.* (See the note upon x. 5.)

How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?] So the inferior angel inquires of the superior concerning the accomplishment of the events foretold, viii. 13.

Ver. 7. *And I heard the man clothed in linen—when he held up his right hand and left hand unto the heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever.*] *Holding up the hand* was a ceremony anciently used in taking an oath. (See Gen. xiv. 22. Deut. xxxii. 40.) St. John plainly alludes to this place, Rev. x. 5, 6. and by the description he gives of the angel, that *he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth*, ver. 2. he can be no other than Christ, who had *all power given to him in heaven and in earth.*

That it shall be for a time, times, and a half.] Or, *The dividing of time*, as it is expressed in the Chaldee, (vii. 25.) which contains, in the literal sense, *three years and a half:* during which time the public sacrifices and worship were discontinued during the persecution of Antiochus, the figure of antichrist. (See the note there.) But this line of time is expressly applied to the antichristian persecution, Rev. xii. 14. and is farther explained in that chapter,

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ver. 6. by *twelve hundred and sixty days:* which is *three years and a half,* reckoning *three hundred and sixty days* to a year. (See the note upon ix. 24.) And if we suppose each *day* to signify a *year,* which is the prophetical sense of the word *day,* this period of time denotes twelve hundred and sixty years. (See the note upon viii. 14. ix. 24.)

And when he shall have accomplished to disperse the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.] When the Jews' dispersions shall be ended, then the most remarkable events contained in this prophecy shall be fulfilled. The restoration of the Jewish nation is foretold by the prophets as one of those signal events to be brought to pass in *the latter days,* or times, of the world. (See Isa. xi. 11. xxvii. 12, 13. lxvi. 10, &c. Jer. iii. 18. xxiii. 5. 8. xxx. 3, &c. xxxi. 1. l. 4. Ezek. xx. 38. 41. xxviii. 25. xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 24, &c. xxxvii. 12, &c. Hos. i. 11. iii. 5. Joel iii. 1. Amos ix. 14, 15. Obad. ver. 17, &c. Micah vii. 14, 15. Zeph. iii. 14. Zech. viii. 7. 13. x. 6. xii. 10. xiv. 8, &c.) Mr. Mede makes the text before us parallel with those words of Christ, Luke xxi. 24. *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the gentiles, until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled: i. e.* till the times of the fourth monarchy be expired. (See his Works, p. 709. 744. 753.)

Of the holy people.] See viii. 24.

Ver. 8. *And I heard, but I understood not.*] I did not understand what time was allotted for bringing to pass this event, *viz.* the restoration of the Jewish nation.

Then said I, O my lord, what shall be the end of these things?] See ver. 6. Or, as Mr. Mede translates the words, *What are these latter times* thou speakest of? (Compare x. 14.)

Ver. 9. *And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for thy words are closed up, and sealed till the time of the end.*] Be content with what has been made known to thee: (see ver. 13.) for the fuller explication of this prophecy is deferred till the time of its accomplishment draws near. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 10. *Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried.*] The persecutions of the faithful are designed for the trial of their faith, and purifying their lives. (See xi. 35.)

But the wicked shall do wickedly.] And for those that are obstinately bent upon following the corrupt practices to which they have been accustomed, neither the exhortations nor threatenings of God's word, nor the judgments they see overtake others, will prevail with them to forsake their evil practices. (See Rev. ix. 20. xxii. 10.)

And none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.] The holy writers often repeat this maxim: That an honest and good heart is a necessary qualification for the receiving and understanding Divine truths. (See Isa. vi. 9, &c. Hos. xiv. 9. John viii. 47. x. 27. xviii. 37.)

Ver. 11. *And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate shall be set up.*] The same expressions made use of to describe Antiochus's persecution, xi. 31. are here applied to the desolations made by antichrist, of which the former was a figure. (See the note upon viii. 14. 23, 24. xi. 26.)

Ibid. and Ver. 12. *There shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five-and-thirty days.*] Here the time allotted for the persecutions of antichrist, till the church be entirely cleansed and purified, is enlarged from one thousand two hundred and sixty days, denoted by *time, times, and a half,* ver. 7. to one thousand two hundred and ninety days; and then to one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. Mr. Mede wisely forbears giving an interpretation of these particulars, telling us that time would make them manifest. (See his Works, p. 674.) However, we may venture to say, in general, that there may be a considerable space of time between the fall of antichrist, and the last judgments which shall be inflicted upon him. Some learned men, who have compared the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation together, suppose the interval of time between the one thousand two hundred and sixty days, and the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days, to be included within the times of the *seventh trumpet,* during which the *seven last plagues* will be *fulfilled.* (See Rev. xi. 15. 18. and xv. 1. 7, 8.)

Ver. 12. *Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh,* &c.] Some expositors suppose St. John to allude to these words, Rev. xx. 4. where he saith, *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection:* in like manner the prophet here pronounceth those blessed, who, after a patient expectation of the fulfilling of God's promises, come to have a share in the enjoyment of them. (Compare ver. 1—3. of this chapter.)

Ver. 13. *But go thou thy way, Daniel, till the end be.*] Be content with that state and condition which God shall appoint thee, till the finishing of all these wonderful events, (ver. 4. 6. 8.)

For thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.] The prophet was now ninety years of age, at least: (see the note upon x. 1.) so he could not expect to live much longer; and the angel here tells him, that after his life was ended, he should rest in peace with the souls of the righteous, (compare Isa. lvii. 2. Rev. xiv. 13.) and at the resurrection, foretold ver. 2. of this chapter, he should obtain a share of that happiness which is reserved for the faithful servants of God, and shall be actually conferred upon them at the conclusion of the times here specified, ver. 12.

The righteous are said *to stand in the judgment of the last day,* (Psal. i. 5.) and to *have boldness in the day of judgment,* (1 John ii. 28. iv. 17.) whereas the wicked are described as *hiding themselves for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when the great day of his wrath is come,* (Isa. ii. 10. Rev. vi. 15—17.)

The word *lot* signifies a state or condition of life, Jer. xiii. 25. and is often used for an inheritance, because the land of Canaan was divided by lot among the Israelites; as the promised land was a figure of that better and heavenly country, which all the good men among the Jews expected, so here it signifies that heavenly inheritance which belongs to *the heirs of salvation.*

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HOSEA.

A

GENERAL PREFACE

TO THE

MINOR PROPHETS.

THE twelve minor Prophets were always comprised in one book, called the *book of the Prophets*, by St. Stephen, Acts vii. 42. and the *book of the twelve Prophets*, by St. Cyprian, Epist. 59. The son of Sirach speaks of them under one and the same character, Ecclus. xlix. 12. *Let the bones of the twelve Prophets flourish out of their place.* And both Jewish and Christian writers, particularly Josephus (lib. i. contr. App.) and St. Jerome, (Prolog. Galeat.) when they mention the canonical books of the Old Testament to be in number twenty-two (a number equal to the letters of the Jewish alphabet), comprehended the twelve minor Prophets under one book.

These twelve Prophets are not placed exactly in the order of time when they lived, either in the Hebrew or Greek copies; for Jonah, who was the eldest of them, is placed the sixth in order both in the Hebrew and Greek Bibles: there being in other respects some little difference between them: the series of them standing thus in the Greek, Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonas: but no variation as to the rest.

Hosea, who is placed the first in order, is as ancient as any of them, except Jonah: having prophesied before the captivity of the ten tribes, to whom he chiefly directs his prophecy, and threatens them with a sudden destruction for their great and crying sins, which he, in all probability, lived to see brought upon them.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

Under the figure of a wife living in whoredom, and bearing illegitimate children, is represented the great idolatry of the ten tribes, which provoked God to cast them off utterly: yet with the promise of repairing that loss, by bringing in the gentiles into the church: and afterward of uniting Israel and Judah under one head, the Messias. The prophet does likewise foretell the extinction of Jehu's family.

Ver. 1. *THE word of the Lord that came to Hosea in the days of Uzziah—and of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.*] Jeroboam the son of Joash, who was the second king of Israel of that name, and was contemporary with Uzziah, is here mentioned, because this prophecy does chiefly concern the kingdom of Israel. And there was no need of mentioning the names of any of the succeeding kings of Israel, because Hosea mentioning his prophesying from the times of Uzziah to Hezekiah, it follows from thence, that he prophesied all the reigns of those kings of Israel who succeeded Jeroboam, the reign of Hezekiah bearing date from the third year of Hoshea, the last of those kings. From whence we may conclude, that Hosea, who often foretold the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, lived to see an end put to that kingdom by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, as we read 2 Kings xviii. 10.

Ver. 2. *The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea.*] The first prophecy or message which came from God to Hosea, was as follows.

Go, take thee a wife of whoredoms, and children of whoredoms, &c.] This may be properly understood of a wife, who after marriage should prove false to her marriage vow: this would make the case more exactly parallel with that of the Israelites, who had departed from the true God, and polluted themselves with idolatry, called often in Scripture by the names of whoredom and fornication. (See particularly the sixteenth and twenty-third chapters of Ezekiel.) Taking the words in this sense, there will be no inconvenience in supposing this relation to be literally true, and not barely a figure or parallel, as some commentators understand it, and particularly the Chaldee paraphrast, who thus expresses the sense: *Go, utter a prophecy against the rebellious city.* This question is handled at large in Dr. Pocock's commentary upon this place.

Ver. 3. *So he went and took Gomer—who conceived, and bare a son.*] This probably might be a legitimate son, according to the sense given of the foregoing verse. (See the following words.)

Ver. 4. *And the Lord said unto him, Call his name Jezreel.*] The word signifies either *the arm of God*, or *the seed of God:* and is taken in both those senses in the following verses. It does not seem proper to make an illegitimate child the earnest of such acts of God's justice or mercy, as are implied in any of those senses.

For yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu.] The blood of Joram the son of Ahab, whom, with all the rest of Ahab's family, Jehu slew in Jezreel. (See 2 Kings x. 11.) God made Jehu the instrument of destroying the house of Ahab, (ibid. ver. 10. 30.) but yet he was prompted to it by his own ambition and cruelty, without any regard to God's glory, whose worship he forsook, and maintained that idolatry which Jeroboam had first set up.

Wicked men are called a *sword in the hand of God,*

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Psal. xvii. 11. to execute his judgments upon those who are as bad or worse than themselves: but when they have fulfilled God's purposes, he often punishes them for the outrages they have committed, which their own evil dispositions prompted them to do, but it was God's providence allotted upon whom the execution should fall.

And will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.] This may be a prophecy of the destruction of the whole kingdom of Israel, which was in a declining condition from the death of Jeroboam; but it rather denotes the ceasing of the kingdom in his family, according to God's promise to Jehu, *That his children should sit upon the throne of Israel to the fourth generation,* 2 Kings xv. 12.

Ver. 5. *And it shall come to pass at that day.*] Quickly after the extinction of Jehu's family: *at that day,* in the prophets, commonly signifies a season marked out by Providence for some extraordinary act of God's justice or mercy. (See the note upon Isa. iv. 2.)

I will break the bow [*i. e.* the armies, or strength] *of Jezreel.*] This is commonly understood of that invasion of Israel which Tiglath-pileser made, and is mentioned 2 Kings xv. 29. wherein he subdued a great part of the kingdom, and carried the inhabitants away captive; the Assyrian army having routed the Israelites in the valley of Jezreel, which is mentioned Josh. xvii. 16. xix. 18. Judg. vi. 33. as being in the border of Issachar. But the expression may mean no more than the place where *God's arm,* or strength, will appear in subduing the Israelites, which is one signification of the word *Jezreel.* So Joel calls the place where God will gather all nations *the valley of Jehoshaphat,* the word signifying *the valley of God's judgment,* iii. 2. 12.

Ver. 6. *I will no more* [or, no longer: see Noldius, p. 682.] *have mercy upon the house of Israel, but will utterly take them away.*] I will carry them into captivity, never to return any more to their own land: (2 Kings xvii. 6. 23.) and will utterly put an end to that people, considered as a distinct kingdom from Judah. (Compare ix. 15. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 7. *But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God,* &c.] I will deliver the kingdom of Judah out of the hands of Sennacherib, not by any human means, but by the stroke of an angel destroying his whole army. (See 2 Kings xix. 35. compare Zech. iv. 6.) Interpreters observe the expression may allude to the salvation, to be accomplished by the Messias, who is God as well as man; the Lord being spoken of as a distinct person from the principal Author of the salvation here promised. (Compare Isa. xxxv. 4. xl. 9.) To this sense the Chaldee paraphrases it, *I will save them by the Word of the Lord their God:* a title he elsewhere gives to the Messias. (See the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield's Defence of Christianity, chap. 2. p. 70.)

Ver. 9. *Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.*] Since you have disowned the covenant relation I had to you, by apostatizing from my service, I will no more own you for my people, nor continue my protection over you. (Compare Lev. xxvi. 12. Ezek. xi. 20. xiv. 11.)

Ver. 10. *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea,* &c.] Though God casts off the ten tribes, yet he will, in due time, supply their loss, by bringing in great numbers of *true Israelites* into the church, not only of the Jews, but also of the gentiles, and making them, who before were *strangers to the covenants of promise, fellow-heirs* with the Jews. (See Rom. ix. 25. 29. 1 Pet. ii. 10.)

Ver. 11. *Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together,* &c.] When the *fulness of the gentiles is come in,* this will be a means of converting the Jews, and bringing them into the church. (See Rom. ix. 25, 26.)

And shall appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land.] Upon this will follow the restoration of the Jewish nation, when they shall return into their own country, from the several dispersions where they were scattered, and become one nation or kingdom under the Messias, their head and king. (Compare Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 22. Micah ii. 13.) Israel and Judah are joined together where this general restoration is foretold. (See the note upon Jer. iii. 18.)

For great shall be the day of Jezreel.] The word *Jezreel* signifies both the *seed of God* and the *arm of God,* as was before observed: in both senses, great will be the day of Jezreel: God will signally exert his arm, and shew his power, in the restoration of his ancient people, and subduing their enemies: and thereby a numerous offspring of the seed of Abraham shall be added to the church.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet reproves the ten tribes for their ingratitude to God, their great benefactor, and giving the glory of all the good things they possessed to their idols; for which he threatens them with severe judgments, yet gives them some hopes of obtaining mercy and reconciliation.

Ver. 1. *SAY ye to your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah.*] Several interpreters join this verse with the foregoing chapter, to this sense: When that general restoration of the Jewish nation shall come to pass, ye may alter your style in speaking to those of your brethren and sisters, whom I had before disowned, and you may call them my people, and such as have obtained mercy. (See ver. 23.) This interpretation gives the plainest and easiest sense. However, other expositors join this verse with the following words, and translate it thus, *Ye that are my people, and have obtained mercy, speak to your brethren and sisters, and plead with your mother.* But this sense I think not so agreeable with the context, which threatens the ten tribes with the miseries of their ensuing captivity.

Ver. 2. *Plead with your mother, plead; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband.*] The words are directed to those pious persons that still remained among the ten tribes, who are required to reprove, and use their best endeavours to reform, that general corruption which the nation had contracted by its idolatry: whereby they have broken the covenant I had made with them, (frequently expressed in the prophets by a marriage-contract: see Jer. iii. 1. 8. xxxi. 32.) and made a separation or divorce between them and me. (See Isa. l. 1.)

Let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts.] Let her leave off her idolatries, usually expressed by the fondness

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and caresses which pass between unchaste lovers. (Compare Ezek. xvi. 25, &c.)

Ver. 3. *Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day wherein she was born,* &c.] The punishment commonly inflicted upon harlots was to strip them naked, and expose them to the world. (See ver. 10. Jer. xiii. 22. 26. Ezek. xvi. 37.) So God threatens to deal with the nation or kingdom of Israel: to deliver her into the hands of her enemies, who shall strip her of all her wealth and ornaments, and carry her away naked into captivity, (see ver. 9.) in as forlorn and desolate a condition as she was in during her bondage in Egypt. (See Ezek. xvi. 4. compare likewise ver. 37. 41. of the same chapter.)

And make her as a wilderness, &c.] The state of captivity is fitly compared to being placed in a wilderness, in want of common necessaries. (Compare Ezek. xix. 13.)

Ver. 4. *And I will not have mercy on her children; for they be the children of whoredoms.*] As an injured husband has no regard for the children his wife has brought by another man: so neither will I take pity of thy children which are trained up to practise thy idolatries.

Ver. 5. *For she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water,* &c.] By *lovers* are meant, in the first place, the idols with whom the Israelites committed spiritual fornication: (see Jer. iii. 1.) and then the idolatrous nations, whose alliance the Israelites courted, and in order to it practised their idolatries. (See ver. 10. and the note upon Ezek. xvi. 37.) The word may be understood here in both senses: they ascribed all the plenty they enjoyed chiefly to the favour of the idol-gods which they worshipped; (see Jer. xliv. 17.) and then they placed their trust and confidence in the confederacies they had made with their neighbouring idolaters, and thought the peace and plenty they possessed was very much owing to their protection and alliance.

Ver. 6. *I will hedge up her way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.*] I will bring her under great calamities, that she shall not know which way to turn herself, or get out of them. (Compare Job iii. 23. xix. 8. Lam. iii. 7. 9.)

Ver. 7. *And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them.*] She shall seek for help of her idols, but shall receive none.

She shall seek them, but she shall not find them.] A proverbial expression, denoting lost labour, when persons receive no assistance from those whose help they implore. (See v. 6. Prov. i. 28.)

Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then it was better with me than now.] Her afflictions will bring her to a sense of her duty, and the happiness she enjoyed as long as she cleaved steadfastly unto God. (See v. 15. and compare Luke xv. 18.)

Ver. 8. *For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.*] Or, bestowed upon Baal. (Compare 2 Chron. xxiv. 7.) *She did not consider,* so the first part of the sentence should be translated, (compare vii. 9.) that all the necessaries she enjoyed, as well as her riches and ornaments, were my gift, which yet she ungratefully bestowed upon the service of her idols. (Compare viii. 4. and Ezek. xvi. 17—19.)

Ver. 9. *Therefore I will return, and take away my corn in the time thereof,* &c.] For a punishment of her ingratitude, I will take away the good things I have given her: at the very season when she expects to receive the fruits of the earth, her enemies shall invade her, and destroy them.

I will recover [or take away] *my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness.*] They shall strip her of her very clothes, and carry her away captive: without leaving her any covering for her nakedness. (See the note upon Isa. iii. 17.)

Ver. 10. *And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers,* &c.] The filthiness of her idolatries shall appear by the punishments I will inflict upon her, which shall be so remarkable, that it shall be taken notice of by the idolatrous nations round about her. (See ver. 5. and Ezek. xvi. 37. xxiii. 29.)

Ver. 11. *And I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast-days,* &c.] The public festivals are frequently called days of joy and gladness: the observation of several of these festivals was retained in the worship of the golden calves: (see 1 Kings xii. 32. Amos viii. 5.) God here threatens them, that, under their captivity, they should have no opportunity to celebrate them, since they had so much abused those solemn seasons of Divine worship. (See ix. 4, 5. Amos viii. 10. and the note upon Dan. x. 4.)

Ver. 12. *These are my rewards that my lovers have given me.*] See ver. 5. and ix. 1.

I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them.] I will give up their lands unto their enemies, who shall destroy the fruits of it, or else leave it desolate, for the beasts of the field to devour. (Compare Psal. lxxx. 12, 13. Isa. v. 7.)

Ver. 13. *I will visit upon her the days of Baalim,* &c.] I will punish her for all the idolatries she has committed from the days of Jeroboam, who first set up the worship of false gods. (See xiii. 1.) The chief god of every country was called by the name of Baal: so Baal-Peor was the god of the Moabites; Baal-zebub was the god of Ekron; (2 Kings i. 2.) Baal-herith the god of the Phœnicians, (Judg. viii. 33.) Those several deities are called in the plural number Baalim. (See Judg. iii. 7.)

And she decked herself with her ear-rings and jewels, and she went after her lovers.] She put on her richest ornaments in their idolatrous festivals. (See Ezek. xxiii. 40. 42.)

Ver. 14. *Therefore, behold, I will allure her.*] Here is a plain alteration of the style, from threatenings to promises: so the first word of this verse should be translated, *nevertheless.* (See the note upon Isa. xxx. 18.)

I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, &c.] Or, *After I have brought her into the wilderness.* The state of the Jews' captivity is elsewhere expressed by a wilderness state. (See the note upon Ezek. xx. 35.) It probably means here the dispersions of the ten tribes, ever since their first captivity by Shalmaneser, 2 Kings xvii. 6.

The words, *I will allure her, and speak comfortably to her,* allude to the practice of fond husbands, who, forgetting past offences, use all the arts of endearment to persuade their wives, who have parted from them, to return to them again: so God will use the most powerful persuasions to bring the Israelites to the acknowledgment of the truth, notwithstanding all their former abuses of the means of grace. This verse, and the following part of the chapter, import a general promise of the restoration of the Jewish nation: which is a subject often treated of by the prophets: particularly by Ezekiel, chap. xxxiv. xxxvi. xxxvii.

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Ver. 15. *And I will give her her vineyards from thence.*] Or, *From that time:* for so the word *misham* may be rendered. (See the notes upon Isa. xlviii. 16. lxv. 20.) Then I will restore her vineyards and fruitful fields, which I had taken from her, (ver. 12.)

And the valley of Achor for a door of hope.] As at the Israelites' first entrance into Canaan, their taking possession of the fruitful valley of Achor (see Isa. lxv. 10.) gave them encouragement to hope they should become owners of that whole land, flowing with milk and honey: the same auspicious tokens of the Divine favour should accompany them at their return into their own country.

And she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, &c.] She shall express her joy in God, as her forefathers did at their first coming out of Egypt, after their deliverance at the Red Sea, when I espoused them for my peculiar people, and entered into a covenant with them at Mount Sinai: where they solemnly promised an entire obedience to me, Exod. xix. 5. 8. (Compare xi. 1. Jer. ii. 2. Ezek. xvi. 8. 22. 60.)

Ver. 16. *Thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt call me no more Baali.*] Whereas God had formerly renounced any marriage-relation with Israel by reason of their idolatry: (see ver. 2.) he now declares himself reconciled to them again; (see ver. 20.) and permits them to call him by the name of *Ishi*, i. e. *husband*, but not of *Baali*, i. e. *Lord*. The word *Baali* often signifies a husband, and is particularly spoken of God as he was by his covenant-relation a husband to his people. (See Isa. liv. 5. Jer. iii. 14.) But because the word *Baal* had been so much profaned by being given to idols, he forbade it to be applied any more to himself. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 17. *For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth,* &c.] The Jews were forbidden to mention the names of heathen idols. (See Exod. xxiii. 13. Josh. xxiii. 7. Psal. xvi. 4. compare Zech. xiii. 2. and see the note upon xiv. 2.) Baalim is sometimes equivalent to Baal: (see 1 Kings xviii. 18. compared with ver. 21. and 2 Chron. xxiv. 4. compared with 2 Kings xxiii. 4.) so Baalim and Ashtaroth, Judg. x. 6, 7. is the same with Baal and Ashtaroth, ii. 13. for the plural number in the Hebrew language sometimes expresses an excellency, as in the word Elohim. In like manner Baal was called Baalim by his worshippers, to denote that he was a principal object of their worship: but the word likewise signifies the several Baals which the idolaters worshipped under so many distinguishing characters; such as Baal-Peor, Baal-berith, Baal-zebub, and the like: and, in general, it signifies the many strange gods of the heathens. (See 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. 2 Chron. xxiv. 7. Jer. ii. 23.)

Ver. 18. *And in that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field,* &c.] I will protect them from that violence and annoyance which beasts and birds of prey or venomous creatures might threaten them with. (Compare Job v. 23. Ezek. xxxiv. 25.)

I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle, out of the earth.] A universal peace and freedom, both from foreign and domestic enemies, is mentioned by the prophets as a concomitant of that flourishing state of the church, which shall commence from the restoration of the Jews, and the coming in of the gentiles. (See Isa. ii. 4. xi. 6. 9. Zech. ix. 10.)

And I will make them lie down safely.] As flocks do when they are secure from beasts of prey. (See Ezek. xxxiv. 25. Zech. iii. 13. Jer. xxiii. 6. xxx. 10.)

Ver. 19, 20. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness,* &c.] I will enter into a new covenant with my church, consisting of the converted Jews, and increased by the coming in of the fulness of the gentiles: (see ver. 23.) which covenant is described as if it were a marriage-contract: (see the note upon ver. 2.) wherein I will eminently display my attributes of righteousness and equity, of loving-kindness, mercy, and faithfulness.

And thou shalt know the Lord.] One especial part of the new covenant shall consist in imparting to the faithful a more perfect knowledge of God's will, and their own duty. (See Jer. xxxi. 34.)

Ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear* [or answer], *saith the Lord.*] I will graciously answer all the petitions my people make to me. (Compare Isa. lxv. 24. Zech. xiii. 9.) Or the words may be referred to what follows.

Ibid. and Ver. 22. *I will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth,* &c.] All creatures shall answer the desires and wants of my people: the heavens shall answer the wants of the earth in sending down seasonable showers, and the earth shall answer the wants of mankind in bringing forth corn and wine, and other necessaries of life, and the very fruits of the earth shall answer the wishes of my people, now returned into their own land, by giving them due nourishment. The same sense is more plainly expressed in Zechariah, viii. 12. *The seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.* Spiritual blessings are often described under the emblems of fruitfulness and plenty. (See the note upon Isa. iv. 2. and compare vi. 3. of this prophecy.)

And they shall hear Jezreel.] This new state of the church, increased by a numerous accession both of Jews and gentiles, is fitly called by the name of Jezreel: the word importing both *the seed* and *the arm of God.* (See the note upon i. 11.)

Ver. 23. *And I will sow her unto me in the earth.*] Here is a plain allusion to the word Jezreel mentioned just before, which signifies the *seed of God:* the prophet foretells a plentiful increase of true believers, like to that of corn sowed in the earth. (Compare Zech. x. 9.)

And I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy, &c.] Compare i. 6. I will have mercy both on the Jews and gentiles, who shall become true converts to the Christian faith. This was in part fulfilled at the first preaching of the gospel: (see Rom. ix. 24—26.) but shall receive its completion at the restoration of the Jews, and the coming in of the *fulness of the gentiles.* (Compare i. 10, 11.)

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Under the figure of the prophet's receiving his adulterous wife home again, and her continuing there in a state of widowhood, yet with hopes of reconciliation, is signified that Israel (the ten tribes especially) shall be for several

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ages without any external form of civil government, or public worship: yet with a promise of being restored to their ancient dignity and privileges in the later ages of the world.

Ver. 1. *GO yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet* [or, although] *an adulteress.*] This is probably the same woman mentioned i. 3. who, upon her ill life, was parted from her husband, who yet had a kindness for her still, and was willing to receive her upon conditions of her better behaviour. The Hebrew word *reang, friend,* is used for a *husband,* Jer. iii. 20. Cant. v. 16.

According to the love of the Lord towards the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.] Hosea's dealing thus with a wife who had injured him, exactly resembles the favour which God hath shewed towards the Israelites, who, notwithstanding all their obligations to him, retain an incurable propension to idolatry, often called by the name of spiritual whoredom.

The words which our translation renders *flagons of wine,* may be translated *cakes made of* (dried) *grapes.* Such were the cakes, probably, which the Jews offered to the *queen of heaven,* Jer. vii. 18. xliv. 19. So, Cant. ii. 5. the word *ashish* might rather signify *cakes,* or *comfits,* than *flagons:* as our translation renders it. The expression signifies, in general, those entertainments which they were partakers of in the idol temples, (Amos ii. 8. 1 Cor. x. 7. 21.)

Ver. 2. *So I bought her for me for fifteen pieces of silver,* &c.] The expression alludes to the custom anciently practised of men's buying their wives: and it implies, that the prophet made a new espousal or contract with her; as God intended to betroth Israel a second time, ii. 19. and the meanness of the price offered, shews of how little value the Israelites were in God's sight, since their apostacy from the worship of God to idolatry. (Compare Zech. xi. 13.) A homer was about ten bushels. (See the note upon Ezek. xlv. 11.)

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt abide for me many days: thou shalt not play the harlot.*] Thou shalt continue in a solitary condition (see Deut. xxi. 13.) for a considerable time, that I may make some proof of thy amendment.

Thou shalt not be for another man; so will I also be for thee.] The word *another* is not in the Hebrew, so the sentence may be thus translated more agreeably to the original, *Thou shalt not have a husband, neither will I have thee* [to my wife]; *i. e.* thou shalt continue some time in a state of widowhood. The Hebrew phrase *Lo tehi laish* properly signifies, *Thou shalt not have a husband;* and so it is rendered by our interpreters, Ezek. xliv. 25. and to the same sense without the negative particle, Ruth i. 12. The LXX. render it to the same sense, Οὐδὲ μὴ γένῃ ἀνδρί, and so it is used by St. Paul, Rom. vii. 3.

Ver. 4. *For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince,* &c.] This threatening was fulfilled upon the ten tribes immediately upon their captivity by Shalmaneser, (compare ix. 4.) and upon the two remaining tribes at the destruction of their temple and commonwealth, during the Babylonish captivity. The later Jews thus express the sense of those exiles in the Song of the Three Children, as it is found among the apocryphal writings, ver. 14. *Neither is there at this time prince, or prophet, or leader, or burnt-offering, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense, or place to sacrifice before thee, and find mercy.* This threatening was still more remarkably fulfilled upon the whole nation of the Jews, from the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian unto this day. From that time they have had no republic or civil government of their own; but live every where, like so many exiles, only upon sufferance: they have had neither priests nor sacrifice, their temple being destroyed where only they were to offer sacrifice: and yet the want of a place where to perform the most solemn part of their public worship, does not tempt them to idolatry, or make them fond of image-worship, or any such idolatrous practice, which was the epidemical sin of their forefathers. This seems the general import of this remarkable prophecy: but the several expressions must be more particularly explained.

Without a king.] A *king* in the Hebrew language signifies any sort of governor or magistrate: it is applied to Moses, Deut xxxiii. 5. and to the judges, Judg. xvii. 6. and to the four successive monarchies, Dan. vii. 17. So in the New Testament, Rev. xvii. 10. the *seven kings* are commonly explained of seven sorts of governments: so here a *king* means any civil magistrate with supreme authority.

And without a prince.] The word may be equivalent to the former: if we suppose it to denote a distinct authority, it may be fitly explained of the high-priest, and the heads of the priestly courses: called *the princes of the sanctuary,* Isa. xliii. 8. and *governors of the house of the Lord,* Jer. xx. 1. Taking the word in this sense, it fitly follows, *And without a sacrifice,* which could only be offered by the priests.

Without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.] Some interpreters suppose these words to denote the several ways of lawful worship, or means of inquiring after the will of God; and by the word *matzebah,* they understand an *altar:* this sense agrees very well with the word *sacrifice,* going before: the same word is joined with an *altar* erected to God's worship, Isa. xix. 19. and signifies in that place such a religious memorial as Jacob set up, Gen. xxviii. 18. *Teraphim* they suppose to signify the same with the *urim,* or the oracle placed in the breast-plate of the high-priest, and therefore fitly joined with the *ephod,* which often signifies the whole priestly habit, and is particularly mentioned when there is occasion of consulting God by the high-priest, 1 Sam. xxiii. 9. xxx. 7. This interpretation is followed by the LXX. and it makes an easy and natural sense of the text; *viz.* that God will deprive the Jews of the principal offices, for the enjoyment of which they chiefly valued themselves, *viz.* that of the priesthood, and that of prophecy. The Jews had no succession of prophets for a considerable time before Christ's coming: (Ecclus. xxxvi. 15. 1 Macc. iv. 46. ix. 27. xiv. 41.) and both kingdom and priesthood were taken away within forty years after Christ's death. Dr. Spencer carries this interpretation so far, as to be very positive that *teraphim* means the same with the *urim,* and that both words denote an image enclosed within the folds of the high-priest's breast-plate, which uttered oracles by a voice. (Lib. iii. de Legib. Hæbr. Dissert. *ult.*) This opinion is strenuously opposed by Dr. Pocock in his notes upon this place, to which I refer the reader. Other learned men agree with Dr. Pocock, in observing that the word *teraphim* is, in other places

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of Scripture, used for a sort of divination practised by idolaters, and therefore think it unlikely that the prophet should express an oracle of God's own appointment by so infamous a name: whereupon they suppose, that Hosea here speaking to the ten tribes, means some idolatrous kind of divination practised by the priests at Dan and Beth-el, after Jeroboam's schism: as if he had threatened them, that in a short time they should have neither king, nor priest, nor sacrifice, nor any degree of prophecy or foreknowledge of what is to come. This interpretation exactly agrees with that state of the people's widowhood, described ver. 3.

To this interpretation it may be objected, that it cannot be thought a proper punishment to threaten the taking away an idolatrous sort of worship. But to this they answer, that the prophet here conforms his speech to the sentiments of those he speaks to, and threatens them with the loss of what they were extremely fond of.

Ver. 5. *Afterward the children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God.*] They shall be touched with a true remorse for their former errors (especially that of rejecting the Messias), and shall desire to be instructed in the knowledge of the truth. (Compare Jer. l. 4.) The expression of *seeking the Lord*, alludes to the custom of the Jews going up in companies to celebrate their solemn feasts at Jerusalem. (Compare v. 6. Psal. cv. 4. Jer. l. 4, 5.)

And David their king.] The Messias is often called so by the prophets, as being the person that was to spring from his loins, and in whom all the promises made to David were to be fulfilled. (See Isa. lv. 3, 4. Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24.) So the Chaldee paraphrase expounds this and the parallel texts. David was a type of the Messias; (see Psal. lxxxix. 20. 36.) who therefore is called by the name of David: so John Baptist is called Elias, Mal. iv. 5. because he was to resemble him, and to succeed him in his office of reproving the people, and exhorting them to repentance. The expression cannot be literally understood here, David himself having been dead long before the uttering of this prophecy.

And shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.] The goodness of God in making them partakers of the mercies of the gospel, shall engage them to yield an entire obedience to him: (compare Jer. xxxii. 9.) and this will come to pass in the latter days or times of the world. *The latter days* are often spoken of the times of the gospel. (See the notes upon Isa. ii. 2. Dan. ii. 28.) But the phrase does sometimes denote the very last days of the gospel age, near which time probably the conversion of the Jews will be brought to pass. (See Deut. iv. 30. Jer. xxx. 24. Ezek. xxxviii. 8. 16.)

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet denounces judgments against the sins both of the people and priests of the ten tribes; and exhorts Judah to take warning by Israel's calamity.

Ver. 1. *THE Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land.*] The expression is taken from the actions or pleas which one man hath against another for injuries or damages received: so here God is represented as entering into judgment with the inhabitants of the ten tribes for their impieties, as being so many injuries to his honour, for which he demands satisfaction. (Compare xii. 2. Isa. iii. 13. v. 3, 4. xliii. 26. Jer. xxv. 30.)

Ver. 2. *By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing.*] Stealing, and swearing, *i. e.* false-swearing, are elsewhere joined together; because in the Jewish courts of justice men that were suspected of theft were obliged to purge themselves by oath: and they often ventured to forswear themselves rather than discover the truth. (See Prov. xxix. 24. xxx. 9. Zech. v. 4.)

They break out.] There is an inundation of all manner of wickedness, and all law and right are broken through and violated.

And blood toucheth blood.] Compare v. 2. vi. 9. This may more particularly relate to the murder of their kings, that were slain by their successors: as Zechariah by Shallum, Shallum by Menahem, (2 Kings xv. 10. 14.) In such civil broils a great many of their friends and dependants are commonly slain with the kings themselves. (See 1 Kings xvi. 11.)

Ver. 3. *Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish,* &c.] These civil wars and commotions make the whole land look dismally: the inhabitants are either destroyed, or forced to leave their habitations, and languish under want of all things: the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air, are consumed by famine or pestilence: and the fishes of the rivers and great waters (called *seas* in the Hebrew language) are killed through drought, or the waters being tainted by the infection of the air, or corrupted by the blood of the slain. (Compare Jer. iv. 25. Zeph. i. 3.) The prophets sometimes describe a general desolation by an enumeration of particulars. (Compare Isa. xix. 5. 8.)

Ver. 4. *Let no man strive, or reprove another: for my people are as they that strive with the priest.*] The prophet speaks of the Israelites as one that despaired of their amendment, and thought it lost labour to reprove them, they being of that refractory temper, as not to hearken to instruction, and even to quarrel with their priests themselves, when they admonished them of their duty. This seems to be a proverbial expression to denote a stubborn and incorrigible temper: for it was a capital offence by the law for any to behave themselves in a presumptuous manner against the injunctions of the priest. (See Deut. xvii. 12.)

Ver. 5. *Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet shall fall in the night.*] Thou shalt be destroyed both by open violence and by secret treachery: (compare Jer. vi. 4, 5. xv. 8.) and the false prophets shall be involved in the same destruction. (Compare ix. 7, 8.)

I will kill thy mother.] The Hebrew reads, *I will cut off thy mother; i. e.* the whole state or kingdom of Israel. (Compare ii. 2. Jer. vi. 2. xv. 8.)

Ver. 6. *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*] The ignorance of the true principles of religion, which prevails among the people of the ten tribes, is the occasion of those sins which draw down such heavy judgments upon them: the Levites, who are placed in every tribe by God's appointment for the better instructing of the people, are turned out of their possessions by Jeroboam and his suc-

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cessors, and none left to teach them their duty. (See 2 Chron. xi. 14.)

Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest for me.] This is spoken to Jeroboam's priests, who, being taken *out of the lowest of the people,* (1 Kings xii. 31.) were very ignorant themselves, and therefore unable to teach others.

Because thou hast forgotten my law, I will also forget thy children.] I will not look upon them any longer as *the seed of Abraham,* and children of my covenant.

Ver. 7. *As they were increased, they sinned against me,* &c.] Or, *The more they were increased, the more they sinned against me.* (See Noldius, p. 436.) The greater were the favours I heaped upon them, the more presumptuously they sinned against me. (Compare xiii. 6.) Therefore I will divest them of all those glories for which they pride themselves, and lead them away in a poor and miserable condition into captivity.

Ver. 8. *They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their hearts on their iniquity.*] Those idolatrous priests mentioned ver. 6. live upon the sin-offerings of the people; and are so far from restraining them, that they take delight in seeing them commit iniquity; because the more they sin, the greater is the number of their sin-offerings, which are the priests' portion.

Ver. 9. *And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways,* &c.] As they are alike in sinning, so shall they be in punishment.

Ver. 10. *For they shall eat, and not have enough.*] Or, *Not be satisfied;* as the word is elsewhere translated. (See Lev. xxvi. 26. Micah vi. 14.) The expression may signify, either their food shall not afford due nourishment, for want of God's blessing accompanying it; (compare Deut. viii. 3. Hag. i. 6.) or else the words imply a threatening them with famine, when they shall not have food enough to satisfy a craving appetite. (Compare Lev. xxvi. 26. Amos iv. 8. Micah vi. 14.) The contrary phrase, *To eat, and be full,* or *satisfied,* denotes plenty. (See Lev. xxvi. 5. Deut. vi. 11. viii. 10. xi. 15. Psal. xxii. 26. Joel ii. 26.)

Ver. 11. *Whoredom, and wine, and new wine, take away the heart.*] Deprive men of their judgment, and darken their understandings. So a gift is said to *destroy the heart,* Eccles. vii. 7. to bereave men of the use of their discerning faculties.

Ver. 12. *My people ask counsel at their stocks.*] Of their idols; for so the word *nets* elsewhere often signifies. (See Jer. ii. 27. x. 8. Habak. ii. 19.)

And their staff declares unto them.] This, learned men suppose to be the same kind of divination with that made by arrows, which is described, Ezek. xxi. 21. (See the note upon that place.)

For the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err, &c.] This is to be understood of idolatry, which is spiritual whoredom. (Compare v. 4.)

Ver. 13. *They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains,* &c.] The sacrificing upon mountains and shady groves was an ancient piece of idolatry, often mentioned and reproved by the prophets. (See Isa. i. 29. Ezek. vi. 13. xx. 20. and the notes upon those places.)

Therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, &c.] God delivers men up to vile affections, as a punishment of their idolatry. (See Rom. i. 28.)

Ver. 14. *I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom,* &c.] I will suffer them *to fall from one degree of wickedness to another.* (See the foregoing verse.)

For themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots.] The word rendered *harlot* signifies such as prostituted themselves in an idol-temple, in honour of the idol: such lewd practices were frequent in the gentile temples dedicated to Venus, and such-like impure deities: (see Baruch vi. 23.) from thence the Jews learned those filthy customs. (See 1 Kings xiv. 23, 24. xv. 12.) The LXX. render the word very properly τετελεσμένων; such as are *initiated* into the service of the idol by such lewd rites.

Therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall.] See ver. 1. 6.

Ver. 15. *Though Israel play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend.*] The kingdom of Judah still retained the worship of the true God, and the ordinances of the temple-service: so the prophet exhorts that people not to be led away by the ill example of their brethren of the ten tribes.

And come not ye to Gilgal, neither go up to Beth-aven.] Gilgal was a remarkable place for the renewing of the rite of circumcision: (Josh. v. 9.) there the people afterward used to offer sacrifice: (1 Sam. xv. 21.) after Jeroboam's setting up of idolatry, it was noted for the worship of false gods, as appears by comparing this text with ix. 15. xii. 11. Amos iv. 4. v. 5. In those places of Amos, as well as in this verse, it is joined with Beth-el, noted for the worship of one of Jeroboam's calves; called here Beth-aven, and x. 5. Beth-el originally signifies *the house of God;* that name was given to it by Jacob, because of God's appearing to him there, Gen. xxviii. 17. But when it became the seat of idolatry, it was called Beth-aven, *i. e.* the house of vanity.

Nor swear, The Lord liveth.] As long as ye continue to worship idols, I will not have my name mentioned by your polluted lips, inasmuch as there is no fellowship between God and idols. Many of the Israelites halted between God and Baal, and the other idols, sometimes serving one, and sometimes the others. (See 1 Kings xviii. 21. Ezek. xx. 39. xxiii. 38, 39. Zeph. i. 4, 5.) Some understand the words, of their swearing by the name of the true God, which is a solemn act of religious worship, (see Deut. x. 20.) and yet meaning by it the god that is worshipped at Beth-el. This God forbids, as a profanation of his name. (See Amos viii. 14.)

Ver. 16. *For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer.*] The word translated *slideth back,* properly signifies being headstrong and untractable: it is a metaphor from oxen or heifers that draw their neck back, and will not put it under the yoke. (See Jer. vii. 24.) The expression alludes to the *calves,* called *heifers* by the Septuagint, which they worshipped.

Now will the Lord feed them as a lamb in a large place.] The expression seems ironical; as if the prophet had said, they were like headstrong cattle, that would not be managed by their leaders or drivers: so God will suffer them to be scattered as sheep without a shepherd in the large country of Assyria, whither they shall be led captive.

Ver. 17. *Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone.*] Ephraim signifies the same with Israel, or the ten tribes. (See

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v. 3.) It is to no purpose to take pains to reclaim him. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 18. *Their drink is sour.*] The phrase may be metaphorical, to express the corruption of their manners: (compare Deut. xxxii. 32. Isa. i. 22.) or else, if we join it in sense with the remaining part of the verse, it imports their excessive drinking, till their liquor turn sour in their stomachs; and so the whole verse taxes them for three great vices, drunkenness, whoredom, and bribery.

They have committed whoredom continually.] This may be understood of idolatry, which is spiritual whoredom: (see ver. 12.) but the literal sense agrees very well with the rest of the verse.

Their rulers with shame do love, Give ye.] *i. e.* Are continually asking or expecting bribes: (compare Prov. xxx. 15.) are still greedy of filthy lucre. (See Micah iii. 11. vii. 3.)

The Hebrew word translated *rulers*, properly signifies *shields*: it is taken for rulers in Psal. xlvii. 9. as well as here.

Ver. 19. *The wind hath bound her up in her wings.*] The words threaten them with going into captivity: for it is common with the prophets to express what is future by the preter-perfect tense: (see the note upon Isa. xxi. 9.) God's anger is often expressed by a blustering or tempestuous wind. (See xiii. 15. Jer. iv. 11, 12. li. 1.) This wind is said here to carry them away out of their country: and then they will have reason to be ashamed of their idolatrous sacrifices, which have brought such severe judgments upon them.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter, and the next to the fourth verse, threatens judgments both against Israel and Judah for their manifold sins, till they repent: upon which they may conceive hopes of pardon.

Ver. 1. *HEAR this, O priests.*] Or rather, *O princes:* which reading better agrees with the *house of the king* that follows: the Hebrew word is of both significations. So Gen. xlii. 45. and Exod. ii. 16. where it is in the text *priest of On and Midian:* but the margin reads the *prince of On and Midian.* (Compare vi. 9.)

For judgment is towards you (or against you), *because you have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor.*] Ye have laid snares for others to seize upon them and kill them: (see ver. 2.) just as hunters spread their nets upon mountains and hills in order to catch their prey. Mizpah and Tabor were two noted mountains; the former on the hither side of Jordan, the other on the farther side of it, the same with Gilead. (See Gen. xxxi. 25. 40. 49.)

Ver. 2. *And the revolters are profound to make slaughter.*] The ringleaders in idolatry and other wickedness lay deep designs to ensnare men's lives. (Compare iv. 4. vi. 9.)

Though I have been a rebuker of them all.] By my prophets. (Compare vi. 5.)

Ver. 3. *I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me.*] I know him and his doings: Ephraim is equivalent to Israel, as distinct from Judah, in this prophecy, and comprehendeth the ten tribes, ver. 5. 12. 14. iv. 17. vi. 4. 10. vii. 8. 11. viii. 9. and in several other places. Ephraim was the head of the ten tribes, both for its numbers, and because Jeroboam had placed the seat of his kingdom in that tribe. (1 Kings xii. 25.)

Ibid. and Ver. 4. *Ephraim, thou committest whoredom:—the spirit of whoredom is in the midst of them.*] See iv. 12.

Ver. 5. *And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face.*] Their indecent behaviour towards God, whose worship they despise, doth discover itself in all their behaviour: and convicts them of the just desert of their sins. (Compare Isa. iii. 9.)

Ver. 6. *They shall go with their flocks and herds to seek the Lord.*] *The sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord;* as the Scripture often observes. (See Prov. xv. 8. Isa. i. 15.) This verse is meant of the people of Judah, mentioned in the latter part of the foregoing verse: who, though they did frequent the temple-worship, yet came thither without any true sense of religion: for which the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah particularly reprove them. (See Isa. i. 11, &c. Jer. vii. 3, &c.)

But they shall not find him: he hath withdrawn himself from them.] God is said to *hide* and *withdraw himself*, when he will not answer men's prayers, nor afford them seasonable relief in time of need. (See 1 Sam. xxviii. 16. Psal. cii. 2. Lam. iii. 44. and compare Micah iii. 4.)

Ver. 7. *They have dealt treacherously against the Lord.*] The verb *bagad*, to *deal treacherously*, signifies properly a wife's being false to her husband: (see Jer. iii. 20.) from whence it is applied to the sin of idolatry, so often styled spiritual whoredom. (Compare vi. 7. Isa. xlviii. 8. Jer. v. 11.)

For they have begotten strange children.] *Strange children* may either mean children begotten of heathen women, whom they took to marriage, contrary to the law, (Exod. xxiii. 32. Deut. vii. 2.) or it may signify such children as are bred up in the idolatrous practices of their fathers.

Now shall a month devour them and their portions.] If we understand this verse of Judah (which interpretation the foregoing and following verses favour), the words may be expounded of the invasion made upon Judah by Pekah, king of Israel; of which, see 2 Chron. xxviii. 6. By *a month's devouring them*, is meant a sudden and speedy destruction. (Compare Zech. xi. 8.)

Ver. 8. *Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah,* &c.] This imports the sounding an alarm to give notice of the approaching enemy, (compare Joel ii. 1.) which threatens to invade the kingdom of Judah. (See the foregoing verse.) These were towns in the tribe of Benjamin, that lay upon the frontiers of that kingdom.

Cry aloud at Beth-aven.] To give notice of the approach of the enemy. (Compare Isa. x. 30.) Beth-aven may either mean Beth-el, (see iv. 15.) or a town of that name near to it. (See Josh. vii. 2.)

After thee, O Benjamin.] The enemy is just behind thee; or, Let him that is after thee, or behind thee, O Benjamin, prepare himself to battle; *i. e.* the tribe of Judah, which lay next to Benjamin.

Ver. 9. *Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke.*] God's judgments shall likewise overtake Israel, or the ten tribes, (see the note on ver. 3.) as well as Judah.

Among the tribes of Israel I have made known that which surely shall be.] I have denounced my judgments against

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the whole kingdom of Israel, as well as that of Judah, and given them warning that they may escape them by a timely repentance.

Ver. 10. *The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound.*] They have violated the most sacred laws of God, upon which not only the ordinances of his worship, but likewise the rights and properties of men depend; and are become guilty of the same injustice and confusion with those that remove the ancient bounds and landmarks. (See Deut. xix. 14.) Critics observe, that the *note of similitude* is sometimes in sense equivalent to a strong affirmation. So Isa. xiii. 6. *It shall come as a destruction from the Almighty: i. e.* it shall be an apparent instance of the Divine vengeance. John i. 14. *We beheld his glory, as of the only-begotten of the Father: i. e.* such as proved him to be the only-begotten of the Father.

Therefore have I poured out my wrath upon them like water.] Which shall overwhelm them like a deluge. Great calamities are often compared to the overflowing of water. (See Psal. xxxii. 6. lxix. 1. cxiv. 7. Isa. xxx. 28. Dan. ix. 26.)

Ver. 11. *Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment.*] He is delivered over to oppressors by God's just judgment: such were Pul and Tiglath-pileser, kings of Assyria. (2 Kings xv. 19. 29. compare Deut. xxviii. 33.)

Because he willingly walked after the commandments.] This is commonly explained of Jeroboam's command to his subjects of forsaking the worship of the true God; which they readily complied with. Of the same kind were the statutes of Omri, which are mentioned Micah vi. 16. But the LXX. render it, *He walked after vanity; i. e.* idolatry: either reading it *shave* for *tsave;* or else supposing the latter word put for the former: as there are frequent instances in the Hebrew text, that letters which are near the same sound are often changed one for another.

Ver. 12. *Therefore I will be to Ephraim as a moth,* &c.] My judgments shall consume both Israel and Judah, as a *moth fretteth a garment.* (See ver. 3.)

Ver. 13. *When Israel saw his sickness, and Judah his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian,* &c.] When the king of Israel saw himself too weak to contend with Pul king of Assyria, he sent an embassy to make him his ally, and in order to it became his tributary, that *his hand might be with him to confirm his kingdom to him;* (2 Kings xv. 19.) which king is therefore called king Jareb, *i. e.* the king that should plead for him, or defend his cause against any that should oppose him. So in like manner shall Ahaz king of Judah implore the assistance of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria against his enemies. (2 Kings xvi. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 16—18.)

Yet could not he heal you, nor cure you of your wound.] Yet neither of these alliances afforded any lasting benefit or succour to those that desired their help: Menahem's son being after a short reign killed by Pekah; and Ahaz being rather distressed than helped by Tiglath-pileser. (2 Chron. xxviii. 21.)

Ver. 14. *For I will be to Ephraim as a lion,* &c.] I will pour out my judgments upon both kingdoms without mercy. (Compare xiii. 7, 8. Psal. l. 22. Lam. iii. 10.)

Ver. 15. *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face.*] I will withdraw myself from them, (see ver. 6.) till by a sincere humiliation they implore my favour. The Chaldee paraphrase expresses the sense thus: *I will take away my majestic presence, or Schechinah, from among them, and will return into heaven.* Ezekiel describes the destruction of the temple and kingdom, by God's removing his glory from the sanctuary and the city. (See Ezek. x. 4. xi. 23.)

In their affliction they will seek me early.] *i. e.* Earnestly, with great diligence and assiduity. (See Prov. i. 28. Psal. lxxviii. 34.)

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

The three first verses of this chapter should have been joined to the fifth, as was observed in the Argument of that chapter: in the following verses God complains of their incorrigibleness, and threatens his judgments as a just consequent of their sins.

Ver. 1. *COME, let us return unto the Lord,* &c.] A form of supplication which the prophet dictates to them, as very proper for the occasion. (Compare xiv. 2.) The LXX. add the word λέγοντες, *saying,* to the end of the foregoing verse.

He has torn, and he will heal us, &c.] The same God that punisheth us, can only remove his judgments, and shew us mercy. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6.) The expression, *he has torn,* relates to what is said, v. 14.

Ver. 2. *After two days he will revive us; in the third day he will raise us up,* &c.] A deliverance from such miseries or calamities, from whence men despair of a recovery, is often represented as restoring them to life after death. (See Psal. xxx. 3. lxxi. 20. lxxxvi. 13.) Particularly the restoration of the Jewish nation is often described, as if it were a new life from the dead: see the note upon Ezek. xxxvii. 11. *Two or three* in Scripture denotes a small number: (see Isa. xvii. 6. Matt. xviii. 20.) accordingly here it signifies a short space of time. (Compare Luke xiii. 32, 33.) Dr. Wells thinks the words primarily foretell Hezekiah's recovery from his dangerous sickness on the third day: (2 Kings xx. 5.) but it is certain, taking the expression in its true and natural sense, it is a plain prediction of our Lord's resurrection, and referred to by St. Paul as a proof of it, 1 Cor. xv. 4. The prophets when they predicted temporal deliverances, were often carried out beyond themselves and their first subject, if I may so express it, to foretell the more signal mercies relating to the times of the gospel.

Ver. 3. *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.*] God will bless our sincere endeavours to know his will with a proportionable success. (Compare Isa. liv. 13.)

His going forth is prepared as the morning, &c.] The comforts of the gospel are here expressed by two things, which are very proper to enliven and exhilarate our spirits, a fair morning, and a kindly season, wherein the earth plentifully yields her increase, by a due intermixture of rain and sunshine. (Compare 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. and see the note upon ii. 22.) Concerning the *former* and the *latter rain,* see the note upon Joel ii. 23.

Ver. 4. *O Ephraim, what shall I do to thee? O Judah, what shall I do to thee?*] Or rather, *What shall I do for thee?* (See x. 3.) How can I shew either Israel or Judah

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any mercy or favour, since there is nothing of true or solid goodness to be found in you?

Ver. 5. *Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth.*] The verb rendered *hewed*, signifies likewise to *cut off*, or destroy. (See Isa. li. 9.) The prophets are said to do things, when they declare God's purpose of doing them. (See Jer. i. 10. v. 14. Ezek. xliii. 3.) God's word is described as *sharper than a two-edged sword*, Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16. because his judgments denounced by his messengers are like the sentence of a judge, which shall be certainly followed with execution.

And thy judgments are as the light when it goeth forth.] Thou wilt make the justice of thy judgments, O God, appear as clear as the light of the rising sun. It is frequent in the Hebrew language to change the discourse from the first to the second or third person.

Ver. 6. *For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice*, &c.] *i. e.* Rather than sacrifice; I am better pleased with true goodness, than with the exactest observance of the external duties of religion, unless they proceed from a sincere principle of obedience. (See Micah vi. 6—8.) The Jews use to express comparisons by negatives, or rejecting the thing less worthy: so we are to understand that expression of the prophet Joel, (ii. 13.) *Rend your heart, and not your garments:* and those words of Christ, (John vi. 27.) *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life; i. e.* for this rather than the former: and that text of St. Peter, (1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.) *Whose adorning, let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, or wearing gold; but let it be the hidden man of the heart.*

Ver. 7. *But they, like men* [Hebrew, *like Adam*], *have transgressed the covenant.*] Which I solemnly contracted with them; just as Adam did in Paradise.

There they have dealt treacherously against me.] In that very instance of my loving-kindness, they made me most unsuitable returns. (See v. 7.)

Ver. 8. *Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood.*] The iniquity which Gilead is here accused of is, probably, idolatry, as appears by comparing this verse with xii. 11. The Hebrew word *aven*, used in both places, frequently signifies so: and the *blood* which is said to be *polluted with*, may mean the blood of their children which they sacrificed to Moloch. Dr. Wells interprets the verse of those Gileadites who assisted Pekah in the murder of Pekahiah, 2 Kings xv. 25. The Hebrew phrase translated here *polluted with blood*, literally signifies *with bloody footsteps*, being taken from such who are found with their shoes stained with the blood they have shed. (Compare 1 Kings ii. 5.)

Ver. 9. *And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent.*] The word *cohanim, priests*, does likewise signify princes: (see v. 1.) who are often reproved by the prophets as guilty of great injustice and oppression. (See Ezek. xxii. 27. Zeph. iii. 3.)

For they commit lewdness.] Or, *enormity:* as the margin reads to a better sense.

Ver. 10. *I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel.*] Such an apostacy from God as cannot be mentioned without horror. (Compare Jer. ii. 11, 12. v. 30.)

There is the whoredom of Ephraim.] This may be understood, both in a literal and a metaphorical sense, for idolatry. (See iv. 12—14.)

Ver. 11. *Also, O Judah, he hath set a harvest for thee*, &c.] Or, *A harvest is appointed for thee;* the active is used for the impersonal: (see the note upon Isa. xliv. 18.) *i. e.* thou hast made thyself ripe for destruction. (Compare Jer. li. 33. Joel iii. 13. Micah iv. 12. Rev. xiv. 15.)

When I returned the captivity of my people.] The sense would be plainer if the words were rendered, *When I would have turned away the captivity of my people:* when I would, upon their repentance, have averted my judgments, which will end in their captivity. The Hebrew language wants the potential mood, which is supplied by the tenses of the indicative.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet reproves the sins of the princes and great men of Israel, and denounces judgments against the people in general for their hypocrisy.

Ver. 1. *WHEN I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria.*] When God was just averting his judgment from Israel, the people gave him new provocations, especially the inhabitants of Samaria, the principal seat of the kingdom. (See ver. 5.)

For they commit falsehood; and the thief cometh in, &c.] Both great and small seize other men's properties by the secret methods of fraud, and the open violence of rapine and oppression. (See v. 1. vi. 10.)

Ver. 2. *Now their own doings have beset them about.*] They shall be taken in their own wickedness, (see Psal. ix. 16. Prov. v. 22.) and their sin shall bring its own punishment with it.

Ver. 3. *They make the king glad with their wickedness*, &c.] They study to please their kings and great men by complying with the idolatry they have set up. The LXX. read, *kings*, in the plural number, meaning the succession of kings of Israel from Jeroboam.

And their princes with lies.] Which they speak to please and flatter them. But the word *lie*, sometimes signifies an idol, and the practice of idolatry, as being set up in direct opposition to the true God. (Compare ver. 13. ii. 4. x. 13. xi. 12. Habak. ii. 18. Rom. i. 25. Rev. xxii. 15.) This sense agrees very well with the scope and design of the place.

Ver. 4. *They are all adulterers.*] The expression may be metaphorical, implying that they were apostates from God, to whose service they were engaged by the most solemn bond and covenant. (Compare Jer. ix. 2. Matt. xiv. 4. James iv. 4.) If the words be understood literally, the prophet compares the heat of their lust to the flame of an oven; as it follows.

Who ceaseth from raising after he hath kneaded the dough, &c.] When an oven is sufficiently heated, the baker doth not raise any more fire, but thinks what he has made enough to keep the oven hot, till the dough be fit to put into the oven. Some render the latter part of the sentence thus, *Who ceaseth from waking*, or *watching* (his oven): to the

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same sense with that of ver. 6. *Their baker sleepeth all the night.*

Ver. 5. *In the day of our king the princes have made him sick with bottles of wine.*] Or, *With being overheated through wine:* so the word *chamath* signifies, Habak. ii. 15. The day of the king's birth or inauguration was kept with riot and excess.

He stretched out his hand to scorners.] He encouraged mean and loose people to converse too familiarly with him, forgetting his rank and dignity.

Ver. 6. *For they have made ready their heart like an oven, while they lie in wait,* &c.] This verse pursues the metaphor begun in ver. 4. As the baker when he has thoroughly heated his oven, if he lays himself to sleep in the night, finds all in a flame in the morning: so the great men of the land kindle evil desires in their hearts, and at the first opportunity their hidden designs break out like a flame into open action.

Ver. 7. *They are all hot as an oven, and have devoured their judges: all their kings are fallen.*] The flame of civil discord is spread among the people in general: this hath been the destruction both of the inferior magistrates and of their kings too; an anarchy continuing for eleven years after the death of Jeroboam the Second; and afterward his son Zechariah, and his successors Shallum and Pekahiah, being slain by conspiracies formed against them. (2 Kings xv. 10. 14. 25.)

There is none among them that calleth upon me.] And yet these confusions have not brought either kings or people to a due humiliation for their sins.

Ver. 8. *Ephraim hath mixed himself among the people.*] Whereas Israel was by God's institution to be his *peculiar people,* Deut. vii. 6. he has mixed or joined himself with idolaters; (see Psal. cvi. 35.) and he shall have a just punishment for his sins, he shall be carried away captive to dwell among them. (See ix. 3. Jer. xvi. 12, 13.)

Ephraim is a cake not turned.] Baked only on one side: *i. e.* serving God by halves, and halting between his service and the worship of idols. The Chaldee paraphrast interprets it, *Before it is baked on both sides, it is devoured by its greedy enemies;* the metaphor being taken from the ravenousness of a hungry stomach. This sense agrees very well with what follows.

Ver. 9. *Strangers have devoured his strength, and* (or yet) *he knoweth it not.*] The Syrians, in the time of Jehoahaz, reduced them very low: (see 2 Kings xiii. 7.) afterward they became tributaries to Pul king of Assyria, (2 Kings xv. 20.) and at length were carried captive by Shalmaneser, (2 Kings xvii.) And yet all these afflictions do not make them sensible of the ill state of their affairs, and that the hand of God is against them. (See ii. 8. and the following verse: Isa. xlii. 25.)

Yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him.] He still declines in strength and power, like a man worn out with age, and ready to give up the ghost.

Ver. 10. *And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face.*] See v. 3.

And they do not return to the Lord their God, &c.] See ver. 9.

Ver. 11. *Ephraim is a silly dove without a heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.*] Like an unwary dove which falls into the snare that is laid for it; so the Israelites betake themselves for refuge to their enemies: sometimes they apply themselves to the king of Egypt for succour; at other times they trust to the aid of the Assyrians. (See 2 Kings xv. 19. xvii. 4.)

Ver. 12. *When they shall go, I will spread a net for them; I will bring them down as the fowls of heaven.*] Whithersoever they betake themselves for safety, they shall no more escape than birds can escape the snares of the fowler. (See the foregoing verse.)

I will chastise them as their congregation hath heard.] I will bring those calamities upon them, which I have denounced in my laws against the whole people of Israel, whenever they forsake me. (See Lev. xxvi. Deut. xxviii. compared with 2 Kings xvii. 13, 14.) The Chaldee paraphrast renders the latter part of the verse thus, *I will chastise them because they have followed their own counsels:* as if he had read in the original *La Asatham,* instead of *Laadatham.* (Compare x. 6. xi. 6.)

Ver. 13. *Though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me.*] Though I have redeemed them out of Egypt, (see Micah vi. 4.) and afforded them many other signal deliverances, yet they have not given me the glory; but have represented me by their golden calves, and *changed my truth into a lie,* Rom. i. 25. (See the note upon ver. 3.)

Ver. 14. *And they have not cried to me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds.*] When they were bemoaning their calamities, as sick men bewail themselves upon a bed of sickness, yet they did not call upon me heartily and sincerely. (Compare Jer. iii. 10. Psal. lxxviii. 34. 36.)

They assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me.] When they assembled themselves to deprecate a famine, they still retained the same disobedient temper towards me.

Ver. 15. *Though I have bound and strengthened their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me.*] Though I have bound up their wounds, and given them new strength and vigour, yet they are continually devising some new idolatrous invention, whereby they may dishonour me.

Ver. 16. *They return, but not to the Most High; they are like a deceitful bow.*] Their conversion is only outward, not inward and sincere: they are like an ill-contrived bow, which never directs the arrow to the mark. (Compare Psal. lxxviii. 57.)

Their princes shall fall by the sword for the rage of their tongue.] For the dishonour they have done me by blasphemous speeches against me. (See ver. 13.)

This shall be their derision in the land of Egypt.] Their blasphemies and other enormities shall be a just cause of their reproach to them, when they are exiles in Egypt, whither many of them fled or were carried away captive. (See ix. 3. 6. compare viii. 13. and see the notes upon Ezek. xxxvi. 20.)

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

God's judgments are denounced both against Judah and Israel, for their idolatries and other impieties.

Ver. 1. *SET a trumpet to thy mouth: he shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord.*] Give notice of the approaching enemy; (see v. 8.) who is coming with speed

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and fierceness, like a bird of prey, (see Deut. xxviii. 49.) against the city and temple of Jerusalem. By *the house of the Lord* may be meant God's people in general, whom he formerly took a peculiar care of as his own family. (Compare ix. 15.) This may probably denote Sennacherib's invasion, 2 Kings xviii. 17.

Ver. 2. *Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee.*] Israel is placed in the Hebrew the last word in the verse: so Dr. Wells joins it to the next verse, and understands this verse of Judah; who shall cry unto God as their protector, in the times of their fears, when the invasion mentioned in the foregoing verse threatened them. (See v. 15.) If we understand the words of Israel, according as ours and most other translators render them, the sense of them is, that the ten tribes still acknowledged the true God to be their God, and pretended that they had not forsaken him, but worshipped him at Dan and Beth-el, though under sensible representations: as we see Jehu still pretended a great zeal for the Lord, at the same time that he worshipped the golden calves, 1 Kings x. 16. 29.

Ver. 3. *Israel has cast off the thing that is good,* &c.] Whereas they have really cast off the true worship of God, and with that every thing that is good: and as a punishment of their impiety, their enemy the king of Assyria shall pursue them like a wild beast, and they shall become a prey to him. (Compare Psal. cxliii. 3. Lam. iii. 66. v. 5.) Dr. Wells reads the verse according to the division he has made of this and the foregoing verse: *As for Israel, Israel hath cast off the thing that is good,* &c.

Ver. 4. *They have set up kings, but not by me,* &c.] Shallum, and Menahem, and Pekah, usurped the kingdom by murder and treason; (2 Kings xv. 13, 14. 25.) not by any declaration of my will, as Jeroboam and Jehu had done, or consulting me by any prophet.

Of their silver and gold have they made themselves idols, &c.] They have abused their wealth to idolatry, which will be the occasion of their destruction. (See ii. 8.)

Ver. 5. *Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off,* &c.] As the people of Samaria (see ver. 6.) have cast off that which is good, (ver. 3.) so the calf which they worship shall not protect or deliver them from the evils coming upon them, now my anger is kindled against them.

How long will it be ere they attain to innocency?] I shall no longer shew any patience towards them, since it is in vain to expect any reformation from them.

Ver. 6. *From Israel was it also.*] This calf, as well as that made in the wilderness, (Exod. xxxii.) was an invention of the Israelites, not borrowed from any of their neighbouring idolaters.

But the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces.] *And carried for a present to the king of Assyria,* x. 5, 6. The sense would run better, if the words were rendered, *Therefore the calf of Samaria,* &c. so the particle *ki* often signifies. The *calf of Samaria* denotes the calf of Beth-el, in the kingdom of Samaria. (Compare x. 5.) Samaria being the chief seat of the kingdom of Israel, is often put for that kingdom. (See 1 Kings xiii. 33. xxi. 1. 2 Kings v. 3. xxiii. 19.)

Ver. 7. *For they have sowed the wind, and shall reap the whirlwind.*] A proverbial expression, to signify, that as men's works are, so must their reward be: that they who *sow iniquity shall reap vanity,* Prov. xxii. 8. their labour shall be fruitless, or shall turn to their hurt and damage. (See Eccles. v. 16. and x. 13. of this prophecy.) All the pains the kings of Israel and their subjects take to enrich themselves, and to strengthen their kingdom, being built upon the foundation of apostacy and idolatry, shall turn to no better account than countrymen expect from a blasted crop of corn: and whatever advantage they make, it shall at last be a prey to foreigners, to the kings of Syria and Assyria. (See 2 Kings xiii. 3, 4. xv. 29. xvii. 6.)

Ver. 8. *Israel is swallowed up.*] *i. e.* Shall as certainly be carried captive by the Assyrians, as if he was already gone into captivity. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 9.)

Now shall they be among the gentiles as a vessel wherein there is no pleasure.] They shall be despised as a vessel or utensil that is broken and become useless. (Compare Jer. xxii. 28. xlviii. 38.)

Ver. 9. *For they are gone up to Assyria,* &c.] To engage Pul, king of Assyria, to be their confederate, (2 Kings xv. 19.)

A wild ass alone by himself.] As a wild ass, which is altogether untractable, and will go its own way. (See Job xxxix. 5. Jer. ii. 24.) The particle *as* is frequently understood. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 8.)

Ephraim has hired lovers.] Procured foreign allies with great expense, and depends upon them for succour and protection, and not upon God. (See ii. 10. v. 13. xii. 1. Jer. xxii. 20. 22.)

Ver. 10. *Yea, though they have hired* [allies] *among the nations, now will I gather them.*] I will make their own allies turn their enemies, particularly the Assyrians. (See the note upon Ezek. xvi. 37.)

And they shall sorrow a little for the burden of the king of princes.] They shall feel the burdens and oppressions laid upon them by the king of Assyria, who styles himself *king of kings,* as having kings and princes his tributaries. (See the note upon Isa. x. 8.) The word *menat* signifies *in a little time* here, as it does Hag. ii. 6.

Ver. 11. *Because Ephraim hath made altars to sin, altars shall be to him to sin.*] Or, *A punishment for his sin:* he shall fall from one degree of wickedness and idolatry to another; and his sin shall bring its own punishment along with it, (compare x. 8. Deut. iv. 28. Jer. xvi. 13.) and be the occasion of bringing my severest judgments upon him.

Ver. 12. *I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were accounted as a strange thing.*] That law which I gave them by Moses, containing rules excellent in themselves, and such as would have made them great in the eyes of their neighbours, (Deut. iv. 6. 8.) they have disregarded, as if it had neither reason nor authority.

Ver. 13. *They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the Lord accepteth them not.*] Their sacrifices are not acceptable to God, being not brought with a religious mind. (See cv. 6. ix. 4. Amos iv. 4.) The Chaldee paraphrast renders the expression *Zibche Hababai, the sacrifices of mine offerings,* as if it meant *the sacrifices of extortion,* such as were gotten by bribes and rapine, which still adds to the wickedness of the offerers. (Compare Amos ii. 8.)

Now will he remember their iniquity.] See ix. 9. Amos viii. 7.

They shall return into Egypt.] As into a second bondage there, which God threatens the Jews as one of the

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severest judgments he could inflict upon them. (Deut. xxviii. 68. see vii. 16. ix. 3. 6. of this prophecy.) Or the expression may denote, that they shall go into a state of captivity and bondage, as bad as that which they suffered in Egypt. *Going into Egypt* was a proverbial speech for extreme misery. (See the note upon Zech. v. 11.)

Ver. 14. *Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples.*] To his idols, at Dan and Beth-el.

And Judah hath multiplied fenced cities, &c.] Judah puts greater confidence in their fortifications than in God's protection: but God's judgments shall destroy them as surely as if a fire had been kindled in them. (Compare Amos i. 4, &c.) God's vengeance is often compared to fire. (See the note upon Ezek. xxx. 8.)

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

The captivity of the ten tribes is foretold as a judgment for their manifold sins.

Ver. 1. *REJOICE not, O Israel, for joy, like other people.*] The joy here mentioned may properly mean those rejoicings which were commonly made among all people at the end of harvest, when the gentiles offered sacrifices of thanksgiving for the plenty they enjoyed. The prophet tells the Israelites they had more highly offended by their apostacy, than the gentiles did by their ignorance. (Compare Ezek. xvi. 47, 48.)

For thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, thou hast loved a reward from every corn-floor.] Thou hast broken the covenant God made with thee, by serving other gods, (see iv. 12. v. 4. 7.) and hast offered the first-fruits, or tithes of thy increase, to idols, as an acknowledgment that the plenty thou enjoyest was their gift. (See ii. 12. Jer. xliv. 17.)

Ver. 2. *The floor and the wine-press shall not feed them,* &c.] I will take away their plenty of corn and wine, as a just punishment of their ingratitude. (See ii. 9. 12.)

Ver. 3. *They shall not dwell in the Lord's land: but Ephraim shall return to Egypt.*] God will turn them out of that inheritance he gave to their fathers, and they shall be carried into captivity and bondage a second time into Egypt. (See viii. 13.)

And they shall eat unclean things in Assyria.] Their circumstances in captivity will not permit them to observe the rules of that law relating to unclean meats, and they will be forced to partake of such meats as have been offered to idols. (Compare Ezek. iv. 13. Dan. i. 8.) The ten tribes were carried captive into the dominions of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii. 6. (Compare xi. 11. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 4. *They shall not offer wine-offerings to the Lord,* &c.] A more particular explanation of that threatening denounced, iii. 4. that they should be *without a sacrifice:* they should have no opportunity in their captivity to offer meat-offerings, or drink-offerings to God, as they did upon the high-places, or in their idolatrous temples; (see Amos iv. 4, 5.) and sometimes, perhaps, in the temple at Jerusalem. (See ver. 15.) They themselves shall be in the condition of mourners for the dead, and by that means be unqualified to offer any thing to God; nor will their offerings be acceptable. (See Deut. xxvi. 14.)

All that eat thereof shall be polluted.] As those are who come near the dead, (Numb. xix. 11.) who are thereby unqualified to attend upon God's service. (See Lev. xxi. 1. 6.)

For their bread for their souls shall not come into the house of the Lord.] The offerings they make for the expiation of souls (see Lev. xvii. 11.) shall not be fit to be brought into the house of the Lord, and the temple itself shall be left desolate.

Ver. 5. *What will ye do in the solemn day, in the day of the feast of the Lord.*] Ye shall have no opportunity of observing any of your solemn feasts in your captivity. (See ii. 11.)

Ver. 6. *For, lo, they are gone because of destruction: Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them.*] A great many of the ten tribes went into Egypt for fear of the captivity threatened by Shalmaneser: (see vii. 16. viii. 13.) accordingly the prophecies, which foretell their restoration, mention their return from Egypt. (See xi. 11. Isa. xi. 11. xxvii. 12. Zech. x. 10, 11.) The prophet threatens those that went down thither, that they should have no better a fate than their brethren, who were carried away into Assyria; but they should die there, and never see their native country any more.

Egypt shall gather them up.] Or, *Gather them,* as the word is translated, Ezek. xxix. 5. It signifies in both places the same with their being buried, expressed in other places by *being gathered to their people.*

The pleasant places for their silver.] Or, *Places desirable for their silver;* either as being repositories for their treasure or their plate, or as being adorned with silver.

Nettles shall possess them.] They shall be uninhabited and fall to ruin. (Compare x. 8. Isa. xxxii. 13. xxxiv. 13.)

Ver. 7. *The days of visitation are come—Israel shall know it.*] God's judgments (see ver. 9.) upon the ten tribes shall be so evident, that the most incredulous shall not be able to deny it.

The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad.] The false prophets (see ver. 8.) that pretend to speak by the Spirit of God, and foretell nothing but peace, shall be convinced of their folly and madness, when they see things fall out otherwise than they had foretold. (See Jer. vi. 14. xxii. 16, 17. Ezek. xiii. 10. Micah ii. 11. Zeph. iii. 4.)

For the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.] God has delivered this people up to those delusions, as a just punishment of their many sins, and the great hatred they have against God and his worship. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 8. *The watchman of Ephraim was with my God: but the prophet is a snare of a fowler,* &c.] The true prophet, like a watchman sent by God, gave warning to Israel of their approaching calamities. (See Jer. vi. 17. Ezek. iii. 17. xxxiii. 2. Micah vii. 4.) But the words of the false prophet are like a snare laid on purpose to entrap men into mischief and destruction: (see v. 1.) and his false prophecies he utters purely out of hatred to God and his worship, and to deter those that hearken to him from attending upon God's service at the temple.

Ver. 9. *They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the day of Gibeah.*] The men of Gibeah are described in the same characters as those of Sodom are: (compare Judg. xix. 22. with Gen. xix. 4.) to which they added

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the villany of *forcing* the Levite's *concubine*, (ibid. ver. 25, &c.)

Ver. 10. *I found Israel as grapes in the wilderness*, &c.] After I had miraculously redeemed Israel out of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness, their obedience was as grateful to me as early grapes, or the first ripe figs, are to a thirsty traveller. (Compare Isa. xxviii. 4. Micah vii. 1.) This relates to their first entering into covenant with God, and their promises of a ready obedience. (See Exod. xix. 8. xxiv. 3. Deut. v. 27—29. and compare ii. 15. xi. 1. of this prophecy.)

But they went to Baal-Peor, and separated themselves unto that shame.] The Hebrew word, *yinnazeru, were separated*, alludes to the order of the Nazarites, who were in a peculiar manner set apart for God's service: (see the note upon Amos ii. 11.) such as were Samson and John Baptist: whereas these dedicated themselves to the service of that filthy idol Baal-Peor, *that shame* or *shameful thing*, as it is expressed Jer. xi. 13. *Bosheth, shame*, was a nickname for Baal: so Jerubbaal is called Jerubbesheth, 2 Sam. xi. 21.

And their abominations were according as they loved.] They followed their own imaginations in the several idolatries which they committed. (See Numb. xv. 39. Deut. xxix. 19. Amos iv. 5.)

Ver. 11. *As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away as a bird*, &c.] The multitude of their people, in which they pride themselves, (see x. 13.) shall vanish out of sight like a bird: (compare Prov. xxiii. 4.) their women shall not be so fruitful as they have been heretofore.

Ver. 12. *Though they bring up their children, yet will I bereave them, that there shall not be a man left.*] If after the hazards of conception and childbearing, they should breed up their children to man's estate, yet will I make them childless; the sword without, and famine and pestilence within, shall make an entire riddance of them and their posterity. (See Deut. xxviii. 62. xxxii. 25. Jer. xvi. 3.)

Yea, woe also to them when I depart from them.] They shall feel what miseries shall befal them, when I withdraw my protection from them. (See Deut. xxxi. 17. 2 Kings xvii. 18. 23.)

Ver. 13. *Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, is planted in a pleasant place,*] The situation of Ephraim, and particularly of the royal city of Samaria situate in that tribe, is as pleasant as that of Tyre. (See Ezek. xxvii. 3.) But though Tyre held out against the siege of Shalmaneser, as Josephus relates, (Antiq. lib. ix. cap. *ult.*) yet Ephraim and the whole kingdom of Israel (see v. 3.) shall be subdued by him, and many of their children shall be a prey to his murdering sword.

Ver. 14. *What wilt thou give them? give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.*] The prophet speaks as if he were in suspense, their condition being so desperate, that nothing could relieve them. But, saith he, rather let their women be barren, than bring forth children only for the slaughter. (See the foregoing verse, and compare Luke xxiii. 29.)

Ver. 15. *All their wickedness is in Gilgal;* (see iv. 15.) *there I hated them.*] Or, *Therefore I hated them:* so the particle *sham* sometimes signifies. (See Noldius, p. 766.)

I will drive them out of my house, I will love them no more.] Compare i. 6. I will not any longer treat them as my domestics, but debar them of the privilege of living in my land, (ver. 3.) of coming to my temple, (ver. 4, 5.) or enjoying any marks of my favour, (ver. 17.)

All their princes are revolters.] Their rulers and magistrates revolt from my worship, and break all the rules of justice and honesty. (Compare iv. 8. Isa. i. 23. Ezek. xxii. 27. Micah iii. 11. Zech. iii. 3.)

Ver. 16. *Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit.*] They are like a tree that is blasted and dead at root, and only fit to be cut down.

Yea, though they bring forth, &c.] See ver. 13.

Ver. 17. *My God will cast them away*, &c.] He will no more own them for his people, but leave them to wander and be dispersed among the other nations. They were afterward called by the name of the Διασπορὰ, or *dispersed* among the gentiles. (See John vii. 35. James i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 1.)

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet continues to threaten destruction to the ten tribes and their idols, but withal exhorts them to repentance and reformation.

Ver. 1. *ISRAEL is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself.*] The Hebrew word *bokek* is capable of two contrary significations; it may either signify *empty*, or *emptying (i. e.* casting) the fruit it giveth, the sense which our translators follow: or else it may signify *nourishing;* in which sense the LXX. and Vulgar Latin understand it, and which Dr. Pocock confirms from the use of the word in Arabic: and then the words will import, that though Israel, like a flourishing vine, abounded with plenty of all things, yet he brought forth no fruit unto God, but abused his blessings to the encouragement of sin and idolatry; as it follows in the next words.

According to the goodness of the land they have made goodly images.] See ii. 8. viii. 4.

Ver. 2. *Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty.*] They think to divide their duty and affections between God and idols. (See 1 Kings xviii. 21.) This will manifestly appear in the punishment of their sin, when God shall destroy all the monuments of their idolatry. (See ver. 5, 6. 8.)

Ver. 3. *We have no king, because we fear not the Lord.*] This verse relates to the time of anarchy, or an interregnum, which continued for eight or nine years, between the murder of Pekah and the settlement of Hoshea in the throne. (Compare ver. 7. 15. and see Archbishop Usher's Annals, ad A. M. 3265. 3274.)

What then should a king do to us?] Or rather, *for us*, as the phrase signifies, vi. 4. *i. e.* a king cannot protect us, if God be against us.

Ver. 4. *For they have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant.*] This may either relate to their breaking their solemn covenant with God; (see v. 7.) or their treachery towards their kings, against whom they had formed several conspiracies. (See 2 Kings xv. 10. 14. 25. 30.)

Thus judgment springeth up like hemlock in the furrows of the field.] Injustice being publicly countenanced, encourages the same practices in private men's dealings: thus,

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instead of judgment and fair dealing, injustice increases every where, as bitter and poisonous weeds grow up in a field, where there is no care taken to destroy them. (Compare Amos v. 7. vi. 12.) The word *rosh* is sometimes translated *gall*, and in other places *hemlock*; and signifies some bitter poisonous herb expressed by a *root of bitterness*, Heb. xii. 15.

Ver. 5. *The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of the calves of Beth-aven*, &c.] Samaria here signifies the kingdom of Israel, of which Samaria was the capital city. (See viii. 5, 6.) The inhabitants of that kingdom shall be seized with fear and confusion when the calf of Beth-el (see iv. 15.) shall be carried away as a present to Shalmaneser, (ver. 6.) when he made the king and kingdom of Israel tributary. (2 Kings xvii. 3.) The Jewish writers have a tradition, that the golden calf at Dan was taken away by Tiglath-pileser, when he subdued Galilee, (2 Kings xv. 29.) and the other at Beth-el by order of Shalmaneser. The plural number of the word *calves*, is an enallage for the singular; for the same idol is in this verse spoken of in the singular number. (Compare xiii. 2.)

For the people thereof shall mourn over it, and the priests thereof that rejoiced on it, &c.] Dr. Pocock observes, that the word *yagilu*, translated *rejoiced*, is also used in a contrary signification, as several Hebrew words are, for *mourning*, or being sorrowful; in which sense it is probably used, Job iii. 32. Psal. ii. 11. and then the sentence here may be word for word translated, *and the priests thereof shall sorrow over it*. Both priests and people shall mourn and be sorrowful, when they see *its glory departed* from it, (1 Sam. iv. 21.) and it is no more the object of religious worship. The word *kemarim*, rendered *priests*, is translated *idolatrous priests*, 2 Kings xxiii. 5. but the original word is retained in our translation of Zeph. i. 5. which are all the places in which it occurs in the Scriptures. From this word the Latin *camillus* is derived, which in the primary signification denotes a priest.

Ver. 6. *It shall be carried to Assyria, for a present to king Jareb.*] King Jareb is a king that can plead their cause, and take them into his protection, as the phrase is explained, v. 13. there it probably means Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, unto whom Menahem betook himself for safety: and here it seems to denote Shalmaneser, who took the Israelites into his protection by making them tributaries. (See the note on ver. 5.)

Ephraim shall receive shame, &c.] They shall see the unsuccessfulness of Jeroboam's policy in setting up of this idolatrous worship, and their complying with it; and shall be ashamed to find that the idol in which they trusted, could not defend itself. (Compare xi. 6.)

Ver. 7. *As for Samaria, her king is cut off*, &c.] This may probably be understood of Pekah, who was slain by Hoshea. (See ver. 3.) The king of Israel is styled king of Samaria, 1 Kings xxi. 1, 2. 2 Kings i. 3. as being the capital city of the kingdom.

Ver. 8. *The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed.*] *Aven* is the same with *Beth-aven*, ver. 5. The idolatrous temples were usually placed upon mountains: (see iv. 13.) so was that at Beth-el, called the *high places*, the plural number being often used in the Hebrew to express a thing spoken of to be eminent or remarkable in its kind. The idolatry here practised is called the *sin of Israel*, as being such in an eminent manner. (See Deut. ix. 21.) So Jeroboam is said to *make Israel to sin*, by setting up this idolatrous worship. (See 1 Kings xii. 30. xiii. 34.)

The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars.] Such usually growing among ruins. (See ix. 6.)

And they shall say to the mountains, Cover us, &c.] The words express the great consternation of the wicked, when God's judgments overtake them; whose guilt prompts them to cast about where to hide themselves. (Compare Isa. ii. 19. Luke xxiii. 30. Rev. vi. 16.)

Ver. 9. *O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah.*] See ix. 9. Some render it, *More than in the days of Gibeah.*

There they stood.] The other tribes set themselves in array of battle against the Benjamites, who refused to deliver up the men who had been guilty of so much lewdness. (See Judg. xx. 13.)

The battle in Gibeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them.] The other tribes did not at first get the better of the Benjamites, though at last they cut all of them off but six hundred. (See Judg. xx. 46, 47.) But if the same thing were to be done now, you would not have the zeal or courage to encounter any such offenders.

Ver. 10. *It is in my desire that I should chastise them.*] I shall take pleasure in punishing them for their sins, and shall now *rejoice over them to destroy them*, Deut. xxviii. 63.

And the people shall be gathered against them.] Either the Assyrians, whose alliance they formerly sought after; or those people whose idolatry they had complied with. (See Ezek. xvi. 37.)

When they shall bind themselves in their two furrows.] The LXX. give a much plainer and easier sense of the words, who follow the marginal reading of the Hebrew, and render it, *When I shall chastise them for their two iniquities; viz.* the calves of Dan and Beth-el. (Compare ver. 8.)

Ver. 11. *And Ephraim is as a heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn; but I passed over her fair neck*, &c.] The sense would run easier if we read it, *Ephraim is as a heifer that is teachable—so I passed over her fair neck. I caused Ephraim to ride, Judah did plough, and Jacob did break the clods.* God sets forth the gentle and easy methods he used to bring both Israel and Judah to a sense of their duty; treating them with gentleness, as a husbandman does young bullocks or horses, stroking them, and encouraging them, till they are accustomed to the yoke: then he gave them his law, and prescribed them rules for the several duties and offices of life, and expected they should bring forth fruit answerable to the several helps and advantages which he had given them. Men's improvements in grace are often compared to the manuring of ground, in order to make it fruitful: so the church is styled *God's vineyard*, Isa. v. 9. and his *husbandry*, 1 Cor. iii. 9.

Ver. 12. *Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy.*] Employ yourselves in works of justice and righteousness; and by God's mercy you may still hope to reap the fruits of your repentance and reformation.

Break up your fallow ground, &c.] You have lain a long while uncultivated, so it is time for you to repent, and bring forth the fruits of good living; and you shall not fail of God's blessing upon your sincere endeavours, to make you more and more fruitful.

Ver. 13. *Ye have ploughed wickedness, ye have reaped*

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iniquity, &c.] As your thoughts and designs have been evil, such has been the fruit and reward of your labours. (Compare viii. 7.)

Ye have eaten the fruit of lies.] You have received the just rewards of your idolatry. (See the note on vii. 3.)

Because thou didst trust in thy way, and in the multitude of thy mighty men.] See ix. 11. xiii. 15. This *way* may signify that way of worship which thou hast devised: so the word is taken, Amos viii. 14. (See the note there.)

Ver. 14. *Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people*, &c.] This points at the taking Samaria, after a three years' siege, by Shalmaneser king of Assyria; which put a final period to the kingdom of Israel. (See 2 Kings xvii. 6.)

As Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel in the day of battle.] The prophet compares the destruction of Samaria with another terrible desolation, which the same Shalmaneser, called here Shalman, made at Beth-arbel, a place in Armenia (famous afterward for the defeat of Darius, the last king of Persia, by Alexander), where all the inhabitants were put to the sword, without any distinction either of sex or age. (Compare xiii. 16.)

Ver. 15. *So shall Beth-el do unto you because of your great wickedness.*] The idolatry set up at Beth-el shall be in like manner the cause of your ruin. The Hebrew reads, *Because of the evil of your evil:* that language expresses the greatness of any thing by repeating the word over again. The same expression is used by St. Paul, (Rom. vii. 13.) *That sin might become exceeding sinful; i. e.* hereby it might appear how full of evil our natural corruption is.

In a morning shall the king of Israel be cut off.] Suddenly shall Hoshea be deprived of his kingdom, and an end put to the whole state and government of Israel. The expression in the Hebrew denotes the *first appearing of the morning*, to signify that it shall be done early and without delay: so we read, Psal. xlvi. 3. *God shall help her, and that right early:* where the Hebrew reads, *At the appearing of the morning:* and again, Psal. xc. 14. cxliii. 8. The same thing is elsewhere expressed by *rising early*, Jer. vii. 13, xxxv. 15. The expression here may allude to the destruction of Pharaoh and his army when *the morning appeared*, Exod. xiv. 27.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

A continuation of threatenings against Israel, but yet with promises of shewing them mercy.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Israel was a child, then I loved him.*] When this people was in a state of childhood, *i. e.* in the patriarchal times, and during their continuance under the Egyptian bondage, from whence I delivered them.

And called my son out of Egypt.] Israel is called *God's son*, and his *first-born*, Exod. iv. 22, 23. and therein was an eminent figure of the Messias, in whom all *God's promises are fulfilled.* This prophecy is applied by St. Matthew, ii. 15. to our Lord's return out of Egypt, after his flight thither in his infancy: and the literal sense of the words does more properly belong to him than to Israel; which is observable in many other prophecies, which can but improperly be applied to those of whom they were at first spoken, and taking them in their true and genuine sense, are only fulfilled in Christ. (See particularly Psal. xxii. 16. 18.)

Ver. 2. *As they called them, so they went from him.*] Or, *The more they called them*, or *they were called* (the active being often used for the impersonal), *so much the more they went from him.* (See Noldius, p. 436.) The more earnestly the prophets called upon them to cleave steadfastly to the true God, (see ver. 7.) the more they were bent to depart from him to the worship of idols.

They sacrifice to Baalim.] See the note upon ii. 13. and xiii. 1.

Ver. 3. *I taught Ephraim also to go, taking him by the arms.*] In this time of his childhood (ver. 1.) I bare him, and carried him *as a man doth bear his son*, Deut. i. 31. Or, As a mother doth teach her child to go, leading it by the arms; protecting him, and providing for him in the wilderness. (See Deut. viii. 2.)

But they knew not that I healed them.] They considered not (see ii. 8. vii. 9.) that the health and safety they enjoyed was owing to me. (Compare Exod. xv. 26. xxiii. 25.)

Ver. 4. *I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.*] I made use of those means of drawing them to myself, which were most proper to work upon their reason and ingenuity; *viz.* the methods of loving-kindness and good-will towards them.

I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws.] I removed the yoke or bondage of Egypt from off their heads. (Compare Lev. xxvi. 13.)

And I laid meat unto them.] I provided manna to sustain them in the wilderness.

Ver. 5. *He shall not return into Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king*, &c.] Though many of them have gone into Egypt for refuge against the invasion of Shalmaneser, (see viii. 13. ix. 3.) yet they shall not have any farther opportunity of betaking themselves thither, but the king of Assyria shall carry them away captive; because they refused to return to me, notwithstanding so many calls I had given them in order to their repentance.

Ver. 6. *And the sword shall abide on his cities, and consume his branches, and devour them.*] Both cities and villages shall be destroyed by the conqueror's sword. The word translated *branches*, signifies also *bars;* and may denote the valiant men that should defend them against the enemy's forces; so the Chaldee understands it, and in this sense the word is used, Isa. xvi. 6. Jer. xlviii. 30.

Because of their own counsels.] See x. 6.

Ver. 7. *And my people are bent to backsliding from me.*] See iv. 16. The original word *meshubah*, is the same which Jeremy often uses, speaking of this subject. (See Jer. iii. 6. 8, &c. viii. 15. xiv. 7. and compare xiv. 4. of this prophecy.) The words are thus translated by some, *My people are in suspense because of their backsliding from me.* Either they are in continual anxiety because of my displeasure; or else they are irresolute, and halt between God and their idols. (Compare x. 2.)

Though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him.] This may relate to the several calls God gave them by his prophets. (See ver. 2.) Dr. Wells understands it of the invitation Hezekiah made to the people of Israel to join with him in celebrating the Passover, which some of the ten tribes accepted of, but others refused, (2 Chron. xxx. 1. 11.)

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Ver. 8. *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee up, Israel?*] God's mercies are here pathetically described as contending with his justice, to shew that he does *not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men*, Lam. iii. 33.

How shall I make thee as Admah? &c.] How shall I give thee up to be a perpetual desolation? (Compare Deut. xxix. 23.)

My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.] Thus God's compassion towards sinners is elsewhere expressed by the sounding or yearning of his bowels, Isa. lxiii. 15. Jer. xxxi. 20. a metaphor taken from the natural affection which parents have for their children.

Ver. 9. *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee.*] I will not deal with them like an enraged enemy, who thinks of nothing but satisfying his revenge: I will not, like such a one, *return to destroy, i. e.* make a second destruction, so to cut off those that escape the first fury of my vengeance: I do not give way to a blind rage, as men often do; but, as God, am unchangeable, and will still fulfil my gracious promises made to Abraham and his people, of being their God. (Compare Mal. iii. 6.)

I will not enter into the city.] A second time, in order to make an utter destruction.

Ver. 10. *They shall walk after the Lord; he shall roar like a lion.*] They shall follow God's call, and comply with his commands; when he shall convert them by an efficacious call of his providence, or powerful preaching of the gospel. God's voice is elsewhere compared to the roaring of a lion, because of the terror which accompanies it. (See Joel iii. 16. Amos i. 8. Rev. x. 3.)

When he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.] The word *tremble* describes the motion which a bird makes with her wings when it flies; see the following verse. So the sense is, That at this efficacious call of God, his children, the remnant of Israel, who shall be accounted his children, and heirs of the promises made to their fathers, (see i. 10.) shall come in haste from the several places of their dispersions, and particularly from the western parts of the world; (see Zech. viii. 7.) called *the sea* in the original, and expressed in Isaiah, by *the islands of the sea.* (See Isa. xi. 11. xxiv. 14. and the notes there.)

Ver. 11. *They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt* [*i. e.* fly with haste; see the foregoing note], *as a dove out of the land of Assyria.*] Great numbers of Jews were exiles in Egypt and Assyria: so when the restoration of the Jews is spoken of, Egypt and Assyria are mentioned as countries from whence a considerable number of them should return. (See the note upon ix. 3. 6.)

And I will place them in their houses.] As doves naturally resort to the houses they are used to, (see Isa. lx. 18.) so shall these return and settle in their own native country. (See the note upon Ezek. xxviii. 25.)

Ver. 12. *Ephraim compasseth me about with lies*, &c.] In several translations this verse begins the twelfth chapter, as of right it ought to do: for the reproof which God gives here to Israel belongeth to the subject of the following chapter; and sets forth the ten tribes abounding in all manner of idolatry and wickedness. (See the note upon vii. 3.)

But Judah yet ruleth with his God, and is faithful with the saints.] Judah keeps close to that kingly government which God settled in David's family, and faithfully observes those ordinances which God gave to his saints by Moses; (see Deut. xxxiii. 3.) by which they were to be distinguished to be a holy nation, and God's peculiar people. This relates to the times of Hezekiah.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet reproves both Israel and Judah for their impieties, and puts them in mind of God's favours to their father Jacob, for which they made most ungrateful returns.

Ver. 1. *EPHRAIM feedeth on wind, and followeth the east wind.*] A proverbial expression to signify labour in vain, or pursuing such measures as will bring damage rather than benefit. (Compare viii. 7.) The east wind was a parching wind, which blasted the fruit of the earth: thence it denotes desolation and destruction. (See xiii. 15.)

They do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt.] At the same time that they engage themselves to be tributaries to the king of Assyria, they underhand send presents to the king of Egypt, that he should assist them in shaking off that yoke. (See 2 Kings xvii. 4.) The land of Judah had plenty of excellent oil. (See Deut. viii. 8. Ezek. xxvii. 17.)

Ver. 2. *The Lord also hath a controversy with Judah,* (see iv. 1.) *and will punish Jacob according to his ways*, &c.] Though Hezekiah had abolished idolatry, and restored God's worship in the temple, (2 Chron. xxix. 3. xxx. 1.) yet there was much hypocrisy and great corruption in the manners of his subjects; for which God's judgments are here threatened, and the invasion of Sennacherib was actually inflicted, (2 Kings xviii. 13, &c.)

Ver. 3. *He took his brother by the heel in the womb.*] From the mentioning of Jacob in the foregoing verse, the prophet takes occasion to put his posterity in mind of the particular favours God had shewed him, and bestowed upon his posterity for his sake. His taking his brother *by the heel* in the womb, denoted that he obtained the right of the first-born, and deprived his brother of it.

Ibid. and Ver. 4. *By his strength he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed.*] The prophet alludes to those words of his, Gen. xxxii. 26. *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me;* intimating the strength and prevalency of his prayers for the obtaining a blessing from God. The words, ver. 3. *He had power with God,* and those that follow, *He had power over the angel,* are equivalent; which plainly prove that this person who assumed a human shape was really God; *i. e. the Son of God,* and the *angel of the covenant;* by whom all the Divine appearances recorded in the Old Testament were performed; the affairs of the church being ordered by him from the beginning. This subject is learnedly handled by Dr. Alix, in his Judgment of the Jewish Church against the Unitarians, chap. 13—15. by Archbishop Tenison, in his discourse of Idolatry, chap. 14. and by Bishop Bull, Defen. Fid. Nicen. cap. 1. sect. 1.

Ver. 4. *He wept and made supplication to him.*] Jacob's wrestling with the angel was not only a corporal conflict, but likewise a spiritual one: from bodily wrestling he betook him to spiritual weapons; he poured forth tears with earnest supplications and prayers, and strove not so much

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for victory as for a blessing; the only way for a feeble, impotent creature, to prevail over his Creator. Jacob's supplication and tears may probably relate to those earnest prayers he made, Gen. xxxii. 9—11. The combat here referred to, by which he had power with God, ended in an assurance that his prayers were answered.

He found him in Beth-el.] This relates to God's appearing to Jacob after the former vision, Gen. xxxv. 9. 14. where God renewed his promise of giving the land of Judea to his posterity. The prophet takes particular notice of the place where he appeared, *viz.* Beth-el, which they had since so miserably polluted by idolatry.

And there he spake with us.] The Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint reads, *There he spake with him;* as if the expression alluded to Gen. xxxv. 14. where God is said *to have talked with Jacob:* but the present Hebrew reading yields a very good sense, importing that God did not only speak to him there, but likewise did instruct us not to set up an idol in that place which he had honoured with his presence.

Ver. 5. *Even the Lord God of hosts; The Lord is his memorial.*] Jehovah is the name by which he will be known, and remembered by all his servants, and distinguished from all false gods. (See Exod. iii. 5.)

Ver. 6. *Therefore turn thee to thy God,* &c.] Return to him and serve him faithfully, and then you may expect the continuance of his favours, and his making good the promises he made to your fathers.

Ver. 7. *He is a merchant,* &c.] Instead of keeping mercy and judgment, (ver. 6.) he loves those frauds and deceits, which are too commonly practised in buying and selling; and forgets those laws of God, which require the use of *just weights and measures.* (See Lev. xix. 35, 36. Prov. xi. 1.)

Ver. 8. *And Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich,* &c.] He pleaseth himself with the thoughts that his riches increase, notwithstanding his unjust dealings; and from thence concludes that God is not displeased with him, nor will lay his injustice to his charge.

In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin.] Or, *They shall find neither iniquity nor sin:* the particle *asher* is sometimes taken in a copulative sense. (See Eccles. v. 18.) The words translated *iniquity* and *sin* are equivalent. (See Psal. xxxii. 5.)

Ver. 9. *And I that am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt.*] Who brought thee out from thence, and have still continued my favours towards thee. (Compare ver. 13. xiii. 4.)

Will yet make thee dwell in tabernacles, &c.] I will in aftertimes return thy captivity, and give thee quiet possession of thy own land again, where you shall thankfully acknowledge your former delivery out of Egypt, and your settlement in your own country; which was the intent of keeping the feast of tabernacles. (See Lev. xxiii. 42, 43. 2 Macc. x. 6.) It was a feast observed with extraordinary expressions of joy by the Jews, as appears from Nehem. viii. 17. Zech. xiv. 16. John vii. 37.

Ver. 10. *I have also spoken by the prophets, and have multiplied visions, and used similitudes,* &c.] Here are three species of prophecy or Divine revelation distinctly mentioned: first, immediate suggestion or inspiration, when God dictates or suggests the very words which the prophet was to deliver: secondly, *visions,* or a representation made of external objects to the imagination in as lively a manner as if they were conveyed by the senses; and, thirdly, *parables,* or apt resemblances; such as that of God's church to a *vineyard,* Isa. v. 1. of the destruction of Jerusalem to a *forest set on fire,* Ezek. xx. 46. 49. and to a *seething-pot,* xxiv. 3. Hosea himself was a *parable* or type to the Jews in taking a *wife of whoredoms,* to represent the idolatries of the house of Israel, whereby they went a whoring after strange gods, and forsook the Lord their king and husband. It was an ancient custom in the eastern parts of the world, to convey instructions under *symbols* and sacred *hieroglyphics:* Pythagoras learned this method in his travels in the east, and the conversation he had there with the Jews, and other wise men of those parts. God saith here, that he had inspired his prophets in these different ways to bring his people to repentance, but all in vain. Some interpreters understand the words in the future tense, *I will also speak by the prophets;* as if God had promised to give some new effusion of his Spirit in the latter days, to facilitate the Jews' conversion. (See the note upon Isa. liv. 13.)

Ver. 11. *Is there iniquity in Gilead? surely they are vanity.*] If we read the former part of the sentence with an interrogation, it might be more significantly rendered, *Is there not iniquity in Gilead?* So the particle *im* signifies, Esth. iv. 14. Jer. xxxi. 20. However, the words are in sense a vehement affirmation, importing that the idolatry practised in Gilead, (see vi. 8.) could not preserve him from being carried away captive by Tiglath-pileser, (2 Kings xv. 29.)

They sacrifice bullocks in Gilgal; yea, their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the field.] Notwithstanding this judgment of God upon Gilead, and the country on the other side Jordan, they continue to offer sacrifices to their idols in Gilgal. (See iv. 15.) Their altars stand so thick, that they are discernible as stones gathered up and laid in heaps in the fields. (See viii. 11. x. 1.) Some understand the sentence as containing a threatening, that their altars should be demolished, and become so many ruinous heaps. (2 Kings xix. 25.) The word *gulim, heaps,* alludes to Gilgal, just before mentioned, a name derived from the same original. Some commentators explain the whole verse to this sense; That the whole kingdom of Israel, that part which is beyond Jordan, where Gilead stood, as well as the other parts on this side that river, and particularly Gilgal, are polluted with idolatry.

Ver. 12. *And Jacob fled into the country of Syria,* &c.] In this and the following verse, the prophet reproves their ingratitude, by putting them in mind from what small beginnings God raised them to be a mighty nation; that their ancestor Jacob (mentioned before, ver. 3, 4.) was fain to fly for his life to Laban in Syria, and sustain himself, and raise his family by keeping his uncle's flock. (Compare Deut. xxvi. 5.)

Ver. 13. *And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt,* &c.] And afterward, when his posterity were detained in a miserable bondage in Egypt, God delivered them thence, and miraculously preserved them at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, by the hand of Moses. (Compare xiii. 4, 5.)

Ver. 14. *Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly.*]

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Notwithstanding all my favours shewed to these people and their ancestors, they have provoked me by their idolatries, and other sins, in a most outrageous manner. The word *tamrurim*, translated *most bitterly*, Schindler renders, *by his heaps; i. e.* his altars, which stood *as heaps* in the field, ver. 12. (Compare Jer. xxxi. 21.)

Therefore shall he leave his blood upon him.] Or, *His blood shall return upon him*, as the Chaldee paraphrase renders it: his wickedness will be the cause of his destruction. (See xiii. 9.)

And his reproach shall his Lord return upon him.] He has reproached and dishonoured God by word and deed, and God shall in a just recompence make him a reproach and by-word among the heathen. (See vii. 16. Deut. xxviii. 37. compare Dan. xi. 18.)

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

A continuation of God's threatenings for their sins; to which are added gracious promises of deliverance from death, to be fulfilled under the gospel.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel.*] While he behaved himself submissively and obediently towards God, he was reckoned among the principal tribes of Israel. Here Ephraim is spoken of as distinct from Israel: in other places of this prophecy he is put for the whole kingdom of the ten tribes. (See v. 3.)

But when he offended in Baal, he died.] When he gave himself to idolatry, his strength immediately declined, and had manifest symptoms of ruin and destruction; as when a man falls into a languishing condition, it is the certain forerunner of death. The word *Baal* is here taken, in a general sense, for all false gods, or idolatrous ways of worship; so as to comprehend the worship of the golden calves, though they were designed for symbolical representations of the true God: in which sense the word *Baalim* may be understood, ii. 13. xi. 2. To the same sense we may most probably explain that text, 1 Kings xix. 18. *Yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal;* meaning that small remnant of the faithful in Israel, who had stuck close to the worship of the true God, when the whole body of the people had complied with that idolatry which Jeroboam set up and authorized as the national religion. (Compare Tobit i. 5.)

Ver. 2. *But now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images according to their understanding.*] Or, *According to their invention*, or fancy. They please themselves with some new piece of idolatry, as their fancy or imagination suggests. (Compare x. 1.)

They say of them [or, to them], *Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.*] Compare 1 Kings xix. 18. The word *adoration* properly signifies kissing the hand, and making obeisance to the object of worship: so Job describes the adoration which the ancient idolaters paid to the heavenly bodies, xxi. 26. Afterward the same outward act of worship was paid to images; as appears by a noted passage at the beginning of Minucius Felix's Octavius. Sometimes they kissed the image itself; as appears by the description Cicero gives of Hercules's image, which Verres had took away, act. 4. in Verrem, and by those noted verses of Lucretius, lib. i.

> " ——— tum portas propter ahena
> Signa manus dextras ostendunt attenuari
> Sæpe salutantum tactu."

Some translate *zibche adam, the sacrifices of men; i. e.* those who offered human sacrifices: but this was an execrable piece of worship paid to Moloch, but never practised, that we find, at Dan or Beth-el. Our interpreters render the words *zibche adam*, very properly, *the men that sacrifice;* as the phrase *ebijone adam*, signifies *the poor among men*, Isa. xxix. 19.

Ver. 3. *Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud,* &c.] Comparisons that express their sudden disappearing and coming to nothing. (Compare vi. 4. Dan. ii. 35.)

Ver. 4. *Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god beside me.*] In thy distress thou betookest thyself to other gods, expecting relief from them; but thou shalt find that none will be able to save thee but myself, whenever thou wilt sincerely turn to me. (Compare xii. 9. Isa. xliii. 11.) This and the following verse are an introduction to the gracious promises that follow, ver. 9. 14. and chap. xiv. and import, that God will never utter lyforget the promises made to their fathers. (See Rom. xi. 29.)

Ver. 5. *I knew thee in the wilderness,* &c.] I took especial care of thee, fed and sustained thee for forty years in the wilderness, a place destitute of all conveniences of life: the words are taken out of Deut. ii. 7. To *know*, often signifies, in the Scripture phrase, to have a regard for, or take care of. See Exod. ii. 25. Psal. i. 7. xxxi. 8. cxliii. 3. Prov. xii. 10. Nahum i. 7. where our translation renders it *regard*.

Ver. 6. *According to their pastures so were they filled,* &c.] The more care I took to provide plentifully for them, both before and after they came into the land of promise, the more perverse they shewed themselves towards me; their pride made them forget me their great Benefactor. The expression alludes to Deut. viii. 12. 14. (See likewise xxii. 15.)

Ver. 7, 8. *Therefore I will be to them as a lion,* &c.] I will utterly consume them from being a nation, and give them up into the hands of such enemies as will shew them no mercy. (Compare ver. 16. and Jer. v. 6.)

Ver. 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help.*] Thy own sins have brought down destruction upon thee; and it is from me only thou canst expect any help, which I will in due time afford thee. (See the note upon ver. 4.)

Ver. 10. *I will be thy king: where is there any other that may save thee in all thy cities?*] God promises to be their immediate protector upon their repentance. But the words may better be translated, *Where is thy king now, that he may save thee?* &c. In this sense the LXX. understand the words, and several other interpreters; the word *ehi* being taken for *ajeb*, by a frequent transposition of letters, as it is used again, ver. 14. The words relate either to the anarchy, which continued for some years, between the murder of Pekah and the succession of Hoshea; (see x. 3.) or else to the time when Hoshea was deposed and imprisoned by the king of Assyria. (See 2 Kings xvii. 4.)

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And thy judges, of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes.] They desired a king *to judge them like other nations*, attended by his judges and proper officers. (See 1 Sam. viii. 5. 12.)

Ver. 11. *I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away* (or, will take him away) *in my wrath.*] I complied with your request in giving you your first king Saul, though I was justly displeased at it. (See 1 Sam. viii. 7. x. 19.) And of later times I have suffered you to set up new kings, after you had murdered their predecessors; (see viii. 4.) and now I will take your present king Hoshea, and at the same time put an end to your kingdom and nation.

Ver. 12. *The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up: his sin is hid.*] Our translators seem to understand the verse in a favourable sense, as if God hath promised not to execute that vengeance upon Israel which was due to their sins: but the words rather imply a contrary meaning, and may be better translated, *The iniquity of Ephraim is treasured up; his sin is laid up: i. e.* it is laid up in my memory; and though the punishment due to it has been respited for some time, yet now the season is come when it shall be put in execution. The sentence is equivalent to that expression in Job, xiv. 17. *My transgression is sealed up in a bag; i. e.* thou keepest an exact account of it, as men do of money, which they seal up in a bag, to be forthcoming at a proper occasion. To the same purpose are those words of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 34, 35. *Is not this laid up in store for me, and sealed up among my treasures? To me belongs vengeance*, &c. (Compare Rom. ii. 5.)

Ver. 13. *The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him.*] Great calamities are often compared to the pains of childbirth. (See Isa. xii. 8. Jer. xxx. 6. Psal. xviii. 4. and so the Greek word ὠδῖνες is used, Acts ii. 24.)

He is an unwise son; for he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children.] The old translation reads it to a plainer sense, *Else he would not stand still like a still-born child.* As a child, if it could be supposed to have understanding, would deliver itself out of the straits of the womb, and not tarry there to the manifest danger of itself and the mother: (compare 2 Kings xix. 3.) so if Ephraim, or Israel, had acted wisely, they would have prevented their approaching destruction by a speedy reformation.

Ver. 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.*] If we apply this to Ephraim, or the Israelites spoken of before, it may signify, that though they be in never so hopeless and desperate a condition, God will, in due time, deliver them out of it. (See the like expressions, Psal. xxxi. 3. lxxi. 20. lxxxvi. 13.) But there is a more sublime and spiritual sense contained in the words, as will appear by the following note.

O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.] It is usual for the prophets, when they foretell temporal deliverances, to be carried away beyond their first views by the impetus of the prophetic spirit, to predict the greater mercies and deliverances which belong to the gospel state: so here the prophet takes occasion from foretelling temporal mercies, to enlarge his views, and set forth that great and final deliverance of the faithful from the power of sin and death, which shall be completed by Christ at his second coming, when he shall *swallow up death in victory*, 1 Cor. xv. 54. St. Paul understood the words in this sense in the following verse of that chapter, *O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?* This will appear to any one, that compares that place with the Septuagint translation here. The word *chi*, translated *I will*, they render *where*, as it signifies ver. 10. of this chapter. The apostle, indeed, seems to quote this text from his memory, and rather represents the sense of it, than keeps close to the letter. However, the learned Dr. Pocock is of opinion, in his comment upon this place, that the Hebrew word *debareka*, rendered by our interpreters *thy plagues*, and by the LXX. *thy plea, sentence*, or *judgment*, is very properly translated *thy sting* by St. Paul; the word denoting, in Arabic, the *sharp point of a bird's claw;* and the word *Deborah*, a *bee*, being probably so called from its sting.

Ver. 15. *Though he be fruitful among his brethren, yet an east wind shall come from the wilderness*, &c.] The word *Ephraim* denotes fruitfulness. (See Gen. xli. 52.) This tribe answered his name, being the most numerous and potent of all the ten tribes. (See the note upon v. 3.) Notwithstanding the pride he takes in his fruitfulness, (see x. 13.) the king of Assyria, a country lying eastward of Judea, shall come with an army, like a parching east wind coming over a large plain or wilderness, and shall blast and wither him, as a tree that is dried up for want of moisture. (Compare iv. 19. and see the note upon Jer. iv. 11.)

He shall destroy the treasure of all pleasant vessels.] The same enemy shall plunder all their treasures, and take away their rich and costly furniture; as the word *kelee* is translated, Nahum ii. 9.

Ver. 16. *Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God.*] The prophet foretells the final destruction of Samaria for her idolatry and other impieties, by Shalmaneser king of Assyria. (See 2 Kings xvii. 6.)

They shall fall by the sword; their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.] These are the barbarous practices of conquerors, when they take cities by storm, to put all to the sword, without distinction of age or sex. (See x. 15. 2 Kings viii. 12. xv. 16. Isa. xiii. 16. Amos i. 13. Nahum iii. 10.)

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophecy concludes with an earnest exhortation to repentance, and God's gracious promises of pardon and blessing upon it.

Ver. 1. *THOU hast fallen by thine iniquity.*] Thy sins have been the cause of thy destruction. (See xiii. 9.)

Ver. 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him*, &c.] The prophet prescribes them a form of confession very proper to be used upon their repentance and conversion, beseeching God to pardon their past sins, and receive them graciously upon their repentance. Such another form we have, Joel ii. 17.

Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.] The latter part of the sentence may be rendered, *And give us what is good:* bestow thy grace and blessing upon us. Many Hebrew verbs have two contrary significations, as hath been observed upon Isa. xxii. 18. To the instances there collected, we may add one taken out of xi. 8. of this

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prophecy; where the verb *miggen* signifies to *deliver up*, whereas its usual signification is to *protect*. So the verb *lakach* here used probably signifies to *give*, as well as to *receive;* as appears from Psal. lxviii. 18. where our translation reads, *Thou hast received gifts for men:* but the LXX. render it, *Thou hast given gifts unto men;* which sense St. Paul follows, Ephes. iv. 8. and which best agrees with the scope of the text.

So will we render thee the calves of our lips.] Instead of the sacrifices of calves or bullocks, we will offer to thee the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which is the *fruit of our lips*, our *reasonable service*, and such as properly belongs to the times of the gospel. So that this form of confession will be most suitable for the Jews to use upon their conversion to Christianity. St. Paul applies the words to the eucharist, (Heb. xiii. 15.) the true Christian sacrifice; and follows the Septuagint translation of them, which expresses the sense rather than the words.

Ver. 3. *Ashur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses.*] The first part of the people's repentance is described as consisting in relying solely upon God's protection, and not putting their trust in human strength; and then in renouncing all idolatrous worship. The Israelites had formerly made an alliance with the Assyrians, (see v. 13. viii. 9. xii. 1.) and they are often upbraided by the prophets for their courting foreign alliances, and particularly strengthening themselves with horses from Egypt or Assyria. (See 2 Chron. xvi. 7. Isa. xxx. 16. xxxvi. 8.)

Neither will we say to the works of our hands, Ye are our gods.] Another part of their repentance consists in renouncing all sorts of idol-worship; which is often spoken of in the prophets, as an introduction to that state of the church which is to commence from the time of the Jews' conversion. (Compare ii. 17. and see the note on Isa. i. 29.) God interprets all image-worship, or creature-worship, as terminating in the image or creature to which it is offered.

For in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.] It is the property of God to be the *helper of the friendless*, or *fatherless*. (See Psal. x. 10.) The Chaldee expresses the sense very well, *Thou didst take pity upon our forefathers, when they were like fatherless children in Egypt.* (Compare Psal. lxviii. 5.)

Ver. 4. *I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely*, &c.] God's gracious answer to their professions of repentance; assuring them of his being reconciled to them, and as a token of it freeing them from their sins, and the punishment due to them, (compare xi. 7.) and embracing them with a true love and affection, without any remembrance of their former provocations. (Compare Zeph. iii. 17.)

Ver. 5. *I will be as the dew unto Israel.*] This and the following verse contain gracious promises of God's favours and blessing upon Israel's conversion, represented by different metaphors; described in this sentence by the refreshment which large dews give to the grass in the heats of summer. (Compare Job xxxix. 19. Prov. xix. 12.)

And shall cast forth his roots as Lebanon.] As a tree of Lebanon, as the Chaldee paraphrase explains it.

Ver. 6. *His beauty shall be as the olive-tree.*] Compare Psal. lii. 8. cxxviii. 3. Ecclus. xxiv. 12. l. 10.

And his smell as Lebanon.] From the trees of Lebanon came many sweet spices, particularly frankincense, called *Lebonah* in Hebrew, from whence some derive the word *Lebanon*. (Compare Cantic. iv. 11.)

Ver. 7. *They that dwell under his shadow shall return.*] Most interpreters translate the sentence thus, *They shall return and dwell under his shadow; i. e.* They shall return into their own country, and rest safely under the shadow or protection of the Almighty. (Compare Psal. xci. 1. and see the note upon i. 11.)

The scent thereof shall be as the wind of Lebanon.] As fragrant and as pleasing as the richest wines, such as were made near Lebanon; where there was a city called by the Greeks Ampeloessa, for the excellency of its wine; as is related by Pliny, lib. v. cap. 18.

Ver. 8. *Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard and observed him.*] This verse contains a dialogue between God and Ephraim, or Israel his people, (see v. 3.) after their conversion. They begin with declaring their utter aversion to idolatry. (See ver. 3.) To which God graciously replies, that he has heard them confessing their sins, and expressing their abhorrence of them (compare Jer. xxxi. 18.) and will observe them, (for the verb *asharena* is in the future tense); *i. e.* will guide them with the eye of his providence and mercy, as the LXX. and Chaldee paraphrase express the sense.

I am like a green fir-tree: from me is thy fruit found.] Ephraim or Israel gratefully acknowledges that he is in a flourishing and thriving condition; and then God puts him in mind that his fruitfulness is wholly owing to the Divine blessing. Naturalists observe, that the *fir-tree* is of itself unfruitful.

Ver. 9. *Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? —for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them*, &c.] Whosoever is truly wise will be convinced of this great and important truth, *viz.* that they who are sincerely desirous to know and do God's will, will be fully satisfied of the reasonableness of God's laws, and the methods of his providence, and will readily comply with the directions of both, to the securing their own eternal happiness: whereas men of perverse and disobedient tempers take offence at God's commands, and repine against his providence, to their own ruin and perdition. The same sense is expressed in that observation of the son of Sirach, Ecclus. xxxix. 24. *As God's ways are plain to the holy, so are they stumbling-blocks to the workers of iniquity.* To the same purpose are those words of Christ, *Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice*, John xviii. 37. and, *He that is of God heareth God's words*, viii. 47. And St. Peter says, that *Christ is become a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence to the disobedient*, 1 Pet. ii. 8. The observation of Grotius is very remarkable upon this subject, De Verit. Christian. Relig. lib. ii. cap. *ult.* where he says, that the doctrine of the gospel was designed to be "tanquam lapis lydius, ad quem ingenia sanabilia explorarentur:" *as a touchstone, to try the tempers of men, whether they were corrigible or not.*

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JOEL.

PREFACE.

IF it were certain that the minor Prophets were placed in the order of time wherein they lived, we might conclude that Joel prophesied before Amos, who was contemporary with Uzziah king of Judah. Archbishop Usher, in his Annals, ad A. M. 3197. makes the same inference, because Joel foretells that drought, (chap. i.) which Amos mentions as actually come to pass, (iv. 7—9.) But to that argument it may be answered, that the drought there spoken of might probably be peculiar to the kingdom of Israel. And as to the precedence which the present Hebrew copies give to Joel, the LXX. place him the fourth in order, and put Amos and Micah before him.

If we consider the main design of his prophecy, we shall be apt to conclude, that it was uttered after the captivity of the ten tribes; for he directs his discourse only to Judah, and speaks distinctly of the sacrifices and oblations that were daily made in the temple. Israel is indeed mentioned, iii. 2. but it is in relation to future times, not to their present condition at the time when Joel prophesied.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

A description of a terrible famine that is coming on the land, occasioned by a long drought, and the locusts, and other noxious vermin which that produced: with an exhortation to proclaim a fast to be observed by the people, that they may humble themselves under the hand of God, and avert his judgments.

Ver. 2, 3. *HEAR ye this, ye old men, and give ear all ye inhabitants of the land,* &c.] The prophet shews how great and unparalleled this dearth is, by appealing to the memory of the ancients, and the observation of the present generation, whether they ever knew or heard any thing like it; so that it deserved to be recorded as a warning to aftertimes. (Compare ii. 2.)

Ver. 4. *That which the palmer-worm hath left, hath the locust eaten,* &c.] A succession of noxious creatures hath made a perfect riddance of all the fruits of the earth, which makes this judgment so strange and remarkable.

Ver. 5. *Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl,* &c.] This calamity should particularly affect those that spend their time in jollity and excess, and make that the chief business of their life. (Compare Isa. xxiv. 7—9. 11.) It carries along with it evident tokens of being sent as a punishment for their disorders.

Ver. 6. *For a nation is come upon my land, strong, and without number.*] Insects are described as a *nation,* or people marching in order under their leaders, both by sacred and profane writers, because of their power to do mischief, and their being irresistible by human strength or art. (Compare ii. 2. 25. Prov. xxx. 25—27.)

Whose teeth are [as] *the teeth of a lion,* &c.] So the locusts are described, Rev. ix. 8. They devour every thing that comes in their way, like a lion, and none can rescue it. The particle *as* is frequently understood. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 1.) The word *labi* is sometimes rendered a *great lion,* as it is here: *lions* being common in Judea, the Hebrew language hath particular words to express the several ages and sizes of that creature.

Ver. 7. *He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig-tree,* &c.] Bochart, de Animal. par. ii. p. 469. n. 447. observes out of Pliny and other writers, that locusts and such noxious creatures will not only destroy the leaves and the fruit, but even devour the very bark and stock of those trees upon which they fasten. (Compare ver. 12.) The word translated *barked,* is read but in this one place of the Bible; so the LXX. and some others, render it *to break off,* and understand it of the upper branches of the tree; in which sense it is used in the Arabic language.

Ver. 8. *Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.*] The words are an apostrophe to the land of Judea: the prophet puts her in mind that she ought to be deeply affected with the sore strokes of the Divine vengeance, and express her inward sense of those calamities, with the same outward expressions of mourning, as a young virgin that was betrothed to a husband, and should lose him before they had lived together, would lament such an untimely loss. It was common among the Jews, for persons who were espoused, to spend some time together in the house of the woman's friends, before the husband took her home to live as man and wife together. (See Gen. xix. 14.) The *husband of her youth* is a woman's first husband, called elsewhere the *guide of her youth,* Prov. ii. 17. Jer. iii. 4.; as the *wife of thy youth,* Mal. ii. 15. is the first wife.

Ver. 9. *The meat-offering and the drink-offering is cut off from the house of the Lord.*] The meat-offering and drink-offering always accompanied the daily sacrifice. (See Numb. xxviii. 4. 7.) The word *mincha,* commonly translated *meat-offering,* properly signifies the *bread-offering;* being made of flour. (See the note upon Isa. xliii. 23.) The dearth had destroyed both the corn and the wine, ver. 10—12. and thereby disabled the performing the necessary parts of God's daily worship in the temple. This was a new cause of grief to the priests, as well as to all pious persons.

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Ver. 10. *The field is wasted, the land mourneth.*] The fields and the whole land have a mournful appearance, being altogether bare and destitute of food, either for man or beast. (See ver. 18.)

Ver. 11. *Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vine-dressers.*] Your being disappointed of your expectations, and the fruits of your labour, is enough to cover you with shame and confusion: (compare Jer. xiv. 3.) especially when you consider these calamities as the just effects of the Divine indignation.

Ver. 12. *For joy is withered away from among the sons of men.*] That joy they used to shew at the gathering in of the fruits of the earth. (See Isa. ix. 3. xiv. 10. Jer. xlviii. 33.)

Ver. 13. *Gird yourselves* [*with sackcloth*]. *Lament, ye priests.*] See ver. 9.

Lie all night in sackcloth.] Those priests whose turn it is to keep the night-watches in the temple. (See Exod. xxvii. 21. 1 Sam. iii. 3. 1 Chron. ix. 33. Psal. cxxxiv. 2.) Let them cover themselves with sackcloth, as is usual in times of the greatest calamity, and not put it off when they take themselves to rest; but sleep in sackcloth instead of their ordinary garments. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Temple-Service, chap. 9. at the beginning.)

Ver. 14. *Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly,* &c.] In order to avert God's wrath, and deprecate his judgments. (See ii. 15, 16.)

Gather the elders, and all the inhabitants of the land, into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord.] The house where God hath placed his name, and where he hath promised to hear the prayers which are made to him by his people, when they are afflicted with judgments of this kind. (See 1 Kings vii. 37, &c.)

Ver. 15. *Alas, for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand,* &c.] We have just cause to lament our sins which have brought these judgments upon us, which, if not averted by our repentance, will end in our utter destruction, as coming from a God that is infinite in power, and terrible in his judgments.

Ver. 16. *Yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God.*] The dearth has discontinued our public sacrifices, (ver. 9. 13.) and has deprived us of those rejoicings wherewith we used to keep our solemn feasts at Jerusalem, and partake of the sacrifices which were there offered. (See Deut. xii. 6, 7. xvi. 10, 11. 14, 15. Psal. cv. 3.)

Ver. 17. *The seed is rotten under their clods,* &c.] The corn which is sowed dies away, and rots in the ground: so the barns and granaries become useless and desolate.

Ver. 18. *How do the beasts groan? The herds of cattle are perplexed,* &c.] The beasts themselves are sensible of these calamities, and pine away for want of sustenance.

Ver. 19. *The fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.*] The fiery drought hath burnt up all the pasture-grounds. (See ii. 3.) The wilderness is sometimes opposed to the hills or mountains, and then it signifies the plains, and places for pasture. (See Isa. lxiii. 13. Jer. ix. 10.)

Ver. 20. *The beasts of the field cry also unto thee.*] They express their want of food by the mournful noise which they make; which is their natural way of making known their wants unto thee. (Compare Psal. civ. 21. Job xxxviii. 41.)

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet describes the locusts, and other noxious insects, which were the cause of the famine mentioned chap. i. as if they were a mighty army, sent by God to destroy the fruits of the earth; and continues to exhort the people to repentance, promising the removal of these calamities, and a return of God's blessings upon their reformation.

Ver. 1. *BLOW the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain.*] The prophet describes the locusts and the caterpillars as God's *army*, ver. 11. in pursuance of which metaphor he exhorts the people to prepare to meet them, in the same terms as if they were alarmed to encounter an enemy, which was by sounding of a trumpet. (See Jer. iv. 5, 6. 19.) This ceremony was not only used to give notice of an approaching enemy, but likewise to publish the times of the solemn assemblies for the worship of God. (See Numb. x. 3. 9, 10.) And this is the chief use they were to make of it upon this occasion: (see ver. 15.) for there was no other way to avert the impending judgment, but humbling themselves before God with fasting and prayer. (See ver. 15.)

Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, &c.] Let them be seized with as terrible an apprehension of this approaching judgment, as if they saw an enemy invading their country. (See ver. 11.)

Ver. 2. *A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains.*] A day wherein every thing will look dark and dismal. (See Amos v. 18. 20.) The locusts will intercept the light of the sun, and diffuse a darkness over the land, in as swift a manner as the light spreads itself in the morning. Travellers inform us, that these insects will of a sudden cover the sky like a cloud. (See Bochart, de Animal. lib. iv. cap. 4, 5. compare ver. 10.) The LXX. and Chaldee paraphrase join this sentence to the following words: *As the morning spread upon the mountains, a people great and strong.*

A people great and strong.] See i. 6.

There has not been ever the like, &c.] The locusts which plagued Egypt are described after the same manner, Exod. x. 14. *Before them there were no such locusts, neither after them shall be such.* In both places we are to take it for a proverbial expression, to set forth the extraordinary greatness of the judgment, and not understand it too strictly according to the grammatical sense of the word. So we read of Hezekiah, that *after him there was none like him, among all the kings of Judah, nor any that went before him,* 2 Kings xviii. 5. and yet the same character is given to Josiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 25.

Ver. 3. *A fire devours before them, and behind them a flame burns.*] The locusts and the drought which ushered them in, (see i. 19.) have in a manner devoured every thing that comes in their way; and leave sad tokens of destruction wherever they have been. Those that have travelled in the eastern countries inform us, that wherever the swarms of locusts light, they make such a destruction, that *there remains not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of*

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the field, as Moses speaks concerning the locusts in Egypt, Exod. x. 15.

The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness.] The land of Judea, so famous for its fertility and pleasantness before this calamity, is now turned into a desolate wilderness, by the ravages they have made. The *garden of Eden* is a proverbial expression for a place of pleasure and fruitfulness, as we commonly use the word *paradise.* (See Gen. xiii. 10. Isa. li. 3.)

Ver. 4. *The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses,* &c.] See the same comparison, Rev. ix. 7. Bochart observes that locusts resemble horses, not only in their swiftness, but also in the shape of their heads. (See his Hierozoicon, par. ii. p. 474.)

Ver. 5. *Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap.*] Compare Rev. ix. 9. Chariots anciently were a part of warlike preparations, as appears by many passages in Scripture. The text says, that these locusts shall resemble them in their swiftness, noise, and terror. "Tanto volant pennarum stridore, ut aliæ alites credantur:" *Their wings make such a noise, as if they were winged fowls,* saith Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. xi. cap. 29.

Like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble.] Which burns up combustible matter without resistance.

As a strong people set in battle-array.] See ver. 2. and i. 6.

Ver. 6. *Before their face the people shall be much pained; all faces shall gather blackness.*] The inhabitants of the land shall be in great pain and anguish under the apprehension of their coming; they shall be seized with such a dread and fear, as shall make their visage look black and ghastly, like persons who are dying. (Compare Jer. viii. 21. Nahum ii. 10.)

Ver. 7. *They shall run like mighty men,* &c.] They shall march in such a swift and orderly manner, that no place shall be inaccessible to them, nor any force be able to withstand them.

Ver. 8. *Neither shall they thrust one another; they shall walk every one in his path,* &c.] Of the regular and orderly motion of these insects, St. Jerome gives this account from his own experience, in his notes upon the place: "Hoc nuper in hac provincia vidimus: cum enim locustarum agmina venirent, et aerem inter cœlum et terram occuparent, tanto ordine ex disposito Dei judicio volitant, ut instar tesserularum, quæ in pavimentis artificum figuntur manu, suum locum teneant, et ne puncto quidem, ut ita dicam, aut ungue transverso, declinent ad alterum." *This we lately saw in our part of the country: for when swarms of locusts came and filled the lower region of the air, they flew in such order, by the Divine appointment, and kept their places as exactly, as when several tiles or party-coloured stones are skilfully placed in a pavement, so as not to be a hair's-breadth out of their several ranks.*

And when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.] By reason of their nimbleness, and the outward coat of their skin being so hard and smooth, no offensive weapon can touch them.

Ver. 9. *They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall,* &c.] We may have recourse to St. Jerome again for explaining this passage: "Nihil locustis invium est, cum et agros, et sata, et arbores, et urbes, et domos, et cubiculorum secreta penetrent." *Every place* (saith he) *lies open to them; for they infect not only the fields and the fruits of the earth, but creep into cities, houses, and the most secret recesses.*

Ver. 10. *The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and moon shall be dark,* &c.] The inhabitants of the earth shall be seized with a horrible dread at their approach. (See ver. 6. and compare Amos ix. 5.) The heavens shall put on the appearance of fear by looking dark and dismal, because these noxious creatures shall come in such swarms as to intercept the rays of the sun, and the light of the moon and stars. (See ver. 2.) Pliny saith of them, that *they sometimes darken the sun: ubi supra.* And Moses saith of the locusts in Egypt, that *the land was darkened* by them, Exod. x. 15. It is likewise to be observed, that God's particular judgments being an earnest and forerunner of the general judgment, the same expressions are common to both. (Compare ver. 31. and iii. 15. Matt. xxiv. 29. and see the note upon Isa. xiii. 10.)

Ver. 11. *And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army.*] Like a leader or general, he shall command or encourage this his army, and can make the meanest parts of the creation the instruments of his vengeance. God's *voice* sometimes denotes his anger: the most terrible way of declaring his will is when he speaks to us by his judgments. (Compare iii. 16. Jer. xxv. 30. Amos i. 2.)

For his camp is very great.] See ver. 25.

For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible, &c.] The time of God's particular judgments, as well as that of his general one, is commonly expressed by the *day of the Lord,* the former being an earnest and imperfect representation of the latter.

Ver. 12. *Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.*] Testify your inward repentance by outward expressions of true sorrow.

Ver. 13. *And rend your hearts, and not your garments.*] Rending of the garments was customary in times of great sorrow and affliction. (Gen. xxxvii. 34. Job i. 20. 2 Sam. i. 11.) The prophet does not forbid men using this outward sign of mourning, but puts them in mind to add an inward contrition to it. The Hebrew writers sometimes signify the preference that is due to one thing above another, in terms which express the rejecting of that which is less worthy: thus we read, Hos. vi. 6. *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: i. e.* rather than sacrifice. To the same sense we are to understand the text before us.

For he is gracious and merciful, &c.] The words allude to God's own declaration of himself, Exod. xxxiv. 6. compared with Jonah iv. 2.

Ver. 14. *Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?* &c.] God's own nature, and the former instances we have found of his merciful disposition, encourage us to hope, that our sincere repentance may avail to avert God's wrath, and engage him to restore his blessings upon us and our land. (Compare 2 Sam. xii. 22. Jonah iii. 9.)

Even a meat-offering and a drink-offering unto the Lord your God.] At least sufficient provision to supply the necessary parts of God's public worship; which, since the dearth, have been necessarily omitted. (See i. 9. 13.)

Ver. 15. *Blow the trumpet in Zion.*] The signal for as-

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sembling the people at the solemn times of public worship. (See Numb. x. 3. 9, 10.)

Sanctify a fast, &c.] See i. 14.

Ver. 16. *Sanctify the congregation.*] Take care that they be purified from those legal pollutions which render persons unqualified to approach God's temple or worship. (See Lev. xv. 31. Numb. xix. 13. 20.)

Assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts.] Compare 2 Chron. xx. 13. Let both young and old join in this general humiliation: all ages joining in it adds much to the solemnity of it, and is very proper to work in men's minds that sincere contrition, which may avert those judgments which threaten the whole nation, and wherein their posterity may suffer.

Let the bridegroom go out of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.] Let them prepare themselves for this solemn humiliation, by retiring into separate apartments, and abstaining from the enjoyment of each other. (Compare 1 Cor. vii. 15. Zech. xii. 14.)

Ver. 17. *Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar.*] A principal part of the priests' office was to attend upon the altar, and offer the sacrifices there. For which reason the open court just before the porch of the temple, where the brazen altar stood, (see 2 Chron. viii. 12.) was called the *priests' court,* where the greatest part of those whose course it was gave their attendance. Hereupon this is mentioned as the most proper place for the priests to make their prayers and intercessions to God in behalf of the people, where they might best be heard of all the assembly, and where they had before offered the sacrifices proper for such an occasion, which were the most solemn way of calling upon the Lord, (see Gen. xii. 4. 1 Sam. vii. 8, 9.) and being joined to their prayers, were the most effectual means to make an atonement for sin, and avert the Divine displeasure.

And let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, &c.] It was usual to prescribe certain forms of prayer, or praise, to the priests in their public ministrations. (See 1 Chron. xvi. 36. Hos. xiv. 2.) Such was this herein mentioned, wherein they beseech God to deliver his people, not for any merit of theirs, but for the glory of his own name, lest the heathen round about them should take occasion to blaspheme his name, as if he were not able to protect his people. (Compare Psal. xlii. 20. lxxix. 10. cxv. 2.)

That the heathen should rule over them.] This translation of the Hebrew verb *mashal* favours their interpretation, who expound the army described at the beginning of the chapter of a hostile invasion: but if we understand those expressions only as a metaphorical description of that grievous destruction the locusts and other venomous insects should make in the land (which I take to be the truer exposition), then this sentence is to be translated, *That the heathen should use a by-word against them,* as our margin reads; should make them the subject of their scorn and derision, as if they were forsaken by the God whom they worshipped: and the verb *mashal* is indifferently taken in either signification. (See Deut. xxviii. 37.)

Ver. 18. *Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.*] He will be concerned for the honour of that land, which he hath made the lot of his own inheritance, and have so much pity for it, as not to suffer it or its inhabitants to be the subject of reproach to the heathen. (See ver. 17. 19. and compare Zech. i. 14.)

Ver. 19. *Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil,* &c.] I will restore your former plenty, and the nations about you shall have no more occasion to reproach your desolate condition: (ver. 17.)

Ver. 20. *But I will remove from you the northern army,* &c.] The locusts are described like an army in the former part of the chapter, (see ver. 11.) and here they are called the *northern army,* because they entered into the land at Hamath, one of the northern borders of it, and passed quite through it, till they came to the southern parts about the lake Asphaltites, which was barren and desolate ever since the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah; and there they were either famished or devoured in the lake, as the Egyptians were in the Red Sea. (See Exod. x. 19.)

With his face towards the east sea, and his hinder part towards the utmost sea.] In the Hebrew language all lakes or confluences of water are expressed by the name of *seas.* Here the lake Asphaltites, or the Sea of Sodom, is called the *east sea,* (compare Ezek. xlvii. 8. 18. Zech. xiv. 8.) and opposed to the *utmost,* or western sea, which is the Mediterranean. (See Deut. xi. 24.)

And his stink shall come up.] St. Jerome, upon the place, relates, that in his own time the heaps of locusts which were drove by the winds into the sea, afterward putrefied upon the shore, and so corrupted the air as to bring a pestilence.

Because he hath done great things.] Or rather, *Although he hath done great things:* though this army of insects by God's appointment has made such destruction in the land, yet it shall come to this shameful end.

Ver. 21. *The Lord will do great things.*] God will magnify himself as much in acts of mercy, as he did before in the strokes of his justice.

Ver. 22. *Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field,* &c.] As the cattle had their share in the dearth, i. 18. 20. so now they shall receive comfort in the return of plenty.

Ver. 23. *For he hath given you the former rain moderately.*] The season for the former rain was about the middle of our October. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Horæ Hebr. upon Luke iii. 25.) The Hebrew word rendered *moderately* literally signifies, *according to righteousness,* and is equivalent with *according to judgment,* Jer. x. 23. or *in measure,* Jer. xxx. 11. But some interpreters translate it here *plentifully.* Our margin reads a *teacher of righteousness,* which sense is followed by the Chaldee paraphrast, and the Vulgar Latin, and may be a proper introduction to the promise which follows, (ver. 28.) of *pouring God's Spirit upon all flesh.*

And the latter rain in the first month.] Which was Nisan, partly answering to our March: the regular season for this rain was *three months before harvest,* (Amos iv. 7.) *i. e.* before wheat-harvest, which was later than barley-harvest in Judea. (See Ruth ii. 23. 2 Sam. xxi. 9.)

Ver. 25. *And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten,* &c.] The fruit of those years which the venomous insects have devoured. (See i. 4.)

My great army.] See ver. 11.

Ver. 26. *And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied.*] Ye shall *eat bread to the full,* as it is expressed, Lev. xxiv. 5. Deut. vi. 11. viii. 10. Times of scarcity are expressed by *eating and not being satisfied,* Lev. xxvi. 26. Amos iv. 8. Micah vi. 14.

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Ver. 27. *And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel.*] God's giving tokens of his especial blessing and protection to his people is expressed by his *dwelling among them,* or *in the midst of them;* see iii. 17. Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. Ezek. xxxviii. 26. This is a favour he never promises but upon their sincere and steady obedience, as appears in the forecited places; and then the promises contained in this and the foregoing verse, will punctually be fulfilled.

And that I am the Lord your God, and none else.] You will then be convinced that I am always ready to protect you, and you need not apply yourselves to any other gods in your wants or troubles. (Compare Isa. xlv. 5. 21.)

And my people shall never be ashamed.] Shall not be any more disappointed of the trust they place in me; nor be reproached by the heathen, as if I had forsaken them. (See ver. 19. compare Isa. li. 22. Nahum i. 15.)

Ver. 28. *And it shall come to pass afterward.*] Or, *In the last days,* as St. Peter explains the phrase, Acts ii. 17. by which expression Manasseh ben Israel tells us, that all their wise men understood the times of the Messias. (See the Bishop of Litchfield's Def. of the ancient Prophecies, p. 123.) So *afterward* and *in the latter days* are equivalent, Dan. ii. 28. 45.

I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.] The plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit is mentioned by the prophets as the peculiar character of the gospel state: and it is elsewhere compared to the pouring waters upon thirsty land, whereby it becomes fruitful. (See Isa. xliv. 3. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 34. Ezek. xxxvi. 27. compared with John vii. 39.) So this text, in analogy to other parallel places, is very fitly applied by St. Peter to the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the first believers, Acts ii. 17. *All flesh* comprehends the gentiles as well as the Jews: which promise we see was punctually fulfilled, Acts x. 44. xi. 17. The expression of *the last days* is another indication that this prophecy belongs to the times of the Messias: for the Jews agree that prophecy was sealed up with Malachi, and not to be restored till the days of the Messias. (See the forementioned discourse.)

But we need not confine this prophecy to those early times; but since many prophecies have *gradual completions,* we may suppose this prophecy to imply, that there shall be another remarkable effusion of the Spirit bestowed upon the Jews in order to their conversion in the latter times of the world. (See the note upon Isa. liv. 13. Ezek. xxxix. 29.) This exposition agrees very well with some expressions in this prophecy, and makes a clearer connexion with the following chapter.

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.] The gift of prophecy was bestowed upon some women under the Old Testament, as upon Miriam, (Exod. xv. 20.) Deborah, (Judg. iv. 14.) and Huldah, (2 Kings xxii. 14.) But this gift was more frequently conferred upon them in the times of the New. Thus we read of *four daughters* of Philip the evangelist, *who did prophesy,* Acts xxi. 9. and church-history affords us several other instances; such as Perpetua and Felicitas, who were martyrs for the Christian faith, Potamiena mentioned by Eusebius, lib. iv. cap. 5. and others.

Your young men shall see visions.] In visions the inspired person was awake, but his external senses being bound up, and as it were laid in a trance, (see Numb. xxiv. 4.) he had a distinct knowledge of the things revealed to him, and that sometimes accompanied with external representations: such was that vision of St. Peter's, mentioned Acts x. 11. From *visions* being applied to *young men,* and *dreams* to *old,* some have observed that the imagination is stronger in those that are young than in the old; so that their senses need not be bound up with sleep, in order to make them capable of receiving heavenly visions.

Ver. 29. *And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.*] As every age and condition are made partakers of the common benefits of the gospel, so they shall not be excluded from the privilege of the extraordinary gifts of it. (See Coloss. iii. 11. James ii. 5.)

Ver. 30. *And I will shew wonders in heaven, and in the earth,* &c.] This and the following verse principally point out the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by the Romans, a judgment justly inflicted upon the Jewish nation for their resisting the Holy Spirit, and contempt of the means of grace. So Malachi, after he had foretold the coming of the Messias, (iii. 1.) immediately adds, that his coming should be attended with terrible judgments upon the disobedient, iii. 2, 3. 5. iv. 1. The prophet here takes notice of the extraordinary signs which will be forerunners of that destruction: such were the great slaughters of men, and burning of the towns and cities of Judea, which preceded that last and finishing stroke of the Divine vengeance; and chiefly the comet which hung over their city, and the fearful sights seen in the air some time before; which are mentioned by Josephus, De Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 31. and foretold by Christ, Luke xxi. 11.

Ver. 31. *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come.*] Compare Mal. iv. 5. Particular judgments upon kingdoms and nations, are often described in such terms as properly belong to the general judgment; as hath been observed upon the tenth verse of this chapter. The expressions here used, in the literal sense, import the failing of light in the sun and moon, whether by eclipses (when the moon looks of a bloody colour), or any other cause: and here they denote the dark and melancholy state of public affairs at the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans; and the utter overthrow of that state and government. (See the note upon Isa. xiii. 10.)

Ver. 32. *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.*] This St. Paul, Rom. x. 13. explains of those who give themselves up to Christ, and profess themselves his disciples; that being the most effectual means of escaping the judgments coming upon the unbelieving Jews, and likewise of being *delivered from the wrath to come.* (See Luke xxi. 22. 1 Thess. ii. 16.)

For in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, shall be deliverance.] The gospel is described as taking its rise from Jerusalem, and being from thence spread abroad into the world. (See Psal. cx. 2. Isa. ii. 3.) Accordingly Christ commanded his disciples to preach the gospel *to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,* Luke xxiv. 47. The words may also imply, that the Christian church, often denoted by Mount Zion and Jerusalem, is the only place of salvation. (See likewise Obad. ver. 17.)

As the Lord hath said.] By me his prophet. Or the words may relate to the several promises made in the

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Psalms, and elder prophets, relating to the church, under the names of Zion and Jerusalem (see particularly Psal. xiv. 7. and several texts in Isaiah); for we cannot certainly conclude in what time Joel lived.

And in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.] Or, *Among the remnant:* this may partly be understood of those who were converted by the preaching of Christ and the apostles, and thereby escaped the vengeance which involved the rest of the nation. (See Acts ii. 40. 1 Thess. ii. 16.) These are called the Σωζόμενοι, *such as should be saved,* or delivered, Acts ii. 47. But there is another remnant of the Jews included in this promise, who shall be converted at the end of the world (when the obstinate and incorrigible shall be destroyed), and return home from their several dispersions. In this sense *the remnant* is often understood. (See Isa. xi. 11. 16. Jer. xxxi. 7. Micah iv. 7. v. 3. 7.) This conversion of the Jewish nation is frequently mentioned in the prophets. (See Jer. xxx. 3, &c. xxxvi. 25, &c. Ezek. xx. 34. 40. xxviii. 25. Amos ix. 9. and the notes upon these texts.) This sense agrees with what follows in the next chapter.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

The following prophecy relates to the *latter times of the world;* when, upon their conversion, God shall deliver the Jews from their oppressors, and restore them to their own land. The prophet likewise foretells the destruction of their enemies, and other unbelievers, in some decisive battle, such as that mentioned Rev. xvi. 14. and the glorious state of the church that should follow.

Ver. 1. *FOR behold in those days, and at that time.*] The time called *the last days,* ii. 28. according to St. Peter's interpretation, Acts ii. 17. which comprehends all that time which reaches from the first to the second appearing of the Messias. (See the note upon Isa. ii. 1.) The context shews, that here is meant the latter part of these last days, or times.

When I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem.] This is to be understood of that restoration of the Jewish nation and their capital city, which shall be brought to pass in the latter times of the world, according to many predictions of the prophets, as has been observed upon the last verse of the foregoing chapter. (Compare particularly this verse with Jer. xxx. 3.) The prophet's mentioning only the kingdom or tribe of Judah, is a probable argument that he was of that tribe, and lived after the captivity of the ten tribes.

Ver. 2. *I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.*] The prophets speak of a general discomfiture of God's enemies in some decisive battle before the general judgment, as hath been observed in the notes upon Isa. lxvi. 16. Such probably is the battle of Gog and Magog, described Ezek. xxxix. and that of Armageddon, spoken of Rev. xvi. 14. 16. The place of this remarkable action is here called the *valley of Jehoshaphat;* as if the prophet had said, *the place where the Lord will execute judgment,* for so the word *Jehoshaphat* signifies in the original. So the *valley of Jezreel,* Hos. i. 4. means where God's *arm* or *strength* will exert itself. The expression likewise alludes to the valley of Berachah, as it was afterward called, 2 Chron. xx. 26. which was famous for the victory Jehoshaphat and his people obtained there over a great confederacy of their enemies. This valley was not far from Jerusalem, if it be the same with that described Zech. xiv. 4.

And I will plead with them there.] God pleads with men, and vindicates the cause of oppressed truth and innocence by his judgments. Then their own consciences fly in the face of the guilty, and force them to acknowledge the justice of those punishments they suffer. (Compare Ezek. xvii. 20. xx. 35. xxxviii. 22.)

For my people, and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.] The prophets in the Old Testament denounce several judgments against Edom, Moab, and other ill neighbours of the Jews, who took advantage of their calamities to vent their spite against them. (See ver. 19. of this chapter, Jer. xxii. 14, &c. xlix. 1, 2. Ezek. xxv. 3, &c. Amos i. 11. Obad. ver. 10. Zeph. ii. 8.) But since all nations are summoned to answer the impeachment here mentioned, we may suppose the word *Israel* to comprehend the faithful of all ages; and then we may observe, that the judgments denounced against the church's enemies, are chiefly for their hatred and cruelty towards God's servants. (See Rev. xi. 18. xvi. 6. xviii. 20. 24.)

Ver. 3. *And have cast lots for my people.*] Without troubling themselves to make any choice among the captives of my people, they have left the matter wholly to the chance of lots, which captive every man should take. (See Obad. ver. 11. Nahum iii. 10.)

And have given a boy for a harlot, &c.] And have sold their slaves to others, merely to supply their wanton and sinful extravagances.

Ver. 4. *Yea, and what have you to do with me, O Tyre and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine.*] These were some of the Jews' evil neighbours, who took all occasions to distress them. (See Amos i. 6. 9. 2 Chron. xxi. 16. xxviii. 18.)

Will ye render me a recompence?] Do you think to vent your spite against me by way of retaliation for the evils you have suffered from my people? Hardened sinners come to that degree of desperate boldness as to proclaim enmity against God, and shew their resentment towards him, for the hard usage they think that they have received at his hands: so Homer describes Achilles's fierce temper at the beginning of the twenty-second Iliad, thus speaking to Apollo:

Ἤ σ' ἂν τισαίμην εἴ μοι δύναμίς γε παρείη,

——*Were it in my power, my vengeful arm should soon return the wrong.*

Ver. 5. *Because you have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly things.*] The temple was despoiled of its ornaments, either through the necessities or the wickedness of the kings of Judah, several times. (See 2 Kings xii. 18. xviii. 16. 2 Chron xxviii. 24.) It was likewise plundered by the Chaldeans often; once in the reign of Jehoiakim, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7. then in the short reign of Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiv. 13. before the last destruction of it, 2 Kings xxv. 17, 18. Some part of the furniture might perhaps be sold to the mer-

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chants of Tyre and Zidon. The profanation of the temple at Jerusalem, and the sacrilegious spoils of its ornaments, have been remarkably punished by God in heathens and infidels: (see Jer. l. 28. li. 11.) so it was in Belshazzar, Dan. v. 1. in Antiochus Epiphanes, 1 Macc. vi. 12. and in Pompey and Crassus afterward: because God had given remarkable proofs of a Divine presence in that place; and the heathens themselves might have discovered, by the light of nature, that there was but one true invisible God. (See Dan. v. 23.)

Ver. 6. *The children also of Judah, and the children of Jerusalem, have ye sold unto the Grecians.*] It was customary for the merchants of the neighbouring countries, such were those of Tyre and Zidon here spoken of, to buy the children of Israel for slaves of their conquerors, in order to sell them again. (See 1 Macc. iii. 41.) It is said particularly of Javan, *i. e.* Greece, that they dealt in that sort of traffic, of buying and selling of slaves. (Ezek. xxvii. 13.) The histories which relate the calamities of the Jews, speak of great numbers of them made captives, and then sold and dispersed into foreign countries: so forty thousand were sold by Antiochus Epiphanes, 2 Macc. v. 14. and the greatest part of ninety-seven thousand at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. (See Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9.)

Ver. 7. *Behold, I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them.*] I will restore them, or their posterity, which are to be looked upon as making *one natural body*, out of their several captivities, whither their enemies have dispersed them. (See Isa. xliii. 5, 6. xlix. 12. Jer. xxiii. 8.)

Ver. 8. *And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah.*] This might probably come to pass when Alexander, after the taking of Tyre, sold thirty thousand of the inhabitants for slaves: Gaza, a considerable city upon *the coast of Palestine*, (see ver. 4.) at the same time was sacked, and the women and children sold for slaves. (See Dr. Prideaux's Connex. of Script. Hist. par. i. book vii.)

And they shall sell you to the Sabeans, to a people far off.] So the country of Sheba is described, Jer. vi. 20. (See the note there.) They are called the *Sabeans from the wilderness*, Ezek. xxiii. 42. *i. e.* who came from Arabia Deserta, or the places bordering upon it.

Ver. 9. *Proclaim ye this among the gentiles.*] After these particular threatenings against Tyre and Zidon, and that coast, the prophet returns to what he had mentioned, ver. 2. concerning the heathen or unbelieving world, gathering themselves either to oppose the Jews in their return homeward, or some other way to hinder the growth of Christ's kingdom.

Prepare war, make up the mighty men, &c.] The prophet, in an ironical and insulting manner, encourages them to make their utmost effort to oppose the designs of Providence: but it should be all in vain. (See the like expressions, Isa. viii. 9, 10. Jer. xlvi. 3, 4. Ezek. xxxviii. 7.)

Ver. 10. *Beat your plough-shares into swords.*] Let not only the military men prepare for war, but even the husbandmen and vine-dressers: all the forces you can muster together will be little enough for the enterprise you are undertaking. Peaceful times are described by the contrary expressions, of *turning swords into plough-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks*, Isa. ii. 4.

Let the weak say, I am strong.] Feebleness, or want of strength, should be no pretence to excuse any from this service. This is still spoken by way of irony, and insulting such a confederacy, and the preparations they make for war.

Ver. 11. *Thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord.*] Thy mighty angels, to discomfit thine enemies. Angels are often described as mighty in strength: (see Psal. lxxviii. 25. ciii. 20. Rev. x. 1.) and here they are spoken of as chosen warriors proper to execute any enterprise, as they are directed by God. (Compare Isa. xiii. 3. and see below, ver. 13.)

Ver. 12. *Let the heathen be awakened.*] Let their courage be roused up. (See ver. 9.)

And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, &c.] See ver. 2.

Ver. 13. *Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe.*] God will give his commands to the angels, who are *the reapers*, Matt. xiii. 39. to cut off the wicked by a speedy destruction; for their iniquities are come to maturity, and are ripe for judgment. (Compare Jer. li. 33. Hos. vi. 11. Matt. xiii. 38. 41. Rev. xiv. 15.)

Come, get you down; for the press is full, &c.] The angels are again commanded to go down from heaven to the *valley of decision*, ver. 14. The LXX. and the Chaldee paraphrase render the words, *Come, tread*, deriving the Hebrew word from *radah*, which verb still retains that sense in the Arabic, as Dr. Pocock informs us.

For the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.] The wicked have filled up the measure of their iniquities. The former words allude to the time of the harvest; these to the season of the vintage. (Compare Rev. xiv. 19.) As the juice of the vine is called the blood of the grape; in pursuance of the same metaphor, God's extraordinary judgments are expressed by his *treading the wine-press of his wrath.* (See Isa. lxiii. 3. Lam. i. 15. Rev. xiv. 19, 20.)

Ver. 14. *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.*] This makes it probable that the battle here spoken of is the same with that of Gog and Magog, described Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. for there the valley where Gog is said to be buried, is called Hamon Gog; *i. e. the multitude of Gog*, xxxix. 11. *The valley of decision* is the same with the *valley of Jehoshaphat* abovementioned, the place where the great cause shall be decided between God and his enemies.

For the day of the Lord is near.] See ii. 1.

Ver. 15. *The sun and the moon shall be darkened,* &c.] This particular judgment shall be a forerunner of the general one, when the whole frame of nature shall be dissolved. (See the note upon ii. 10. 31.)

Ver. 16. *The Lord also shall roar out of Zion.*] Where he shall give tokens of his especial residence. God's anger, when he speaks to us by his judgments, is fitly compared to the roaring of a lion. (See Jer. xxv. 30. Amos i. 2. iii. 8.)

And the heavens and the earth shall shake.] Great commotions or convulsions of states and governments are expressed by *shaking the heavens and the earth.* (Compare Ezek. xxxviii. 19. Hag. ii. 6. 22.) But here the words may be understood in a literal sense, because the action here described in this chapter is a forerunner and token of the approaching day of judgment.

But the Lord will be the hope of his people, &c.] *Though*

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the heaven and earth pass away, his word and promise made to his servants *will not pass away.* (Compare Isa. li. 6. Matt. xxiv. 35.)

Ver. 17. *So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion.*] You shall find visible effects of my favour and protection. (See ii. 27.)

Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.] This character belongs to the *New Jerusalem:* (compare Isa. xxxv. 8. lii. 1. lx. 21. Rev. xxi. 27.) or it may be understood of the *earthly Jerusalem,* as the metropolis of the converted Jews. As the inhabitants themselves shall be holy, so the city shall be called the *holy city,* as in former times it was. (See Dan. ix. 16. Zech. viii. 3. compare Isa. xxiv. 23. Micah iv. 17. Obad. ver. 17.) It shall no more be subject to be polluted or oppressed by unbelievers. (Compare Nahum i. 15.)

Ver. 18. *The mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk.*] In the millennial state there shall be plenty of all things. Vines were usually planted upon hills; (see Isa. v. 1. Psal. lxxx. 11.) these shall yield such plenty of wine, as if the mountains flowed down with it. The flocks and the herds that feed upon the hills shall afford the same plenty of milk. (Compare Amos ix. 14.)

All the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters.] Rivers shall water the driest and most barren parts of the land, and make them fertile. (Compare Isa. xxx. 25.)

And a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord.] The supplies of grace are often represented by rivers and plentiful streams, both upon account of their cleansing quality, as well as because they enrich the ground, and make it fruitful. (Compare Isa. xliv. 3. Ezek. xlvii. 1. 11. Zech. xiii. 7. xiv. 8.) This fountain is said to *come forth of the house of the Lord;* implying, that the church is the spring from whence all the means of grace are communicated to believers.

And water the valley of Shittim.] So the holy waters, (Ezek. xlvii.) are described as running from the altar as far as the Dead Sea, or the lake Asphaltites; the east part of which bordered upon the country of Moab, within whose border was the valley of Shittim. (See ver. 8. 10. of that chapter.) This denotes the plentiful issues of the Divine grace; an emblem of which was the streams that issued out of the rock, and followed the Israelites through a great part of the wilderness, (1 Cor. x. 4.)

Ver. 19. *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness,* &c.] These two people were remarkable for the spite they bare to the Jews: the Egyptians were their oppressors when they first became a nation, and afterward exercised great cruelties upon them during the reign of the Egyptian kings, who were Alexander's successors. The Idumeans are often reproved, and threatened with judgments by the prophets, for the spite they took all occasions to vent against the Israelites, though nearly related to them. (See Jer. xlix. 7. Ezek. xxv. 12. Amos i. 11. Obad. ver. 10.) So those two nations are taken, in a general sense, for the enemies of God's people. (See the note upon Isa. xi. 14.)

Ver. 20. *But Judah shall dwell* (or continue) *for ever,* &c.] Free from the annoyance of enemies. (See ver. 17. and compare Amos ix. 15.)

Ver. 21. *For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed.*] I will thoroughly cleanse them from their sins and pollutions; neither shall they rise up any more in judgment against them. The word *blood* may signify pollution in general. (See Isa. iv. 3. Ezek. xvi. 6.) But the words chiefly import, that God will pardon the Jews the great crime of shedding the blood of Christ, upon their sincere repentance; the guilt of which they had imprecated upon themselves and their posterity, Matt. xxvi. 25. and had felt the visible effects of God's displeasure upon that account for several ages.

For the Lord dwelleth in Zion.] See ver. 17.

AMOS.

PREFACE.

AMOS was contemporary with Hosea, though he did not probably live so long, but died before the reign of Hezekiah, and the captivity of the ten tribes. St. Jerome gives him this character, that *though he was rude in speech, yet not in knowledge.* Several of his expressions are taken from such observations as are suitable to the employment of a shepherd: as, when he compares God's anger to the *roaring of a lion,* i. 2. iii. 8. and the gigantic stature of the Amorites to the *height of oaks and cedars,* ii. 9. (See also v. 8.) But still there are many beautiful passages in this prophecy, where the expressions are very elegant, and the pathos or rhetoric very moving: such as are ii. 9—11. iv. 6, &c. v. 6. 9. vi. 1. 7. viii. 8. 10. ix. 2. 6.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

In this, and the beginning of the second chapter, the prophet denounces God's judgments against the countries bordering upon Judea; and then prophesies against Judea itself.

Ver. 1. *THE words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoah.*] See vii. 14. Tekoah was in the tribe of Judah, six miles from Beth-lehem, as St. Jerome informs us, who lived near it: the *wilderness of Tekoah,* mentioned 2 Chron. xx. 20. made it a convenient place for keeping cattle.

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Which he saw concerning Israel.] This prophecy relates chiefly to the ten tribes, or kingdom of Israel; though the prophet briefly denounces God's judgments, not only against Judah, but likewise against the Syrians, Philistines, and other neighbouring countries.

And in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.] See vii. 10.

Two years before the earthquake.] Amos uttered his prophecy at that time, though it is probable he did not commit his book, or collection of prophecies, to writing, till after the earthquake mentioned here, and again Zech. xiv. 15. where it is said to have happened *in the days of Uzziah.* Josephus relates it as a tradition among the Jews, that this earthquake was sent as a punishment for Uzziah's presumption in invading the priest's office, for which he himself was struck with leprosy, as we read 2 Chron. xxvi. 18, 19. and the whole city was terribly shaken with an earthquake. (See Joseph. Antiq. lib. ix. cap. 10.) This judgment the Jews suppose to have befallen Uzziah in the twenty-fifth year of his reign; but Archbishop Usher, in his Annals, ad A. M. 3221. and other later chronologers, think it did not happen till the latter part of Uzziah's life and reign, because his son Jotham took upon him the government, who was not born till after Jeroboam's death: so the earthquake must have happened some time before Uzziah's quitting the government to his son.

Ver. 2. *The Lord will roar from Zion.*] See the note upon Joel iii. 16.

And the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.] The want of pasture here threatened was occasioned by the drought which is foretold, iv. 7, 8. Carmel was a mountainous tract of ground, which ran through the two tribes of Issachar and Zebulun: it is spoken of as one of the most fruitful places in all Judea: (see Isa. xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2.) upon which account the word is sometimes taken appellatively, and translated *a fruitful field,* Isa. x. 18. xxix. 17.

Ver. 3. *For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof.*] The prophet begins with denouncing his judgments against foreign countries, and then comes to Judah and Israel. The first he threatens is Syria, the head or capital city of which was Damascus, (see Isa. vii. 8.) for the several transgressions they had committed, expressed by *three transgressions, and four.* It is a common way of speaking, to use a certain number for an uncertain. So we read, Job v. 19. *He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven no evil shall touch thee.* (See the like phrase, Prov. vi. 16. Eccles. xi. 2. Micah v. 5.) So *once and twice* are used, Psal. lxii. 11. *twice and thrice,* Job xxxiii. 29.

Because they have thrashed Gilead with thrashing instruments of iron.] The way of thrashing in the eastern countries was by drawing heavy planks with iron wheels over the corn, having sharp stones fastened on the boards. (See Dr. Hammond's notes on Matt. iii. 12.) From hence the phrase is used to signify the weak's being crushed by the mighty. (See Isa. xli. 15. Jer. li. 33.) Here it denotes the cruelties exercised by Hazael and Ben-hadad, kings of Syria: see 2 Kings x. 32, 33. xiii. 3. 7. where the sacred historian, speaking in the phrase of the text, saith, that *he made them like the dust by thrashing.*

Ver. 4. *But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael,* &c.] God's judgments are often compared to fire. (See Psal. lxxviii. 63. and the note upon Ezek. xxx. 8.) The word is taken in this general sense in the following verses.

Ver. 5. *I will break also the bars of Damascus.*] Its gates and fortifications, wherein its strength consists.

And cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven.] Or, *Bikath-aven:* the word signifies the *plain of vanity;* from whence some conjecture it was a place in Syria remarkable for idolatry: as Beth-el is called Beth-aven for that reason, Hos. v. 15. (See the following note.)

And him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden.] *The house of Eden* is equivalent to the *house of pleasure:* so it may denote one of the pleasant palaces belonging to the king of Syria, described by *him that holdeth the sceptre.* But Eden was likewise a country bordering upon Syria, mentioned 2 Kings xix. 12. Ezek. xxvii. 23. (See the note there.) Mr. Maundrell, in his Travels, observes, that not far from Damascus there is a plain still called the *valley of Bocat,* which he supposes the same with *Bikath-aven* here mentioned: and there is a place at this time called Eden near it. (See his Corrections upon p. 118.)

Him that holdeth the sceptre—and the people of Syria, shall go into captivity unto Kir.] This was fulfilled when Tiglath-pileser took Damascus, *and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin* their king, 2 Kings xvi. 9. Kir was a city in Media, mentioned Isa. xxii. 6. The Vulgar Latin renders it Cyrene, both here and in the second of Kings: but that does not appear to have been under the king of Assyria's dominion.

Ver. 6. *For three transgressions of Gaza,* &c.] This city was situate upon the coast of Palestine, and is one of those threatened by Joel, iii. 6.

Because they carried away captive the whole captivity.] Gaza was a town belonging to the Philistines, who made frequent invasions upon the Jews, and carried away considerable spoils with them. (See 2 Chron. xxi. 16. xxviii. 18.)

To deliver them up to Edom.] See ver. 11.

Ver. 7. *But I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza,* &c.] Compare Jer. xlvii. 1.

Ver. 8. *And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod.*] Another town belonging to the Philistines, and threatened by the prophets with the same judgments which befel Gaza. (See Jer. xxv. 20. Zeph. ii. 4. Zech. ix. 5.)

And I will turn my hand against Ekron.] To *turn the hand,* is the same as to inflict punishment. (See Psal. lxxxi. 14. Isa. i. 25. Zech. xiii. 7.)

And the remnant of the Philistines shall perish.] These are elsewhere called the *remnant of the sea-coast,* Ezek. xxv. 16. and the *remnant of the country of Caphtor,* Jer. xlvii. 4. (See the note there.)

Ver. 9. *For three transgressions of Tyrus,* &c.] This is probably to be understood of the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, foretold by Isaiah, chap. xxiii. by Jeremiah, xlvii. 4. where it is joined with the Philistines, as here; and by Ezekiel, chap. xxvi. xxvii.

Because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom.] See ver. 11.

And remembered not the brotherly covenant.] That strict league and friendship begun between David and Hiram king of Tyre, 2 Sam. v. 11. and afterward continued by Solomon, 1 Kings v. 1. ix. 11.

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Ver. 11. *For three transgressions of Edom, and for four,* &c.] The Idumeans are often threatened for their enmity against the Israelites; who took all occasions to oppress them, and to insult over them in their distress. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 17. Jer. xlix. 7. Ezek. xxv. 12. xxxv. 2. Joel iii. 19. Obad. ver. 1—11.)

Because he did pursue his brother with the sword.] They retained the same hatred and animosity against their brethren the Israelites, which their father Esau had expressed against his brother Jacob.

Ver. 12. *But I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah.*] Teman and Bozrah were two principal cities of Idumea. (See Isa. lxiii. 1. Jer. xlix. 7. Ezek. xxv. 15.) This expression imports the entire conquest and destruction of that country, according to the predictions of the prophets beforecited; to which may be added, Mal. i. 3, 4. The ancient seat of the Edomites was the same which was afterward called Arabia Petræa; from whence they were expelled by the Nabatheans, and never could recover their country, but were forced to settle themselves in the southern parts of Judea. (See Dr. Prideaux, par. ii. ad A. C. 165.)

Ver. 13. *Because they ripped up the women with child of Gilead, to enlarge their border.*] Hazael, king of Syria, grievously afflicted the Israelites that lay eastward of Jordan, particularly the Gileadites. (See 2 Kings x. 33.) The low condition these countries were reduced to, might probably encourage the Ammonites to possess themselves of Gilead, which lay near their own borders, and to destroy the inhabitants in that cruel manner. (Compare Jer. xlix. 1. Zeph. ii. 8. Hos. xiii. 16.)

Ver. 14. *But I will kindle a fire on the wall of Rabbah,* &c.] Compare Jer. xlix. 2. Rabbah was the chief city of the Ammonites. (See 2 Sam. xii. 26.)

With a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.] The destructions of war are often compared to the devastations caused by whirlwinds and tempests. (See Isa. v. 26. Jer. xxv. 32. Dan. xi. 40. Zech. ix. 14.)

Ver. 15. *And their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together.*] See Jer. xlix. 3.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

After two short denunciations against Moab and Judah, the prophet proceeds to the main subject of his prophecy, *viz.* to denounce God's judgments against Israel.

Ver. 1. *FOR three transgressions of Moab,* &c.] Moab and Ammon, as they were nearly related, and bordered upon each other, so they are usually joined together in the threatenings of the prophets. (See Jer. xlviii. xlix. Ezek. xxv. 1. 8. Zeph. ii. 8.)

Ver. 2. *Because he burnt the bones of the king of Edom to lime.*] *To plaster the walls of his house with it,* as the Chaldee paraphrase explains the text; which was a cruel insulting over the dead. A piece of barbarity resembling this is told by Sir Paul Rycaut, of the wall of the city of Philadelphia, made of the bones of the besieged, by the prince that took it by storm, in The present State of the Greek Church, chap. 2. Some refer the cruelty reproved in the text to the story of the king of Moab, related 2 Kings iii. 27. But the story there recited, seems rather to be understood of the king of Moab's own son, than of the king of Edom's.

And Moab shall die with tumult, &c.] His men shall die in the tumult of war. (Compare Jer. xlviii. 15.)

Ver. 3. *And I will cut off the judge from the midst thereof.*] The word *judge* denotes the supreme magistrate or governor; (see Deut. xvii. 9.) and is here equivalent to the king. (Compare Micah v. 1.)

Ver. 4. *For their lies have caused them to err, after which their fathers walked.*] Many of the tribe of Judah have continued in the same idolatry and worship of false gods, which their wicked kings, such as Jehoram and Ahaziah, and their forefathers, have set up, notwithstanding all the warnings I have given them by my prophets. (See 2 Chron. xxiv. 17—19.) *Idols* are often called *lies* in the Scripture. (See the note upon Hos. vii. 3.)

Ver. 6. *Because they sold the righteous for silver,* &c.] They perverted the cause of the righteous, and gave an unjust sentence against him for a bribe of the smallest value. (Compare v. 11, 12. viii. 6.)

Ver. 7. *That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor.*] The Vulgar Latin hath given the best sense of this sentence, "Qui conterunt super pulverem terræ capita pauperum;" *Who tread down the heads of the poor into the dust of the earth: i. e.* they throw them into the dust, and then trample upon them. The Chaldee paraphrase understands the verb *shaaph* in the sense of despising, which comes near the sense of trampling upon: the LXX. render it by καταπατέω, *to tread upon,* both here and Psal. lvi. 1, 2. lvii. 3. The verb *shoph,* which is near akin to *shaaph,* plainly signifies to *tread upon,* or *bruise,* Gen. iii. 15.

And a man and his father will go in to the same maid (or young woman), *to profane my holy name.*] One man hath cohabited with his father's wife, to the great reproach of my name and religion; being such an instance of *fornication,* or uncleanness, *as is scarce heard of among the* more civilized *heathens,* as St. Paul observes, 1 Cor. v. 1. And another *hath lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law,* as Ezekiel complains, xxii. 11. in contradiction to the express words of the law, Lev. xviii. 8. 15.

Ver. 8. *And they lay themselves down upon clothes laid to pledge, by every altar.*] This is to be understood of the feasts which were made of part of their idolatrous sacrifices, and were eaten in some of the apartments of their temples, according to the custom both of the Jews and gentiles. (See 1 Sam. ix. 12, 13. 22. Isa. lvii. 7. Ezek. xxiii. 41.) The prophet reproves them not only for partaking of things offered to idols, but likewise for making use of other men's furniture, left in their hands for a pledge, to set off their idolatrous entertainments. Here was another instance of their unmercifulness, to detain pledges received from the poor, contrary to the law, Exod. xxii. 26. (See the note upon Ezek. xviii. 7.)

The Jews, as well as the Romans, used to lie along at their meals in couches, as appears by this verse, compared with vi. 4. This custom continued in aftertimes, as appears by several places in the gospels, where it is in the original, *Lay down to meat;* though our translation renders it, *Sat down.* The custom of sitting at meals seems to have been

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the more ancient of the two. (See Gen. xliii. 33. 1 Sam. ix. 22. xvi. 11. xx. 25.)

And they drink the wine of the condemned.] The drink-offerings, made with wine, were a necessary part of the sacrifices: some of which was likewise reserved for the entertainment that followed. (See Exod. xxxii. 6.) And this was provided out of the fines or mulcts of such as had been unjustly condemned: (ver. 6.)

In the house of their god.] In the houses dedicated to the calves of Dan and Beth-el, or some other idolatrous temple.

Ver. 9. *Yet I destroyed the Amorite before them.*] The Amorites include the rest of the Canaanites. (See Gen. xv. 16.)

Whose height was as the height of the cedars, and he was as strong as the oaks.] Many of them were of a gigantic stature, as appears from Numb. xiii. 32, 33. Virgil makes the same comparison, speaking of the Titans, Æneid. lib. iii. ver. 677.

> "Concilium horrendum, quales cum vertice celso
> Aeriæ quercus, aut coniferæ cyparissi
> Constiterunt, sylva alta Jovis, lucusve Dianæ."
>
> *A dreadful council, with their heads on high,*
> *Not yielding to the tow'ring tree of Jove,*
> *Or tallest cypress of Diana's grove.*
>
> MR. DRYDEN.

Ver. 10. *And led you forty years through the wilderness.*] Where you wanted for nothing. (See Deut. ii. 7. viii. 2—4.)

Ver. 11. *And I raised up of your sons to be prophets.*] I provided for you a succession of prophets, bred up in schools erected for that purpose, (see 2 Kings vi. 1, 2.) to be your constant instructors, and to whom you might have recourse in any difficulty.

And of your young men for Nazarites.] A Nazarite signifies one separate, or set apart for the service of God. (See Numb. vi. 2. 5.) Such were Samson, Judg. xiii. 5. and John Baptist, Luke i. 15. Their vow did often include in it, beside their abstaining from wine and not shaving their heads, a constant attendance upon God's service, during the time of their separation. (See 1 Macc. iii. 49. and the note upon Hos. ix. 10.) We read of *women that departed not from the temple*, Exod. xxxviii. 8. such as Anna, Luke ii. 37. and there might probably be *men* that constantly attended upon the service there: and of such I would upon second thoughts understand the Nazarites, mentioned Lam. iv. 7. They are described in that place as remarkable for their youth and beauty: and they are styled *young men* here. A Nazarite is always mentioned as a title of honour, and Joseph is called, by way of eminence, *a Nazarite among his brethren*, as the original imports, Gen. xlix. 26.

Ver. 12. *And commanded the prophets, saying, Prophesy not.*] See vii. 13. Isa. xxx. 10. Jer. xi. 21. Micah ii. 6. They would not endure their idolatry and other darling sins should be reproved.

Ver. 13. *Behold, I am pressed under you*, &c.] Your sins have quite tired out my patience, and I am weary with bearing them. (Compare Isa. xliii. 24. Mal. ii. 17.)

Ver. 14, 15. *Therefore shall the flight perish from the swift*, &c.] The most likely means you can provide for your security, shall prove ineffectual. (Compare ix. 1, &c.)

Ver. 16. *And he that is courageous shall flee away naked.*] Having put off his armour for greater expedition. The word *naked* is used of those who lay aside their upper garments, or the habit proper to their quality or profession. (See the note upon Isa. xx. 2.)

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a threatening of God's judgments, first against the twelve tribes in general, and then particularly against the kingdom of Israel, whose capital city was Samaria.

Ver. 1. *HEAR this word that the Lord hath spoken—against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt.*] All that family of which Jacob, or Israel, was the head: *family* is equivalent to people, here and in the following verse; and so it is taken Jer. i. 15. viii. 3. x. 25. Nahum iii. 4. Zech. xiv. 18.

Ver. 2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*] Your punishment shall be exemplary, because you have sinned against a clearer light, and higher obligations. For the same reason the angel is commanded to begin his execution *at the sanctuary*, Ezek. ix. 6. (Compare Matt. xi. 22. Luke xii. 47.)

Ver. 3. *Can two walk together* (as friends), *except they be agreed?*] So neither can I behave myself towards you as a friend or benefactor, as long as you act in perfect contradiction to my nature and laws by your manifold sins.

Ver. 4. *Will a lion roar in the forest when he hath no prey?*] As a lion doth not use to roar but when he hath his prey in view; so neither doth God denounce his judgments, (compared to the roaring of a lion, ver. 8.) unless your sins have made you proper objects of his displeasure.

Ver. 5. *Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth where no gin is for him?*] God is said to *watch over sinners* to bring *evil* upon them, Jer. xxxi. 21. Dan. ix. 14. and thus he will deal by this people, unless they repent.

Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken up nothing at all?] In like manner you are not to expect that God should remove his judgments till they have attained their proper end, *viz.* the people's repentance.

Ver. 6. *Shall the trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid?*] The sounding of the trumpet was the signal of war: such an alarm is apt to strike men with terror: (see Jer. iv. 12.) and the warnings God gives his people by the prophets, of the judgments hanging over their heads, ought equally to affect them.

Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?] You may be assured that the calamities you feel, or have just cause to fear, are not the effect of chance, but come upon you by the especial direction of Providence. (Compare Isa. xlv. 7.)

Ver. 7. *Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he reveals his secrets unto his servants the prophets.*] There was a succession of prophets among the Jews from Samuel's time till the captivity: the people commonly consulted them upon extraordinary occasions, and they gave them coun-

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sel and direction what was proper to be done. (See ii. 11. 1 Kings xxii. 13. 2 Kings iii. 11. xxii. 13. Jer. xxi. 2. Ezek. xx. 2.) The want of this prophetical gift was much lamented in the times of the captivity. (See Ezek. vii. 26. Lament. ii. 9. Psal. lxxiv. 9.)

Ver. 8. *The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord hath spoken, who can but prophesy?*] As the denouncing of the Divine judgments ought to terrify you like the roaring of a lion, (see ver. 4. and i. 2.) so the prophets that are God's messengers must obey those commands and instructions he gives them, with whatever perils the discharge of their duty may be attended. (See ii. 12. vi. 12, 13.)

Ver. 9. *Publish ye in the palaces of Ashdod, and in the palaces of the land of Egypt,* &c.] God calls upon the heathen to be witnesses of his judgments upon his own people, that they may take warning thereby: particularly he gives notice to the Philistines and Egyptians, the Jews' inveterate enemies, that they may assemble themselves, and with pleasure behold the ravages and oppressions which their insulting adversaries will bring upon the kingdom of Israel, whose capital city was Samaria, built upon a hill of the same name: (1 Kings xvi. 24.) or the *mountains of Samaria* may be equivalent to the *mountains of Israel,* mentioned Ezek. xxxvi. 8. xxxvii. 22. Samaria being often taken for the whole kingdom of Israel. (See the note upon Hos. viii. 6.)

Ver. 10. *For they know not to do right.*] *i. e.* They will not know nor learn to do right. (See Jer. v. 4. viii. 7. ix. 3.)

Ver. 11. *An adversary shall be even round about the land.*] Shalmaneser the king of Assyria shall invade the land on every side, shall dismantle its fortresses, and plunder its wealthy palaces.

Ver. 12. *As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear,* &c.] When the lion hath for some time ravaged the flock, but is at last frighted away by the noise of the shepherds and their dogs, or by throwing darts and other offensive weapons at him; in such a case the shepherd can hope to save but only some poor remains of the prey the lion had seized upon. And thus shall it be at the sacking of Samaria; but a small remainder of the inhabitants shall escape the search of their enemies, though they try to hide themselves in their most retired apartments. (Compare 1 Kings xx. 30. xxii. 25.)

And in Damascus in a couch.] The marginal reading gives a better sense, *On the bed's feet.* They that follow the reading of the text, explain it of those Israelites who fled for refuge to Damascus, there being a confederacy between Israel and Syria; (see Isa. vii. 2.) but were seized there, upon the taking of Damascus. (See i. 5. 2 Kings xvi. 9. compared with xv. 29.) Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria conquered both Israel and Syria. (See the places abovecited, and compare Isa. vii. 16. xvii. 1—3.)

Ver. 13. *Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob,* &c.] The words are directed to the prophets, whom God sends to testify and declare his will.

Ver. 14. *That in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him, I will also visit the altars of Beth-el.*] In the general destruction of the ten tribes, God's judgments should be particularly visible upon the places dedicated to idolatrous worship, especially Beth-el, the principal place of that kind. (See ix. 1. Hos. x. 5, 6. 8.) *Altars* may stand here for *altar;* as we read of *the calves of Beth-aven,* in that place of Hosea, meaning the calf at Beth-el.

And the horns of the altar shall be cut off.] They were squares placed at the four corners of the altar, and hollow in the middle, into which some of the blood of the sacrifices was poured out. (See Exod. xxvii. 12. and Dr. Prideaux's draught of the altar, in the first part of his Connex. of Script. Hist.)

Ver. 15. *And I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house.*] The great men had their different houses or apartments suited to the several seasons of the year. (See Jer. xxxvi. 21.)

And the houses of ivory shall perish.] King Ahab built him *an ivory house, i. e.* ceiled or wainscotted with ivory, (1 Kings xxii. 39.) It is probable other great men followed his example, in adorning their houses after this costly manner. Whereupon the prophet threatens destruction to this piece of pride and state.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet reproveth the ten tribes for luxury and oppression, for idolatry and impenitency, notwithstanding the severe judgments already inflicted upon them.

Ver. 1. *HEAR ye this word, ye kine of Bashan.*] The luxury and insolence of oppressors is often compared to the wantonness of full-fed cattle. (See Psal. xxii. 12. lxviii. 30.) Bashan was remarkable for richness of its pastures, and its breed of cattle. (Numb. xxxii. 4. Deut. xxxii. 14. Ezek. xxxix. 18.) Grotius and some other commentators suppose this to be meant of the women of quality. (See ver. 3.)

That are in the mountain of Samaria.] See iii. 9.

Which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.] If we explain the former part of the verse of women, by their *masters,* or lords, as the word is sometimes translated, may be understood their husbands; (see Gen. xviii. 12.) or else by *masters* we may understand those to whom they sold the poor for slaves, (compare ii. 6.) and demanded the money due for their purchase, that they might spend it in a luxurious manner. So the text will be equivalent to that in Joel, iii. 3. *They have sold a girl for wine, that they may drink.*

Ver. 2. *The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness.*] As sure as he is holy and true, so certainly will he bring the threatened judgment upon this people. (Compare Psal. lxxxix. 35.)

That he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks.] Invaders and spoilers are elsewhere compared to fishers. (See Jer. xvi. 16. Habak. i. 15.) The words *besiroth diegah,* translated *with fish-hooks,* the Targum translates, *in fisher-boats;* boats made in the fashion of a pot, for the word *siroth* properly signifies a *pot.* The several invaders of Israel, first, Tiglath-pileser, (2 Kings xv. 29.) then Shalmaneser, (ibid. xvii. 5.) *The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind,* (Isa. ix. 12.) these coming after one another, will make an entire riddance of the whole nation: so that their *posterity,* or remainder, as the word may be translated, which hath escaped the first

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invaders, shall certainly fall into the hands of those that come after.

Ver. 3. *And ye shall go out of the breaches, every cow at that which is before her.*] The prophet pursues the metaphor taken from the kine of Bashan, ver. 1. and tells the people, that as cattle strive to get out at every breach they can find in a mound or fence, so shall they with all possible haste make their escape at the several breaches which shall be made in the walls of Samaria. (Compare 2 Kings xxv. 4. Ezek. xii. 12.)

And ye shall cast them into the palace.] The sentence may be thus translated, *Ye shall cast out yourselves; i. e.* Ye shall with haste betake yourselves to Harmon; so the Vulgar Latin: or, *to the mountains of Mona;* by which the Chaldee understands Armenia, others the mountains of the Maonites, or *Mehunims,* as they are called, Judg. x. 12. 2 Chron. xxvi. 7. They are called *Minæi* by Strabo, and reckoned inhabitants of Arabia Felix: (lib. xvii. p. 768. edit. Casaub.)

Ver. 4. *Come to Beth-el, and transgress.*] A permission spoken by way of sarcasm and irony, sharply upbraiding them as incorrigible, and not to be reformed by all the reproofs and admonitions that have been given them: like that of Ezekiel, xx. 39. *Go ye, serve every man his idols.* (See the note there.)

At Gilgal multiply transgressions.] Gilgal was a place noted for idolatry, as well as Beth-el. (See the note upon Hos. iv. 15.)

And bring your sacrifices every morning.] According to the law of the daily burnt-offering, (Numb. xxviii. 4.) which they observed in the worship of the golden calves, intending by that outward representation to worship the God of Israel. (Compare viii. 5. 10.)

And your tithes after three years.] At the end of three years, when the tithe, spent the other two years at Jerusalem, was distributed among the poor. (See Deut. xiv. 22, 23. 28.) Upon which account the *third year* is called *the year of tithing;* Deut. xxvi. 12. (See Dr. Wootton upon the Mischna, par. i. p. 115.) The Hebrew reads, *After three days,* which our margin supplies, *After three years of days.* The word *yamim, days,* often signifies years. (See Exod. xiii. 10. Lev. xxv. 29. 1 Sam. i. 3. 2 Sam. xiv. 26. compare Gen. xxiv. 55.) So the phrase which we translate, *The yearly sacrifice,* is, in the Hebrew, *The sacrifice of days:* 1 Sam. i. 21. xx. 6.

Ver. 5. *And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven.*] Or, With *leavened bread;* as the law prescribes, Lev. vii. 13. Beside the cakes which were to be unleavened, because it was an offering made by fire: ibid. ver. 12, 13. and ii. 4, &c.

And proclaim and publish the free-offerings.] Or, *free-will-offerings;* as the word is in other places translated. (See Lev. xxii. 18. 21.) These offerings were such as the sacrificers did partake of; whereupon they gave notice of their intention to their friends, and invited them to the feast. (See Deut. xii. 6, 7.)

For this liketh you, O house of Israel.] Your hearts are so set upon your idolatrous worship, that it is in vain to use any arguments to persuade you to the contrary. (See Psal. lxxxi. 12.)

Ver. 6. *And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,* &c.] Or, *For this cause I have given you.* (See Noldius, p. 337, 338.) The famine I have sent upon the cities and territories of Israel hath not brought you to a sense of your sins, or any sincere purposes of amendment.

Ver. 7. *And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest.*] This was called the *latter rain,* and the season for it was in the first month, answering to our March, which was three months before the wheat-harvest. (See the note upon Joel ii. 23.)

And I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city.] This may import, that God punished them with drought, at the same time when he sent rain upon the cities of Judah; making that remarkable difference between Israel and Judah, as he did formerly between Egypt and the land of Goshen. (See Exod. viii. 22. ix. 4. 26. x. 23.)

Ver. 8. *So two or three cities wandered to one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied.*] They had not enough to quench their thirst: the contrary phrase, To eat or drink, *and be satisfied,* denoteth plenty. (See the note upon Joel ii. 26.)

Ver. 9. *I have smitten you with blasting and with mildew.*] A judgment threatened to their sins by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 22.

When your gardens and your vineyards increased, the palmer-worm devoured them.] The palmer-worm and other devouring insects, occasioned by the drought beforementioned. (Compare Joel i. 4.)

Ver. 10. *I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt.*] The several infectious diseases wherewith I plagued Egypt. (See Exod. ix. 3. xii. 29. Deut. xxviii. 27. 60.)

And have taken away your horses.] The enemy hath seized them. (See 2 Kings xiii. 3. 7.) Horses were scarce in Judea, and the Jews used to furnish themselves with horses from Egypt: so such a loss was not easily recruited. (See 1 Kings x. 29. Isa. xxxi. 1. xxxvi. 9.)

And I have made the stink of your camps to come up into your nostrils.] The kings of Israel had frequent wars with the Syrians. (See 2 Kings xiii. 25. xiv. 28.) This made it necessary for them to keep up standing forces: and when diseases spread in their camps, the noisome smell of the carcasses produced a pestilence.

Ver. 11. *I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.*] *Your cities are burnt with fire,* (Isa. i. 7.) and utterly consumed, as Sodom and Gomorrah were, by fire from heaven, (Gen. xix. 24, 25.)

And ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning.] Those that remained very narrowly escaped. A proverbial expression, used both in sacred and profane authors, to signify a narrow escape out of an imminent danger. (Compare Zech. iii. 2. 1 Cor. iii. 15. Jude ver. 23.)

Ver. 12. *Therefore thus will I do unto thee.*] I will send these several judgments upon thee altogether, till I make an entire destruction of thee.

And because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.] Expect that he will come to take full vengeance upon thee, and consider whether thou art able to contend with him; so the expression of *meeting an adversary* is understood, Luke xiv. 31. Or, if that be impossible, try to avert his anger by thy humiliation and repentance, before it actually breaks out upon thee.

Ver. 13. *For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and*

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createth the wind.] The former the most solid, the other the most subtile and active part of the material world.

And declareth unto man what is his thought.] Whose knowledge is infinite, as well as his power; who searches the thoughts and intents of the heart; and, upon some occasions, discovers them for men's conviction. (See Dan. ii. 28.)

That maketh the morning darkness.] Who turns day into night, overcasting the heaven with clouds; (see v. 8.) or else, *darkens the earth in the clear days,* by an extraordinary eclipse of the sun: (see viii. 9.) and can in like manner turn the most flourishing condition into a state of misery. (Compare v. 18, 19.) Affliction is often expressed by darkness. (See v. 18. Job xxii. 11. Isa. v. 30. viii. 22.)

And treadeth upon the high places of the earth.] Who can subdue cities or fortresses of the greatest strength, whose *walls reach up to heaven,* as it is expressed Deut. i. 28. (compare xxxiii. 29.) and takes delight to humble the great and mighty, denoted elsewhere by the *mountains* and hills. (See Isa. ii. 14. Psal. lxxii. 3.)

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

A pathetical lamentation for the sins of Israel, which, upon their impenitency, the prophet foresaw would end in their destruction: whereupon he earnestly exhorts them to a sincere repentance and reformation, without which all their outward exercises of religion would avail nothing.

Ver. 1. *HEAR you this word, which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel.*] The words might be better translated thus, *Hear you this word, even a lamentation which I take up over you.* The text alludes to the lamentations made at funerals. (See ver. 16. Jer. ix. 17. Ezek. xix. 2. xxvii. 2.) So the prophet bemoans the state of the kingdom of Israel, as dead and irrecoverably lost.

Ver. 2. *The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise.*] She that never was conquered by any, is fallen from her glory, and shall never be restored to her former state, as a kingdom or nation. Those cities or kingdoms are called *virgins* who were never conquered. (See Isa. xxiii. 12. xxxvii. 22.) The *virgin of Israel* may likewise import her that was *espoused* to God, *as a chaste virgin* to a husband, (see 2 Cor. xi. 2.) and had the benefit of being under his protection, but is now, for her idolatries and other sins, delivered up to the will of her enemies. (Compare Jer. xviii. 13.)

She is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up.] Like an infant that is exposed, or fallen upon the ground, and hath none to take it up.

Ver. 3. *The city which went out by a thousand shall leave a hundred,* &c.] A city which was able to furnish out a thousand men fit for war, shall have but a hundred of them left. And so it shall be in proportion for any less number: but one in ten of them shall escape the sword, and other chances of war.

Ver. 4. *For* [or rather, therefore] *thus saith the Lord, Seek ye me, and ye shall live.*] *i. e.* Ye shall be prosperous. *Life* is taken for prosperity or happiness: (see 1 Sam. xxv. 6.) as *death* is used for misery, Exod. x. 17. Hos. xiii. 1.

Ver. 5. *But seek ye not Beth-el, nor enter into Gilgal.*] See iv. 4.

And pass not to Beer-sheba.] A place remarkable for Abraham's dwelling there, and planting a grove for the worship of God, (Gen. xxi. 33. xxii. 19.) It is likely a grove might still be continued there, and abused to idolatry. (See vii. 9. viii. 14.) Beer-sheba did formerly belong to Judah: (see 1 Kings xix. 3.) but it seems in latter times to have been taken from it by some of the kings of Israel.

For Gilgal shall go into captivity.] There is an allusion in the Hebrew between the word Gilgal and Galah, which signifies *captivity.* Such paronomasias are now and then used by the sacred writers. (See the note upon Isa. xxiv. 17.)

And Beth-el shall come to nought.] The original runs thus, *Beth-el shall become Aven.* Beth-el signifies *the house of God:* when the place was defiled by idolatry, it was named by way of reproach, Beth-aven, *i. e. the house of vanity,* or idolatry: (see Hos. iv. 15.) and it is here called so in another sense, *viz.* as vanity is the same with a thing of nought, or of no continuance.

Ver. 6. *Lest he break out like fire* [see i. 4.] *in the house of Joseph.*] The ten tribes are called by the name of Joseph, as they are elsewhere by that of Ephraim, the son of Joseph; because that was the chief tribe of the kingdom of Israel. (See Ezek. xxxvii. 19.)

And there be none to quench it in Beth-el.] The idol you worship will not be able to deliver you, but will itself be involved in the common calamity. (See the note upon Hos. x. 6.)

Ver. 7. *Ye who turn judgment into wormwood.*] Or, *Into hemlock,* as the word *laannah* is translated, vi. 12. Ye that pervert the law which was designed to protect innocence, and under colour of it exercise the greatest oppression.

Ver. 8. *Seek him that makes the seven stars and Orion.*] The Hebrew names of these constellations are *Kima* and *Kesil,* which are translated to the same sense, Job ix. 9. xxxviii. 31. These, and other constellations, were commonly thought to have a great influence upon the seasons. (See the forementioned place of Job.) Whereupon their rising and setting used to be particularly taken notice of by husbandmen and shepherds; whose employments lying abroad, made them more observant of the heavenly appearances. So this is an instance of Providence very suitable for one of Amos's profession to mention.

That turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night.] The vicissitudes of day and night, and the light's breaking out of darkness, are just matter of admiration, did not the constant recourse of them lessen the wonder. Clemens Alexandrinus cites these verses out of Pindar to the same sense:

Θεῷ δὲ δυνατὸν ἐκ μελαίνας
Νυκτὸς ἀμίαντον ὥρσαι φῶς·
Κελαινῷ νέφει δὲ σκότου καλύψαι
Καθαρὸν ἀμέρας σέλας.

God can create the light,
And make it spring from darkest night:
And when he covers o'er the day,
The darkness chases light away.

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That calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth.] Who commandeth the seas and the rivers to overflow the earth in great inundations. The Jews call all great bodies of water by the name of *seas*. The words may likewise be explained of the raising vapours out of the sea, to supply rain for the earth, the clouds retaining none of the saltness of the sea-water. (Compare Job xxxviii. 34.)

Ver. 9. *That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong,* &c.] That giveth strength to him that hath been conquered, and enableth him to subdue his conquerors, and become master of their fortifications. And such deliverance God is able to work for Israel. (See 2 Kings xiii. 17, &c.)

Ver. 10. *They hate him that reproveth in the gate.*] The oppressors of the poor, (see ver. 11, 12.) hate those magistrates that would punish the injurious, and do right to the oppressed. It was the custom for judges to execute their office sitting in the gates of the city. (See the note upon Isa. xxix. 21. and ver. 15. of this chapter.)

Ver. 11. *Forasmuch as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat.*] Or, *Choice gifts,* as the LXX. render it, agreeably to the sense of the Hebrew, where the word *massah* often signifies a *gift* or reward; (see Jer. xl. 5. Ezek. xx. 40.) and *bar*, the *choice* or best of any thing.

Ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them, &c.] God often threatens to deprive men of the enjoyment of their ill-gotten substance. (See Deut. xxviii. 38, 39. Micah vi. 15. Zeph. i. 13.)

Ver. 12. *For I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins.*] Your daring impieties, your sins of the first magnitude, such as idolatry and oppression, reproved in the foregoing part of the chapter: or your *numerous sins,* as the word may be translated; in which sense it is taken, Isa. xlvii. 9.

Ver. 13. *Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time,* &c.] In such times as these, the wisest way for private persons is not to be too free in reproving public vices; which will bring trouble upon themselves, and do no good upon those who are hardened in their sins. (Compare Hos. iv. 4. Matt. vii. 6.)

Ver. 14. *Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live.*] See ver. 4.

And so the Lord, the God of hosts, may be with you, as ye have spoken.] Ye use to boast of your interest in him, and of the promises he hath made to your fathers: and obedience is the condition required on your part to qualify you for his favour.

Ver. 15. *Establish judgment in the gate.*] See ver. 10.

It may be the Lord will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.] Your case is not so desperate, but repentance may avert God's judgments: (compare Jer. xxxvi. 3.) and he may be gracious to the small remains of the ten tribes, (see ver. 6.) after those grievous invasions wherewith the kings of Syria first, and afterward Tiglath-pileser, have wasted them. (See 2 Kings xiii. 7. 23. xiv. 26, 27. xv. 29.)

Ver. 16. *Wailing shall be in all—and they shall call the husbandman to mourning,* &c.] There shall be a general lamentation of all orders and degrees of men; of the citizens, for the loss of their wealth and substance, plundered by the conquerors; of the husbandman and vine-dressers, for the loss of the fruits of the earth, destroyed or devoured by a foreign army.

And such as are skilful in lamentation to wailing.] Let such whose profession it is to make lamentation at funerals join in this public mourning, to make it more solemn. (See ver. 1.)

Ver. 17. *And in all vineyards shall be wailing.*] Where there used to be shouting and rejoicing, when the summer-fruits were gathered in. (See Isa. xvi. 10. Jer. xxv. 30. xlviii. 33.)

For I will pass through thee, saith the Lord.] He will come like an enemy, that invadeth and destroyeth a country as he marches through it. (Compare Exod. xii. 12. Nahum i. 15.)

Ver. 18. *Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord.*] Infidels made a mock of the words of the prophets, when they told them, *the day of the Lord was at hand:* (see Joel ii. 2. 11. Zeph. i. 14.) and out of a principle of unbelief they expressed their desire of seeing this day, that they might be convinced of the truth of such predictions by ocular demonstration. (Compare Isa. v. 19. Jer. xvii. 15. Ezek. xii. 22. 27. 2 Pet. iii. 4.)

To what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.] To what purpose should you desire to see the day of the Lord? It will certainly be a very uncomfortable time, when evils shall succeed one another so fast, that he who seeks to escape one shall fall into a worse. (Compare Joel ii. 2. and see the note upon iv. 13.)

Ver. 19. *As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him.*] You may think that day will put an end to the evils which you now complain of; but it will indeed make your condition worse than it was before: as if a man fled from a lion, a creature that has something of generosity in his nature, and a bear should meet him, which never spares any thing that comes in its way.

Or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.] Or as if a man should go into the house to avoid the severity of the weather abroad; and a viper, whose sting is incurable, should creep out of the wall and bite him.

Ver. 20.] See ver. 18.

Ver. 21. *I hate, I despise your feast-days,* &c.] This and the three following verses are the same in sense with Isa. i. 11. 16. Jer. vi. 20. vii. 21—23. Hos. vi. 6. viii. 13. all which places import, how little the external rites of religion are valuable, unless they are accompanied with a universal obedience.

And I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.] Or, *I will not smell the sacrifices of your solemn assemblies.* The word *chag* signifies both a solemn feast, and the sacrifice offered at it: (see Exod. xxiii. 18.) and by the same reason the word *astereth* may be capable of both those significations.

Ver. 22. *Neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts.*] They made choice of the fairest and fattest cattle, when they offered peace-offerings, or offerings of thanksgiving. So we read Psal. lxvi. 15. *I will offer unto thee burnt-offerings of fatlings with the incense,* or burnt fat, *of rams.*

Ver. 23. *Take from me the noise of thy songs,* &c.] The psalms and hymns were sung in the temple with vocal and instrumental music. As the worshippers at Beth-el imi-

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tated the temple-worship in other particulars, (see iv. 4.) so it is likely they did in this part of the public worship. (See viii. 3.) The prophet calls their songs a *noise*, like that of an untuneful voice, because their melody not proceeding from a true principle of religion, it was not grateful to God.

Ver. 24. *But let judgment run down like waters*, &c.] Rather let justice have its free course, so that the meanest persons may feel the benefit of it.

Ver. 25. *Have ye offered to me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?*] When your forefathers offered sacrifices of slain beasts, and added their meat and drink-offerings to them, during their abode in the wilderness; they performed these services with as little sincerity and devotion to me, as you do at present. *To me*, is the same as *to my honour*. (See Isa. xliii. 23. Zech. vii. 5. Rom. xiv. 6.) The prophets often upbraid the Jews with the sins of their forefathers, and threaten them with remarkable judgments upon that account, when their posterity continue in the same or worse impieties. (See Hos. ix. 9, 10. x. 9. compare Matt. xxiii. 35.)

Ver. 26. *Yea, ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch, and Chiun your images.*] Your ancestors want of true devotion towards me appears from hence, that they were so prone to continue in those idolatrous practices which they learnt in Egypt; to which they added the worship of the idols they saw in the countries through which they travelled. (See Lev. xvii. 3. xviii. 3. Numb. xv. 39. xxv. 2. Josh. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7. 16. xxiii. 3. 8.) *The tabernacle of Moloch* was a shrine with the image of the deity placed within it: such were the *silver shrines of Diana*, Acts xix. 24. and the *Thensæ* or *Lecticæ* among the Romans. These their votaries carried in procession, as a solemn piece of worship, or a pledge of the presence of their gods among them. (See Isa. xlvi. 7.) Moloch is an idol often mentioned in Scripture; to whom they offered their children in sacrifice. It is probable the Israelites were addicted to this kind of worship in the wilderness, because it is so severely prohibited by Moses, Lev. xx. 2. 5. Chiun is generally supposed by learned men to be the same with Saturn. (See particularly Lud. de Dieu, upon Acts vii. 43. and Dr. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 3.) The same idol was called Remphan, or Rephan, by the Egyptians, as you may see proved in the places abovecited: for which reason the Seventy interpreters translate Chiun by Rephan; which is an argument that those interpreters were natives, or, at least, inhabitants, of Egypt, as Dr. Hody observes, de Vers. Græc. Auctoribus, lib. ii. cap. 4.

The star of your god.] As the heathens had images that represented the heavenly bodies: (see 2 Kings xxiii. 11. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4.) so the image of Chiun represented the star Saturn, as that of Moloch did the sun. If we suppose with some learned men that Remphan, or Rephan, was a famous Egyptian king, it was a common opinion among the heathens to suppose the souls of their deified heroes to be placed in the stars. So Virgil speaks of the star that appeared quickly after Cæsar's death, Eclog. ix.

" Ecce dionæi processit Cæsaris astrum."

See Cæsar's star is lighted in the skies.

Ver. 27. *Therefore I will cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus.*] Ye shall be removed farther from your own country, than when Hazael king of Syria carried away so many Israelites captives to Damascus: (see i. 4.) and, consequently, shall have less hopes of returning home. The king of Assyria carried the ten tribes captives as far as Media, (2 Kings xvii. 6.) St. Stephen, in his speech recorded by St. Luke, expressing rather the sense than the words, reads, *I will carry you away beyond Babylon*, Acts vii. 43. Media being at a much greater distance than Babylon. Both readings import, that the captivity of the ten tribes would be far worse than that of the two remaining, and with less hopes of returning to their own country.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

A reproof of those who indulge their ease and pleasures without having any sense of God's afflicting hand, which threatens ruin and desolation to the whole kingdom of Israel for their pride and incorrigibleness.

Ver. 1. *WOE to them that are at ease in Zion.*] Or, *Are secure*, as the margin reads: who live fearless of God's judgments, and resolved to indulge themselves in their voluptuousness, notwithstanding the evident tokens of God's displeasure against the whole nation, both Israel and Judah. For these and the following words contain a threatening against both kingdoms, both Israel and Judah, (see ver. 2.) though the chief design of this prophecy is against the ten tribes, or kingdom of Israel. But the LXX. translate the words thus, *Woe unto them that despise Zion.* [But the learned Dr. Grabe conjectures, that instead of Ἐξουθενοῦσι, *despise*, it should be read Εὐθυμοῦσι, *are prosperous:* for so the LXX. render the word *shaanannim*, Psal. cxxiii. 4. See the Prolegom. to his edition of the Prophets.] The word *shaanannim*, which our translation renders *are at ease*, signifying also to be *insolent:* in which sense the words may fitly belong to the ten tribes, who despised Zion and the temple, which *God chose out of all the tribes of Israel, to place his name there.*

And trust in the mountain of Samaria.] In the strength of their capital city, built upon the hill of Samaria. (See iv. 1.)

Which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came.] Zion, or Jerusalem, and Samaria, are the chief seats of the two kingdoms, whither is the greatest resort of the whole nation. The word *gojim*, *nations*, usually signifies the heathen nations, but sometimes denotes the Jews, and is equivalent to *ammim*. (See Zeph. ii. 9.) The Chaldee interprets it, *Who give names to their children, according to the names of the chief of the heathen, to whom the house of Israel apply themselves for protection.* Thus, in the later times, some of the Jews took the names of Alexander, Antipater, Agrippa, and the like, to compliment some great men among the Greeks or Romans of those names. The Jews making alliances with the heathens, is often reproved by the prophets. (See 2 Chron. xvi. 7. Isa. xxx. 1, 2. Hos. v. 13. vii. 11. xii. 1.)

Ver. 2. *Pass ye to Calneh, and see.*] *Calneh*, called *Calno*, Isa. x. 9. was a city in the land of Shinar, or the territory of Babylon, Gen. x. 10. St. Jerome supposes it the same with Ctesiphon. This was taken probably by

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some king of Assyria, not long before the uttering of this prophecy.

Thence go ye to Hemath the great.] St. Jerome supposes this to be the same city which was afterward called Antioch: this was taken too by Sennacherib, or some of his predecessors. (See 2 Kings xviii. 34.) It is called here *Hemath the great*, to distinguish it from another *Hemath*, mentioned ver. 14. which is the boundary of Palestine, and therefore called the *entering in of Hemath* in that verse, and 1 Kings viii. 65. 2 Kings xiv. 25. That town is since called Epiphania.

Then go down to Gath of the Philistines.] Taken by Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6.

Be they better than these kingdoms, &c.] Are they in a better condition than you are, both in Israel and Judah? Or have they a larger and more plentiful country to live in? If they have not, why are you so ungrateful to God, as not to be sensible of those his mercies? The word *border* is equivalent to *country*. (See the note upon Mal. i. 4.)

Ver. 3. *Ye that put away the evil day far from you.*] Who persuade yourselves that God's judgments will not overtake you so soon as the predictions of the prophets import. (See v. 18. ix. 20.)

And cause the seat of violence to draw near.] Ye take hold of every opportunity of perverting justice, by pronouncing unrighteous decrees, and turning the seat of justice into the seat of oppression. (See ver. 12. and compare Psal. xciv. 20.)

Ver. 4. *That lie upon beds of ivory,* &c.] This and the two following verses are an elegant description of the ill uses men too often make of a plentiful fortune: that it shuts out all serious considerations, makes them void of compassion towards those that are in misery, and to regard nothing but the present gratification of their senses. *Lying upon beds of ivory, and stretching themselves upon their couches,* express the posture they used at their meals. (See ver. 7. and ii. 8.)

Eat the lambs out of the flock, &c.] The choicest and best of them.

Ver. 5. *Invent to themselves instruments of music, like David.*] Such variety of music as he appropriated to the service of God, (see 1 Chron. xxiii. 5.) that they contrive for their own diversion.

Ver. 6. *And are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph.*] They do not humble themselves under God's afflicting hand, nor lay to heart the miseries the Divine judgments have brought upon the kingdom of Israel, called by the name *Joseph*, and *the house of Joseph*, v. 6. 15. The words allude to the afflicted state of Joseph, when he was sold by his brethren into Egypt.

Ver. 7. *And the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.*] Their luxurious way of living shall be at an end. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 8. *I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces.*] Whatever the kingdoms of Israel and Judah value themselves for is hateful to me, as having been abused by them, and made instrumental in dishonouring me. If we understand this of Israel, the ten tribes valued themselves as being the most potent kingdom. (See 2 Kings xiv. 9.) If we suppose the words comprehend Judah, (see ver. 1.) they valued themselves for having Jerusalem and the temple situate in their territories, where God had *placed his name;* and is peculiarly called the honour, or *excellency of Jacob,* Psal. xlvii. 4. Ezek. xxiv. 21.

Therefore will I deliver up the city, &c.] I will deliver up Samaria first, and then Jerusalem, into the hands of their enemies.

Ver. 9. *If there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die.*] Those that escape the hands of the enemy shall die by the pestilence. (Compare Ezek. v. 12.)

Ver. 10. *And a man's uncle* [or near kinsman] *shall take him up.*] His nearest kinsman must be forced to perform the last office for him, and carry him to his burial.

And [or] *he that burns him to bring out the bones out of the house.*] *And* is equivalent to *or* here. (See Noldius, p. 271.) The undertakers of the funeral first burnt the body, in order to carry out the remaining bones to be buried. It was usual to burn the bodies of kings and great persons with odours and spices: (see Jer. xxxiv. 5. 2 Chron. xvi. 14.) and it may be, they might use the same custom in this case for fear of infection.

And shall say to him that is by the sides of the house [*in* or *near* the house], *Is there any more with thee?*] Alive or dead.

Then shall he say, Hold thy tongue; for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord.] Silence best becomes such astonishing calamities: or, It is to no purpose to call upon God, or to implore his help in our afflictions. An expression betokening despair, joined with impenitency: like that of Joram, 2 Kings vi. 33. *What should I wait for the Lord any longer?* The verb *zacar,* to remember, or *make mention,* when it is spoken of God, signifies his worship, as Dr. Spencer observes, de Leg. Heb. lib. ii. cap. 5.

Ver. 11. *He will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts.*] People of all ranks, high and low, shall be sufferers in the common calamities. (See iii. 15.)

Ver. 12. *Shall horses run upon the rock? will one plough there with oxen? for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock.*] Your perverting of judgment, and thereby making oppression the seeming fruit or effect of righteousness, is as much the inverting the nature and order of things, as it would be to undertake to run a race upon a rock, or to cultivate it by ploughing or sowing there. The word *rosh,* translated here and in other places *gall,* signifies a weed growing among corn, as bitter as wormwood: and *laannath,* rendered *hemlock,* is translated *wormwood,* v. 7. and in other places.

Ver. 13. *Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought.*] Ye pride yourselves in your own strength, which will stand you in no stead, without God's blessing and assistance.

And say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?] A *horn* is often used in Scripture for power, strength, or authority; the metaphor being taken from the horns of an ox or bullock, wherein his strength lies. The boast of the Israelites seems chiefly grounded upon the success their king Jeroboam the Second had in restoring the ancient dominion of Israel, and recovering it from the Syrians, who had brought them very low. (See 2 Kings xiii. 3. 7. xiv. 25.)

Ver. 14. *But, behold, I will raise up a nation against you —and they shall afflict you from the entering in of Hemath, to the river of the wilderness.*] The prophet means the Assyrians, who should afflict them from one end of the land unto

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the other. *The entering in of Hemath* was the northern boundary of their country, (see the note upon ver. 2.) and *the river of the wilderness* is the same with the *river of Egypt*, Gen. xv. 18. Josh. xv. 47. 1 Kings viii. 65. Isa. xxvii. 12. which arises out of Mount Paran, and is the southermost bound of Judea. It is called the *sea of the plain*, as our interpretation renders it, Deut. iii. 17. or *the sea of the wilderness*, as it is translated here; the original word *Arabah* being the same in both places.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

By three several visions God represents to Amos the judgments he is bringing upon Israel, which are mitigated by the intercession of the prophet; who being accused of sedition by Amaziah the priest of Beth-el to king Jeroboam, he denounces judgment against Amaziah and his family.

Ver. 1. *HE formed grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth.*] Most commentators suppose this vision to denote the invasion of Pul king of Assyria, mentioned 2 Kings xv. 19. But this and the following calamities may as probably relate to those tumults and commotions which happened after Jeroboam's death, during an anarchy which lasted eleven years, from that time till his son's settlement on the throne, as appears by comparing the times of the kings of Israel and Judah. This was cutting Israel *short*, after they had begun to flourish again under the prosperous reign of Jeroboam, and so might fitly be represented by the grasshoppers devouring the latter or second growth of the grass.

It was the latter growth after the king's mowings.] The first crop of grass was set apart for the use of the king's stables.

Ver. 2. *By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small.*] If thou suffer these calamities to proceed to extremity, by what means shall the small remains of the riches and strength of the kingdom be rescued from utter destruction? Some translate the words, *Who shall rise up, or stand for Jacob?* but the interrogative pronoun *mi, who*, may stand for *bemi, by whom;* as it does, Isa. li. 19.

Ver. 3. *The Lord repented for this*, &c.] The Lord was pleased to hearken to my earnest supplication, and to promise, that the threatened judgment should not proceed to an utter destruction of the whole kingdom.

Ver. 4. *The Lord God called to contend by fire, which devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part.*] This represents a sorer judgment than the former, and in the opinion of most expositors denotes the invasion of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, who carried a great part of Israel away captive, (2 Kings xv. 29.) and so was properly represented by a raging fire, which consumed the sea by turning it into vapours, and then devoured a great part of the land.

Ver. 7, 8. *The Lord stood by a wall made by a plumb-line*, &c.] God's judgments are sometimes represented by a *line* and a *plummet*, to denote that they are measured out by the exactest rules of justice. (See 2 Kings xxi. 13. Isa. xxviii. 17.) The instruments which are designed for building are sometimes used to mark out those places which are to be pulled down or destroyed. (See 2 Sam. viii. 2. Isa. xxxiv. 11. Lam. ii. 8.) The vision imports, that as God formerly built up his people, he would now pluck them down and destroy them. (See Jer. i. 10. xxxi. 28.)

Ver. 8. *I will not again pass by them any more.*] I will not any longer pass over their transgressions. (Compare viii. 2. Micah vii. 18.) Or, I will not pass through them to destroy them any more, (see v. 17.) because I will do it once for all. (Compare Nahum i. 9.)

Ver. 9. *And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate.*] The altar and grove at Beer-sheba, where Isaac dwelt and built an altar, (Gen. xxvi. 25. xlvi. 1.) This place was afterward abused to idolatry. (See the note upon v. 5.)

And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste.] The places set apart for idolatrous worship: such were Beth-el, Gilgal, and Beer-sheba. (See iii. 14. v. 5.) The word *sanctuary* is used for an idolatrous temple, Isa. xvi. 12.

And I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.] This was fulfilled when Shallum conspired against Zechariah the son of Jeroboam, and slew him, (2 Kings xv. 10.) who was the last of that family who reigned.

Ver. 10. *Then Amaziah, the priest of Beth-el, sent to Jeroboam.*] This was a priest, not of the tribe of Levi, but such a one as those were, whom Jeroboam, the first of that name, had consecrated to perform the idolatrous service at Beth-el. (See 1 Kings xii. 31.)

Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel.] *i. e.* In an open and barefaced manner. He traduces the prophet as a stirrer up of sedition: the same crime was objected to Jeremiah, Jer. xxvi. 9, 10. to Christ, Luke xxiii. 2. and to St. Paul, Acts xxiv. 5.

The land is not able to bear all his words.] The friends of the government cannot patiently hear them, and the enemies of it will take advantage from them to make some disturbance.

Ver. 11. *For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword.*] This was a plain perverting of the prophet's words; for he did not prophesy against the king himself, but against his family or posterity.

Ver. 12. *O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there.*] There thou mayest find better encouragement and reception, than thou art like to do here.

Ver. 13. *For it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court.*] Beth-el is the place where the king performs his religious worship in person, and often resides there with his court, that he may the better attend upon the service performed at this place. (See 1 Kings xiii. 1.)

Ver. 14. *Then answered Amos—I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son.*] I was not a prophet by profession, nor bred up in the schools of the prophets, as those usually were who took that office upon them. (See 2 Kings ii. 5, &c. iv. 38. vi. 1.)

But I was a herdman.] A herdman, or a husbandman, is spoken of as an employment not consistent with that of a prophet, Zech. xiii. 5. except where there is an extraordinary call.

And a gatherer of sycamore fruit.] One that gathered a sort of wild fig, by some called an Egyptian fig. They that gathered it opened the skin, that the fruit might ripen the sooner: so the LXX. interpret the Hebrew word *boles*, κνίζων συκάμινα, *opening the sycamore fruit:* which agrees

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with Pliny's account of ordering this fruit. (Nat. Hist. lib. xiii. cap. 7.)

Ver. 16. *Drop not thy word against the house of Isaac.*] The verb *hittith*, to *drop*, signifies in its primary sense to instil doctrine or instruction by easy and gentle degrees: (see Deut. xxxii. 2.) from thence it comes to denote prophecy, being one sort of instruction accompanied with exhortation. See Ezek. xxi. 2. Micah ii. 6. where the word is translated *prophesy* by our English interpreters. *The house of Isaac* may be taken in the same sense with the *high places of Isaac*, ver. 9. meaning Beer-sheba: or it may be equivalent to Jacob or Israel, in which sense most expositors understand it.

Ver. 17. *Thy wife shall be a harlot in the city.*] When Beth-el shall be taken by the Assyrians, (see Hos. x. 5, 6.) the soldiers shall abuse thy wife, and treat her as a common harlot. (Compare Isa. xiii. 16. Lam. v. 11. Zech. xiv. 2.) And this shall befal her as a punishment of her idolatry, which is spiritual whoredom. (See Hos. iv. 13.)

Thy land shall be divided by line.] Among the Assyrians: in the division of land it was customary to mark out every one's share by a line. (See Psal. lxxviii. 55.)

And thou shalt die in a polluted land.] Thou shalt be carried captive out of thine own country, and die in a land where the inhabitants are idolaters, and where it will be impossible to converse without committing legal pollutions. (See Ezek. iv. 13. Hos. ix. 3.)

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet by a fourth vision gives notice of the certainty and nearness of the destruction of the ten tribes: he reproves them for oppression, and foretells that the sun shall be darkened by an eclipse upon their solemn festivals, which shall turn their present joy into mourning, and shall be esteemed a prognostication of more dismal calamities to come; amongst which a *famine of God's word* here threatened may be esteemed the greatest.

Ver. 1, 2. *BEHOLD, a basket of summer fruit—Then said the Lord unto me, An end is come upon my people of Israel.*] The basket of ripe summer fruit, which Amos saw in a vision, was to denote that Israel's sins were now *ripe* for judgment; as the time of judgment is elsewhere expressed by a *harvest* or a *vintage*. (See Joel iii. 13.) The two Hebrew words, *kacks, summer fruit*, and *kets, an end*, have an affinity in their sound: such paronomasias are to be found in other texts of Scripture. (See Isa. xxiv. 17. Jer. i. 11, 12.) Many instances of this kind are to be found; Micah i. 10, &c.

I will not again pass by them any more.] See vii. 8.

Ver. 3. *And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day.*] The songs or hymns sung in the temple at Beth-el, shall be turned into howlings or lamentations. (See v. 23.) This may relate to the time when the *golden calf* was carried away by Shalmaneser. (Compare Hos. x. 5, 6.)

There shall be many dead bodies on that day: they shall cast them forth with silence.] The Assyrians (see ver. 8.) will make such a slaughter among the people, that there will be no opportunity of using public mournings or lamentations at their funerals, as was usual in other cases; but their friends will hurry them to their graves with as much silence and privacy as they can. (Compare Jer. xxii. 18.)

Ver. 4. *Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy.*] Or, *Trample upon* them. (See the note on ii. 7.)

Ver. 5. *When will the new moon be gone*, &c.] This was one of their solemn feasts, the use of which they retained with their idolatrous worship. (See ver. 10.)

Making the ephah small, and the shekel great, &c.] The *ephah* was the measure wherewith they sold, containing about one of our bushels: this they made smaller than the just standard. The *shekel* was the money they received for the price of their goods: and by falsifying the balances, when they weighed it, they diminished its just value, and demanded a greater price for their goods. So both ways they overreached those that dealt with them. (See Micah vi. 11.)

Ver. 6. *That we may buy the poor for silver*, &c.] Who must be forced to sell themselves to us for slaves, to satisfy the debts they owe to us. (See ii. 6.)

Yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat.] The traders by these deceitful arts made corn so dear, that people were glad to buy the worst of it, and such as was not fit to make bread.

Ver. 7. *The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob*, &c.] By himself, who is truly the glory of Jacob, or Israel, (see Psal. lxviii. 34.) whatever other excellency or advantage they may make the subject of their glory. (See vi. 8.)

I will never forget any of their works.] God is said to *remember* men's sins when he punisheth them. (See Hos. viii. 13. ix. 9. Isa. xliii. 25. Jer. xxxi. 34.)

Ver. 8. *And it shall rise up wholly like a flood*, &c.] Or *a river*. The LXX. with a very small alteration in the Hebrew points, give a plainer sense of the words thus: *Destruction shall rise up like a flood:* the calamity of a hostile invasion by the Assyrians shall be like an inundation, which in a short time overruns a whole country. (Compare Isa. viii. 7, 8. Jer. xlvi. 8. Dan. ix. 26.)

And it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt.] Or rather, *The river of Egypt*. The inhabitants of the land shall be cast out of their possessions, or the land itself shall be swallowed up, as Egypt is by the inundation of the river Nile. To this sense the Chaldee paraphrase expounds the place: *He shall make a king come against it* [the land] *with a numerous army like a flood, and he shall drive out the inhabitants thereof, and* [the land itself] *shall be drowned, as when the flood of Egypt* [overflows].

Ver. 9. *I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.*] Calamitous times are expressed by the failing of the light of the sun, and the day's being overspread with darkness. (See Isa. xiii. 10. lix. 9, 10. Jer. xv. 9. Job v. 14. xxii. 11.) But Archbishop Usher hath observed in his Annals, ad A. M. 3213, that about eleven years after the time when Amos prophesied, there were two great eclipses of the sun, one at the feast of tabernacles, the other at the time of the Passover: so the text may probably be understood of that darkness; which, to be sure, was looked upon as *ominous*, and gave men more than ordinary apprehensions by falling out upon these solemn festivals: which if they were not celebrated

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with such solemnity among the ten tribes, as they were in Judea, where the temple was situate, yet were observed by many of the Israelites, according to the traditions they had received from their fathers. (See ver. 5. of this chapter, and iv. 5.)

Ver. 10. *And I will turn your feasts into mourning.*] God commanded the Jews to celebrate their festivals with joy and gladness: (see Deut. xii. 7. 12. xvii. 14, 15.) which it would be impossible for them to do under such melancholy circumstances and prognostications of the Divine displeasure.

And all your songs into lamentations.] There were particular psalms and hymns that used to be sung at the Passover, and other great festivals. (See Lightfoot's Temple-Service, chap. 13, 14. 16. and Dr. Hammond upon Matt. xxvi. 30.)

And I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head.] See Isa. xv. 2. Jer. xlviii. 37. Ezek. vii. 18.

And the end thereof as a bitter day.] Those feasts, however begun in joy, shall end in bitterness; and the calamities which follow them shall still increase the sorrow.

Ver. 11. *I will send a famine upon the land, not a famine of bread, but of hearing the word of the Lord.*] It was usual among the Jews to resort to the prophets for counsel under any difficulty. (See ii. 11. Ezek. xiv. 7. xx. 1.) Amos tells them, that in a little time there will be no prophets for them to consult; and this shall be a just punishment for their despising their former prophets, and their instructions. This was fulfilled upon the whole nation at the time of the Babylonish captivity: (see 2 Sam. ii. 9. Psal. lxxiv. 9. Ezek. vii. 26.) and after their return from captivity they had no succession of prophets from the time of Malachi till the coming of Christ. (See 1 Macc. iv. 46. ix. 27.)

Ver. 12. *And they shall wander from sea to sea.*] From the sea or lake of Sodom, called the eastern sea, to the Mediterranean, which lay upon the western coasts. (See Joel ii. 20.)

And from the north even to the east.] The prophet omits naming the south; because the idolaters, to whom he directs his discourse, would choose to inquire any where, rather than of the true prophets of the Lord, (see 1 Kings xxii. 7. 2 Kings iii. 11.) who dwelt in the tribe of Judah, that was situated in the southern parts of the nation.

Ver. 13. *In that day shall the fair virgins and the young men faint for thirst.*] They who are in the bloom of their youth and in the strength of their age shall faint and be dispirited, like those that want necessary refreshment. (Compare Jer. xlviii. 18.) A place that wants the necessaries for life, is expressed by a dry and thirsty land. (Psal. lxiii. 1. Ezek. xix. 13.)

Ver. 14. *They that swear by the sin of Samaria.*] The calf set up at Beth-el by Jeroboam, who committed a great sin in so doing, and made Israel to sin. (1 Kings xii. 30. xiv. 16. compare Micah i. 5.) Swearing is a solemn invocation of the name of God, and, as such, a proper part of Divine worship: (see Deut. vi. 13. x. 20.) and therefore ought not to be given to an idol.

And the manner [or way] *of Beer-sheba liveth.*] The LXX. render it, *The god of Beer-sheba liveth,* expressing the sense rather than the words. *The way* or *manner* signifies the same with the *way of worship:* in this sense it is probably taken, Hos. x. 13. and the phrase is often used so in the Acts; particularly xix. 23. xxiv. 14. Here it is taken metonymically for the god or object of their worship. Beer-sheba was a place noted for idolatry, as hath been observed upon v. 5.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet seeth a fifth vision, representing the final destruction of the kingdom of Israel; but he concludes his prophecy with promises of restoring the kingdom of David, and the Jewish nation, under the Messias, when the church shall be enlarged by the gentiles coming in to it.

Ver. 1. *I SAW the Lord standing upon the altar.*] This may most probably be understood of the altar at Beth-el. (Compare iii. 14.) God's standing upon the altar, may likewise denote the destruction of the idolaters themselves, as so many victims slain to atone the Divine vengeance. (Compare Ezek. ix. 2. xxxix. 17. Isa. xxxiv. 6.) This appearance of God was, by a visible and glorious light, commonly called the Schechinah by the Jewish writers; concerning which the reader may consult Archbishop Tenison's treatise of Idolatry, chap. 14.

Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake.] This denotes the approaching ruin of that idolatrous temple, which should put an end to the worship performed there. (See viii. 3.) The altar of burnt-offerings probably stood near the outward door of the temple, as it did at Jerusalem.

And I will cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last [or residue] *of them with the sword.*] I will give them a mortal wound, (compare Psal. lxviii. 21. Isa. li. 9. Habak. iii. 13.) so that there shall be no residue or remainder left to escape. (Compare Ezek. xxiii. 25.)

He that fleeth of them shall not flee away, &c.] See ii. 14.

Ver. 2. *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them,* &c.] Though they hide themselves in the deepest holes or caverns of the earth, (see Isa. ii. 19.) or take refuge in the highest fortresses, they shall not escape my vengeance.

Ver. 3. *Though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel.*] There were great caves formed by nature in the tops of some mountains, where men used to secure themselves in the time of danger. Such was the cave in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph, 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. (See the note upon Ezek. xxxiii. 27. and Dr. Lightfoot's Works, vol. ii. p. 88.)

Though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command a serpent, and he shall bite them.] The word *serpent* is usual for a water-animal, Isa. xxvii. 1. and is joined there with *leviathan* and *tannin,* which last word signifies, not a *dragon,* as it is translated, but a *whale.* In like manner the word *nahash,* used here, may signify some carnivorous fish.

Ver. 4. *And if they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them.*] The same judgment is denounced against them, Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. xxviii. 65. compare likewise Ezek. v. 13.

Ver. 5. *And* [or, for] *the Lord of hosts toucheth the land, and it shall melt.*] The least token of God's displeasure

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will put the whole frame of nature out of order. (Compare Isa. lxii. 1. 3. Micah i. 4. Habak. iii. 10.) And when God's hand is visibly stretched out against a land, or people, they become altogether dispirited; the stoutest men lose their courage; (see ii. 16.) their hearts failing them for fear, and out of a dreadful expectation of the miseries which are coming upon them.

And it [this calamity] *shall rise up wholly like a flood, and* [they that dwell in the land] *shall be drowned, as by the flood of Egypt.*] See viii. 8.

Ver. 6. *It is he that buildeth his stories in the heavens.*] An awful description of God's irresistible power, discovering itself in the works of the creation, particularly in his appointing several regions of the air, as so many apartments that lead to the highest heavens, the seat of his own glory. (See Psal. civ. 3.)

And hath founded his troop in the earth.] The old English translation hath rendered the sense very perspicuously thus: *And hath laid the foundation of his globe of elements in the earth.* The word *agudah, troop,* signifies the collection of elements and other creatures, which furnish the earth, expressed by the word *isaba, the host,* Gen. ii. 1. The Chaldee paraphrase expresses the sense thus: *It is he that hath placed the Schechinah or tabernacle of his glory in the height above, and made his church glorious upon earth.*

He that calleth for the waters of the sea, &c.] See v. 8.

Ver. 7. *Are you not as the children of the Ethiopians to me?*] Are ye not under a curse, as the Ethiopians, the posterity of Ham, were, (see Gen. ix. 35.) by reason of your multiplied sins and apostacies? Cushi, or Cushim, often signifies the Arabians, but it is sometimes understood of the Ethiopians, properly so called, as hath been observed in the notes upon Jer. xiii. 23.

Have I not brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor?] You may think my former kindness in delivering you out of the Egyptian bondage, and giving you the land of Canaan, obliges me still to continue your protector. But I have shewed the like favour to other nations, particularly to the Philistines, who had their original from Caphtor, and afterward dispossessed the old inhabitants of Palestine, and dwelt in their stead; (see Deut. ii. 23. and the note upon Jer. xlvii. 4.) and yet against these very Philistines I have denounced my judgments for their sins. (See the forementioned place of Jeremy, and i. 8. of this prophecy.)

And the Syrians from Kir?] Some copies of our English Bible read *Assyrians,* but it is a mistake of the print; the more correct editions read *Syrians,* which answers the Hebrew *Aram.* Some understand the words of the new colonies which Tiglath-pileser transplanted from Kir, and placed in Syria in the room of the native Syrians, whom he had carried captive to Kir. (See i. 5.) But it may be understood of some more ancient removal of the Syrians from Kir, not elsewhere taken notice of.

Ver. 8. *Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom,* &c.] See ver. 4.

Saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob.] God still promises to preserve a remnant in the midst of his heaviest judgments, that he may perform to them the promises he made to their fathers. (See Jer. xxx. 11. Joel ii. 32. Rom. xi. 28, 29.)

Ver. 9. *I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve.*] I will mingle or scatter the Israelites among all nations, just as good and bad grain are mingled in a sieve; but will so order it, that none of the good grain shall be lost, or fall to the ground. (Compare Matt. iii. 12.)

Ver. 10. *All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword.*] They shall be cut off by some judgment sent from God. (See the note upon Zech. xi. 17.)

Which say, The evil shall not overtake us, nor prevent us.] Who indulge themselves in their carnal security, without any apprehension or dread of the Divine judgments denounced against them. (Compare vi. 3.)

Ver. 11. *In that day.*] When I come to make a remarkable difference between the good and the bad, (ver. 9.) The phrase denotes some extraordinary time or season, prefixed by God, for restoring the good estate of his people the Jews, or bestowing great blessings upon the world. (See the note upon Isa. iv. 2.) The sense of it is expressed by Μετὰ ταῦτα, *afterward,* Acts xv. 16. which phrase is equivalent to *the last days,* Joel ii. 28. which both Jews and Christians expound of the days of the Messias.

Will I raise up the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, &c.] At that time I will restore the kingdom to the house and family of David, in the person of the Messias, so often styled in the prophets the *seed* or *offspring of David,* and known by that title among the Jews of our Saviour's age. (See Matt. xii. 23. xx. 30. xxi. 9.) And whereas that family had been, for several years before his coming, reduced to a mean and obscure condition, (see Micah v. 2. Luke i. 48. 52.) it shall now recover its ancient splendour and dignity. *The tabernacle of David* is an expression met with but twice in Scripture, here and Isa. xvi. 5. It may allude to his having been a shepherd, and dwelling in tents, before he was advanced to a kingdom, but since that reduced in his family to as low a condition as it was in at first: but I conceive the phrase does mystically denote the church, whereof the Messiah, here foretold, was to be the head; which is elsewhere styled *God's tabernacle,* as being a place of his especial residence, as the tabernacle in the wilderness was. (See Lev. xxvi. 11. Ezek. xxvii. 17. compared with Rev. xxi. 3.) Tobit understood this text of the days of the Messiah, xiii. 10. where he exhorts *Zion to praise God that his tabernacle may again be built in her.*

Ver. 12. *That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen that are called by my name.*] [If we follow the English translation, the words foretell the same event which is foretold by Obadiah, ver. 19. of his prophecy; and by Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 18.] The words in the Hebrew are capable of another translation, thus: *The remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen that are* (or shall be) *called by my name, may possess me,* the Lord: *i. e.* that both those of Edom, which are near neighbours, but fierce enemies to the Jews, (see the notes upon Isa. xi. 14.) as well as the other gentiles *which were afar off,* may be made subjects to the kingdom of David, now again erected. This sense of the text is followed by the LXX. and approved by Lud. de Dieu, and our learned Dr. Pocock, in order to reconcile the Greek translation with the original. (See Dr. Pocock's Not. Miscell. cap. 4. p. 46.)

But others suppose the LXX. read, with a small alteration from the present Hebrew, *yidreshu, seek,* for *yireshu,*

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possess; and that instead of the particle *eth*, they read *othi, me;* and, lastly, instead of *Edom*, they read *Adam*, these two words differing only in their points, which are generally acknowledged to be of a much later date than the original.

For the fuller explaining the text, I shall refer the reader to the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield's learned Defence of the ancient Prophecies, p. 168.

Ver. 13. *Behold, the days come, that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper,* &c.] As the prophecy in the foregoing verse was to commence from the coming of Christ, but not to receive its utmost completion till the *fulness* both of Jews and gentiles come in to the church; so this and the following verses ought to be understood of the happy state of the millennium, which may be supposed to begin after the Jews are restored to their country. (Compare Joel iii. 18.) Then the text says, *The ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed:* where the sense would be clearer if the words were translated, *The ploughman shall meet the reaper,* &c. So the Chaldee and Septuagint understand the place: to the same sense the word *niggash* is often translated in the Greek: and then the words import, that there should be such an increase of the fruits of the earth, that as soon as the harvest is got in, it will be time to plough for the next year, which was not usual in those hot countries, where the corn was ripe early in the summer, in the month of May or June at farthest. And in the like manner, the vintage should be so plentiful, that whereas it used to begin in August, it should not be over till the seed-time, the earliest season of which was November.

And the mountains shall drop with sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.] *i. e.* Shall flow down with wine or milk. (See the note on Joel iii. 18.) The Chaldee paraphrase, the Septuagint, and Vulgar Latin, understand the Hebrew verb, translated *melt*, of being cultivated, the stony ground being made softer by ploughing and manuring. The prophets sometimes describe the days of the Messias in the same terms the poets do the golden age. (See Psal. lxxii. 16. Isa. xxxv. 1. xli. 19. lv. 13. Hos. ii. 21, 22.)

Ver. 14. *And I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel.*] I will restore them to their own country, and settle them in it. (See the following verse, and the note upon Ezek. xxviii. 25.)

And they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them, &c.] Compare Isa. lxi. 4. Ezek. xxxvi. 33. 36. This and the following part of the verse contain a promise to them, that they shall enjoy the fruits of their labours, in opposition to that curse denounced against them, v. 11. Deut. xxviii. 30. that *they should build houses, and not dwell in them.* (Compare Isa. lxv. 22.)

Ver. 15. *And I will plant them in their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land.*] They shall dwell in it secure from any annoyance of enemies. (Compare Jer. xxiii. 6. xxxii. 41. Ezek. xxxiv. 28. Joel iii. 20. Micah iv. 4. Zeph. iii. 13.)

OBADIAH.

PREFACE.

GROTIUS, Huetius (in his Demonstratio Evangelica), and Dr. Lightfoot (in his Harmony of the Old Testament), are of opinion, that Obadiah was contemporary with the elder prophets, Hosea, Joel, and Amos: the reason they chiefly allege is, that the compilers of the Old Testament canon had a regard to the order of time in their placing the minor Prophets. But this reason seems to be of little force, since we find that Jonah is placed the fifth in order, nay, the sixth in the Greek copies, who was confessedly ancienter than any of those that are placed before him.

The more probable opinion is, that Obadiah prophesied about the time of the taking of Jerusalem: and thereupon, in foretelling the destruction of Edom, he uses several expressions which Jeremiah had done before him, speaking upon that subject. (Compare Obad. ver. 1. 8. with Jer. xlix. 9. 14—16.) Ezekiel agrees with Jeremiah and Obadiah, in assigning the same reason for the judgments threatened against the Edomites, *viz.* their insulting over the Jews in the time of their distress. (See Ezek. xxv. 12. xxxv. 5, &c.)

Archbishop Usher, in his Annals, ad A. M. 3419. supposes this prophecy to have been fulfilled about five years after the taking of Jerusalem.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet, after having denounced utter destruction upon Edom for their unnatural enmity against the Jews, foretells their restoration, and flourishing state in the *latter times.*

Ver. 1. *WE have heard a rumour from the Lord, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen* [or nations], &c.] The prophets sometimes represent Almighty God as summoning armies, and setting them in array of battle, against those people he designs to destroy. (See Jer. li. 27, 28.) And here, according to the custom of earthly princes, he is described as sending ambassadors to invite the nations to join in a confederacy against the Idumeans. (Compare

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Jer. xlix. 14.) The words are the same in both places, only what Jeremiah speaks in the singular number is expressed here in the plural, to intimate that Obadiah had received the same commission from God which was signified to Jeremiah before.

Ver. 2. *I have made thee small among the heathen* [or nations], &c.] Thou art contemptible in the sight of the Chaldeans and their confederates, who think they can easily subdue thee. This verse and the two following are almost word for word the same with the fifteenth and sixteenth verses of the forty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah.

Ver. 3. *The pride of thy heart hath deceived thee, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock,* &c.] Thou valuest thyself too much upon the strength of thy situation, being placed among rocks which thou thinkest inaccessible by the enemy. St. Jerome, who dwelt in that neighbourhood, observes upon the place, that the Idumeans dwelt in caves dug out of the rocks. (See likewise Numb. xxxiv. 3, 4. 2 Kings xiv. 7.)

Ver. 4. *Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle,* [see the note upon Jer. xlix. 16.] *and though thou set thy nest among the stars,* &c.] Upon the highest mountains, that seem to reach up to heaven. (Compare Isa. xiv. 14, 15. Jer. li. 53. Amos ix. 2. Habak. ii. 9.)

Ver. 5. *If thieves come to thee, if robbers by night,* &c.] See Jer. xlix. 9.

Ver. 6. *How are his hidden things sought up!*] Those treasures and riches which he took all possible care to conceal, that they might not be discovered by the enemy. (See Jer. xlix. 10.)

Ver. 7. *All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to thy borders.*] The confederates marched out with thee till they came to the borders of thy country, and then they treacherously joined with the enemy's forces.

They that ate thy bread have laid a wound under thee.] Those that were maintained at thy cost, as thine allies have given thee a secret blow, which thou wast not aware of.

Ibid. and Ver. 8. *There is no understanding in him. Shall I not in that day—even destroy the wise men out of Edom,* &c.] These two sentences contain the same sense; and instruct us, that when God designs a people for destruction, he deprives them of that discretion and foresight which is necessary for the due management of their affairs. (See Isa. xix. 11, 12.)

Ver. 9. *And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed,* &c.] A panic fear shall seize those that were remarkable for their courage. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 25. Isa. xix. 16. Jer. l. 37. Amos ii. 16. Nahum iii. 13.) Teman was one of the chief provinces or cities of Idumea, called so from Teman, Esau's grandson. (See Jer. xlix. 7. Amos i. 12.)

Ver. 10. *For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee.*] The prophet uses the expression, *Thy brother Jacob,* in allusion to Esau's animosity against his brother, (Gen. xxvii. 41.) The same reason is assigned in other prophets for God's displeasure against the Edomites. (See the note upon Amos i. 11.)

And thou shalt be cut off for ever.] The Nabatheans drove the Edomites out of their ancient habitations, since called Arabia Petræa; which country they could never afterward recover. (See Ezek. xxxv. 9. Mal. i. 3, 4. Dr. Prideaux, par. ii. ad A. C. 165.)

Ver. 11. *In the day that strangers carried away captive his forces,* &c.] When Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, thou didst join with the enemy. (See Psal. cxxxvii.)

And cast lots upon Jerusalem.] What captives fell to the share of each of the commanders. (See the note upon Joel iii. 3.)

Ver. 12. *But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother.*] Thou oughtest not to have taken pleasure at the sight of thy brother's calamity. So the expression of *looking upon an enemy,* signifies the beholding his fall with satisfaction, Psal. liv. 7. lix. 10. xcii. 10. cxii. 8. Our translators render it in those places, *See my desire upon mine enemies.* (Compare Micah iv. 11. vii. 10.)

The day of thy brother.] *The day of his calamity,* as it is expressed ver. 13. (Compare Psal. xxxvii. 13. cxxxvii. 7.)

In the day that he became a stranger.] When he was driven from his own inheritance, and went captive into a strange land.

Ver. 14. *Neither shouldest thou have delivered up those that did remain.*] Or, *Shut up those,* as the margin reads. The word signifies, to shut up all the ways of escaping to the conquered, in order to take them and deliver them up to the enemy. (See Psal. xxxi. 8.) So the Greek word which answers it is taken, Gal. iii. 23. Συγκεκλεισμένοι εἰς τὴν μέλλουσαν πίστιν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι, which should be translated, not *shut up,* but *delivered over to the faith, which should afterward be revealed:* just as a schoolmaster delivers up his scholar when he comes to age; as the comparison there follows.

Ver. 15. *For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathens.*] *If judgment begin at the house of God,* we may certainly conclude, that they who are more professedly wicked shall not escape. (Compare Jer. xxv. 15. 29. xlix. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 17.)

As thou hast done it shall be done unto thee.] Others shall rejoice at thy calamities, as thou hast insulted over theirs. As thou hast spoiled and plundered thy neighbours, thou shalt be served thyself. (See Ezek. xxxv. 15. Hab. ii. 8.)

Ver. 16. *For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually,* &c.] Since ye, O my people, have drunk the cup of my wrath, which has been executed upon you in Mount Zion (see ver. 17.) and at Jerusalem, where my name was placed; there is no reason that those who are strangers and foreigners to my name and worship should expect to be excused. (See the note upon ver. 15.)

The prophet speaks of the Jews here, as already under a state of captivity; as they actually were, before this prophecy was fulfilled.

God's judgments are commonly represented by a cup of intoxicating liquors. (See the note upon Jer. xxv. 15.)

And they shall be as though they had not been.] They shall be utterly destroyed. (Compare Ezek. xxvi. 21.)

Ver. 17. *But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance.*] This was remarkably verified at the first preaching of the gospel, when God's *law came forth from Zion:* (Isa. ii. 3. Joel ii. 32. Psal. cx. 2.) and there shall be another completion of it, at the restoration of the Jewish nation, which is spoken of in this and the following verses.

And there shall be holiness.] See Joel iii. 17.

Ver. 18. *And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble.*]

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The Jews, when they are restored to their own land, shall devour all their enemies that shall give them any disturbance there. (See Isa. xi. 14. xxxi. 9. Joel iii. 19. Micah v. 8. Zech. xii. 6. Ezek. xxxviii. 14. 23.)

Ver. 19. *And they of the south shall possess the mount of Esau.*] They that dwell in the southern parts of Judea shall possess the mountainous country of Edom, (see Mal. i. 3.) elsewhere called Mount Seir. (See Ezek. xxxv. 2, 3.) The tribe of Judah, which inhabited the southern part of Judea, bordered upon Edom. (See Josh. xv. 21.) Here it is foretold they should enlarge their borders that way.

And they of the plain, the Philistines.] The plain lay lower, and was better watered, than the south part of Judea, and it lay towards the Philistines' country. (See Josh. xv. 33. 45. and the note upon Zech. vii. 7.) These were likewise ill neighbours to the Jews, whom they should at last conquer, and possess their land, as the prophet here foretells. (Compare Zeph. ii. 7.)

And they shall possess the land of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria.] The prophet speaks of those places as possessed by idolaters, for so they were in his time; *viz.* that colony which the king of Assyria settled there, *who served their own idols, together with the god of the land,* 2 Kings xvii. 24. 33. So the words import the conquest of the Jews over their idolatrous neighbours. (See the note upon ver. 18.)

And Benjamin shall possess Gilead.] Benjamin, although one of the smallest tribes, shall enlarge his borders as far as the land of Gilead beyond Jordan.

Ver. 20. *And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel shall possess that of the Canaanites, even unto Zarephath.*] The *ten tribes,* when they shall return from their captivity, shall possess all the country where the Canaanites formerly lived, even unto Zarephath, or Sarepta, a city near Sidon, in the northern borders of Judea, 1 Kings xvii. 9. The Canaanites, properly so called, were ancient inhabitants of that district. (See Judg. i. 32, 33. Matt. xv. 21, 22.)

And the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south.] Dr. Lightfoot, in his Chorographical Notes upon St. Luke, chap. ii. supposes Sepharad to be a part of the country of Edom; and explains the text of the Jews who were captives in Edom, that they should possess the cities of the south that lay near that country. (See the beginning of the nineteenth verse.) Others translate the sentence thus, *The captivity of Jerusalem shall possess that which is in Sepharad, and the cities of the south.* In the former part of the verse the prophet mentioned the resettlement of the ten tribes after their restoration: here he mentions that of Judah, under the name of Jerusalem. Israel and Judah are commonly joined together, as equally sharers in the general restoration of that nation. (See the note upon Jer. iii. 18.) Of the latter it is here foretold, that they should possess the country called Sepharad. If that word be taken as an appellative, it signifies a border, and may denote that part of Arabia which bordereth upon the south of Judea, or the *cities of the south,* here mentioned.

Ver. 21. *And saviours shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau.*] By *saviours* may be understood the leaders of the Jews, who shall fight their battles, and vanquish their enemies, denoted by the inhabitants of Mount Esau. In this sense the word *saviour* is taken, Judg. iii. 9. Isa. xix. 20. Or we may understand the word in a spiritual sense, for the preachers of salvation, whose office it is to convert unbelievers and *aliens to the commonwealth of Israel.* (Compare ver. 17. and Amos ix. 22.) Instead of *saviours,* the LXX. with a small alteration of the Hebrew points, read, *those that are saved,* or escape: the same with the *remnant* often mentioned in the prophets, and particularly Joel ii. 32. (See the note upon that place.)

And the kingdom shall be the Lord's.] This will be fulfilled when the four monarchies are destroyed, and *the stone which smote the image becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth.* (See Dan. ii. 35. 44. vii. 14. 27. Zech. xiv. 9. Zeph. iii. 9. Rev. ix. 15.)

JONAH.

PREFACE.

JONAH was the ancientest of all the prophets whose writings are preserved in Scripture canon. Bishop Lloyd, in his Chronological Tables, supposed him to have prophesied in the latter end of Jehu's, or the beginning of Jehoahaz's reign; at which time the kingdom of Israel was brought very low by the oppressions of Hazael, king of Syria. (2 Kings xiii. 22.) This might be a proper reason for Jonah to foretell the success which Jehoahaz's grandson, Jeroboam, should have in *restoring the coasts* of Israel; 2 Kings xiv. 25. He was of Gath-hepher, a town in the tribe of Zebulun, (Josh. xix. 13.) not far from Sephorim, or Dio-cæsarea, as St. Jerome informs us in his Commentary upon Jonah: who adds, that Jonah's *sepulchre was shewed there in his time.* This town was situate in Galilee, and so confutes that observation of the pharisees, that *out of Galilee there did arise no prophet,* John vii. 52. He was sent to Nineveh, to denounce destruction to that city, within forty days' time, if they repented not. But they complying with the summons of the prophet, God deferred the executing his judgments till the increase of their iniquities made them ripe for destruction, about one hundred and fifty years afterward; as we shall see more particularly, when we come to explain the prophecy of Nahum.

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CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

Jonah, being sent by God to Nineveh, fleeth to Tarshish, meets with a tempest, is thrown into the sea, and swallowed by a fish.

Ver. 1. *NOW the word of the Lord came unto Jonah.*] The Hebrew reads, *And the word of the Lord:* it is usual in that language to begin a discourse, or a writing, with the particle *And.* (See the note upon Ezek. i. 1.)

Ver. 2. *Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city.*] See iii. 3.

For their wickedness is come up before me.] *The cry of their wickedness is come up before me;* as the LXX. express the sense. (See Gen. xviii. 20. James v. 4. Rev. xviii. 5.) For this cause heinous offences are called *crying sins.*

Ver. 3. *But Jonah rose up* [or went away: see Gen. xxv. 34. Numb. xxiv. 25.] *to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.*] He might think that that impulse which wrought in the prophets might not exert itself but in the land of Judea: or he might go away out of a sudden fear, as our first parents *hid themselves from the presence of God among the trees of the garden,* Gen. iii. 8. It is certain that Jonah, in his sedate thoughts, acknowledged God's omnipresence. (See the ninth verse of this chapter, and ii. 2.)

And he found a ship going to Tarshish.] Learned men suppose that there were several places of that name noted for trade; one in Spain, another in India: and this might probably be in Cilicia. *Ships of Tarshish* generally signify any trading or merchant-ships. (See the note upon Isa. ii. 16.) The reason of Jonah's unwillingness to undertake the delivery of the Divine message, shall be considered in the note upon iv. 2.

Ver. 5. *Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god.*] To their several idols, as being heathens, and ignorant of the true God.

But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship.] Into a cabin in one of the sides of the ship. So we read that Jephthah was buried *in the cities of Gilead,* Judg. xii. 7. where our interpreters rightly express the sense, *in one of the cities of Gilead.*

Ver. 7. *Come, and let us cast lots.*] This was a usual method of referring things to the appointment or discovery of Providence. (See 1 Sam. x. 20, 21. xiv. 42. 44. Prov. xvi. 33. Acts i. 26.)

Ver. 9. *I fear the Lord God of heaven.*] Or rather, *Jehovah, the God of heaven;* Jehovah being the peculiar name of the true God, by which he was distinguished from those who had the names of gods and lords among the heathen.

Ver. 10. *Why hast thou done this?*] You have been guilty of great profanation to disobey his command, whom yourself acknowledge to be Lord and Maker of all things.

Ver. 11. *For the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.*] The Hebrew reads, *The sea went, and was tempestuous;* i. e. *grew more and more tempestuous,* as our margin reads. We find the same phrase, Exod. xix. 19. *The trumpet waxed louder and louder;* where it is in the Hebrew, *The trumpet was going and strengthening.*

Ver. 14. *Wherefore they cried unto the Lord.*] They were convinced by the account Jonah gave of himself, that the God whom he worshipped (ver. 9.) had brought this tempest upon them: so they made their petitions to him.

Let us not perish for this man's life.] For exposing this man's life to inevitable danger; since it is done out of extreme necessity to save ourselves, and by his own desire.

Ver. 16. *Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly.*] They were convinced of the power and greatness of that God whom Jonah worshipped; which appeared both in raising this storm, and so suddenly laying it.

And offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.] The words may be translated to a plainer sense, thus, *And offered sacrifice unto the Lord, that is, they made vows* to do it as soon as they had opportunity. The copulative particle *vau* is sometimes used by way of explication; as hath been observed in the note upon Isa. li. 19. (See Noldius, p. 280.) This sense suits best here.

Ver. 17. *Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah.*] Naturalists give an account of some sorts of fish which are large enough to swallow a man; particularly the *canis charcarias,* or *dog-fish,* called by some writers *lamia.* (See Bochart. de Animal. lib. v. cap. 12.)

And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.] The Hebrew language hath no one word to express what we call a *natural day;* so what the Greeks express by Νυχθήμερον, they denote by *a day and a night.* Therefore the space of time, consisting of one whole revolution of twenty-four hours, and part of two others, is fitly expressed in that language, by *three days and three nights.* Such a space of time our Lord lay in the grave; and we may from thence conclude, that Jonah, who was an eminent figure of him in this particular, was no longer in the fish's belly.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

It contains the prayer of Jonah, when he was in the fish's belly; and his deliverance from thence.

Ver. 1. *THEN Jonah prayed unto the Lord out of the fish's belly.*] Those devout thoughts which he had at that time, he afterward digested into the following prayer; and added a thanksgiving for his deliverance at the end of it. So several of David's Psalms were probably composed after his trouble was over; but in a manner suitable to the thoughts he had at the time of his affliction, and with a grateful sense of God's mercies for his deliverance out of it. (See Psal. liv. cxx.)

Ver. 2. *Out of the belly of hell cried I.*] The word *sheol* signifies the *state of the dead.* (See the note on Isa. xiv. 9.) So it may most properly be rendered the *grave* here, as the margin reads: the belly of the fish was to Jonah instead of a grave.

Ver. 4. *Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight: yet I will look again towards thy holy temple.*] My first apprehensions were, that as I had justly forfeited thy favour by my disobedience; so thou wouldest cast me out of thy protection: (see ver. 7. and compare Psal. xxxi. 22.) yet, upon recollecting myself, I thought it my duty not to despair of thy mercy, but direct my prayer towards thy heavenly habitation. (See ver. 7.)

Ver. 5. *The waters compassed me even to the soul.*] When I was thrown into the sea, I thought myself just ready to be drowned. (Compare Psal. lxix. 1.)

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Ver. 6. *I went down to the bottom of the mountains,* &c.] I went down to the bottom of the sea, where the foundations of the mountains lie. (See Psal. xxiv. 2.) I found myself enclosed on every side, so that I had no prospect of deliverance.

Ver. 7. *My prayer came in unto thee, into thy holy temple.*] My prayer reached unto heaven, the place of thy peculiar residence. (See Psal. xi. 4. xviii. 6. cii. 19. Micah i. 2. Habak. ii. 20.)

Ver. 8. *They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.*] They that seek to or trust in idols, often called by the names of *vanity* and *lies,* (see Psal. xxxi. 6. Jer. x. 8. xvi. 19.) forsake him who alone is able to shew mercy to them, and preserve them in the time of danger.

Ver. 9. *But I will sacrifice to thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that which I have vowed.*] I will offer to thee those thanks which I solemnly promised to pay in the time of my trouble, and which will be as acceptable to thee as the fattest sacrifices of slain beasts. (See Psal. l. 14. cxv. 17, 18. Hos. xiv. 2.)

Ver. 10. *And the Lord spake unto the fish,* &c.] God's almighty power is represented in Scripture as bringing things to pass by his bare will and command. (See Gen. i. 3. Rom. iv. 17.) Huetius (Demonst. Evang. prop. iv.) supposes, that Jonah's deliverance from the whale's belly gave occasion to the Greek story of Arion, who, after he was cast into the sea, was conveyed by a dolphin to the port of Corinth.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Jonah is sent again to the Ninevites, and preacheth to them with good success.

Ver. 3. *NOW Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of three days' journey.*] The Hebrew reads, *A city great to God;* so *the mountains of God* are the same with great mountains, Psal. xxxvi. 6. and *the cedars of God* are translated *goodly cedars,* Psal. lxxx. 10.

Diodorus Siculus informs us, that Nineveh was four hundred and eighty furlongs in compass, which makes sixty of our miles: (see Dr. Prideaux, ad A. C. 612.) so that it was bigger than Babylon; which, according to his account, was but forty-eight. Diodorus's account agrees with the description the prophet gives us, that it was *three days' journey* in compass: twenty miles was a day's journey in common computation for a foot-traveller. (See Casaubon's notes upon Strabo, lib. i. p. 35.)

Ver. 4. *Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*] God was pleased to allow them sufficient time to repent, and give some proof of their reformation. The copies of the LXX. read, *three days:* it is no easy matter to guess at the occasion of the mistake, although Is. Vossius is willing to believe that this was the original reading. (See his book de LXX. Interp. cap. 23.) Some copies of Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho, (p. 316. edit. Lond.) read *forty-three days;* but that number is probably owing to the copiers, who joined the two readings of the Hebrew and LXX. together.

Ver. 5. *So the people of Nineveh believed God,* &c.] The fame of the wonderful works God had wrought for the Jews, was spread over the eastern parts of the world. This might make the Ninevites hearken to a man of that nation, that came to them as sent by God: and it is likely that he gave them an account of the miraculous circumstances which attended his own mission. But without question, a sense of their own guilt, and their deserving whatever punishment Heaven could inflict, was a principal reason that moved them to have a regard for his message. And by the men of Nineveh's *repenting at the preaching of Jonas,* God designed to upbraid the stubbornness of his own people, and shame them, as it were, into repentance, for fear the men of Nineveh *should rise up in judgment against them;* as our Saviour speaks of the Israelites in his own time, Matt. xii. 41.

Ver. 6. *For word came unto the king of Nineveh.*] Archbishop Usher, in his Annals, ad A. M. 3233. supposes this prince to have been Pul the king of Assyria, Nineveh being then the capital city of that empire; who afterward invaded the kingdom of Israel, in the days of Menahem; (2 Kings xv. 19.) it being very agreeable to the methods of Providence, to make use of a heathen king that was penitent, to punish the impenitency of God's own people, Israel.

And he arose from his throne, and laid aside his robe from him.] He laid aside all his state, and put on the habit of a penitent.

Ver. 7. *Let neither man nor beast—taste any thing.*] Such general shows of sorrow add to the solemnity of the humiliation, and may be proper to work upon men's minds, and bring them to a true contrition.

Ver. 8. *But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth.*] The covering horses and mules with sackcloth adds to the solemnity of a funeral: in like manner, their mournful garb was an affecting circumstance in this public sorrow and humiliation.

Let them cry mightily unto God; yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.] Natural religion instructed them, that their earnest prayers, without true amendment, would not avail them before God: nor would their repentance be thought sincere, unless they restored to the true owners what they had gained by violence and injustice.

Ver. 9. *Who can tell if God will turn and repent?*] Compare Joel ii. 14. 2 Sam. xii. 22. Even wicked men, upon their repentance, are apt to conceive hopes of obtaining mercy.

Ver. 10. *And God repented of the evil which he said he would do unto them; and he did it not.*] According to the general declaration he hath made of his will in this case Jer. xviii. 1. therefore the threatenings of temporal evils are to be understood conditionally; *viz.* unless the execution of them is suspended by men's repentance.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

Jonah repining at God's mercy in sparing the Ninevites, is reproved by the type and figure of the gourd.

Ver. 1. *BUT it displeased Jonah exceedingly,* &c.] God's mercy in sparing the Ninevites was very displeasing to Jonah; and he expressed a great impatience under it, lest he should be esteemed a false prophet, and treated as such.

Ver. 2. *And he prayed unto the Lord, and said,* &c.] He

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uttered his complaint in his prayers to God, wherein he pleaded an excuse for his disobedience to God's first commands.

Therefore I fled into Tarshish, &c.] This made me unwilling to go upon this message to the Ninevites, because I knew by the declaration thou madest to Moses, (Exod. xxxiv. 6.) and by several instances of thy mercy, that thou dost not always execute the punishments thou threatenest against sinners.

Ver. 3. *Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me,* &c.] I had rather die, than live under the imputation of being a false prophet. Josephus (Antiq. lib. xiii. cap. 19.) tells a story parallel to this, concerning one Judas, an Essene, who had foretold that Antigonus should be murdered on a certain day at Straton's Tower, which was another name for the town of Cæsarea. On the very same day he saw this Antigonus in the temple, at which he fell into a great passion, and wished himself dead: but before the day was over, he received news that Antigonus was slain just under that tower of the palace in Jerusalem, which was called Straton's Tower.

Ver. 5. *So Jonah went out of the city.*] The words should have been translated, *Now Jonah had gone out of the city:* for the particulars related in the foregoing verses happened after his departing out of the city, and sitting somewhere in view of it, expecting some extraordinary judgment should come upon it: but being disappointed, he broke out into that expostulation with God already mentioned.

And sat on the east side of the city.] Probably in some solitary place, where he might not be discovered, and which did not lie in the way towards his own country, but quite opposite to it: so that if the Ninevites had a mind to have pursued him, they might not apprehend him.

Ver. 6. *And God prepared a gourd,* &c.] What sort of plant or shrub this should be, was a question before St. Jerome's time, as appears by his commentary upon the place. He translates it *ivy,* not that he thought it meant so, but in compliance, as he tells us, with some ancient interpreters; although the Septuagint, and all the ancient versions, agree in translating it a *gourd.*

That it might be a shadow over his head, and deliver him from his grief.] From the burning heat of the sun, which still added to his former grief and vexation; the booth which he made at first being withered by the heat.

Ver. 8. *When the sun did arise, God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun did beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted,* &c.] The winds in the hot countries are oftentimes more suffocating than the heat of the sun, when they blow from the sandy deserts; and they make the sunbeams give a more intense heat. The word *charishith, vehement,* signifies likewise *silent,* as it is translated in the margin. Taking it in that sense, it denotes such a wind, as causes a small motion in the air, and makes it sultry hot.

Ver. 9. *Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?*] Dost thou think fit to persist in thine impatience, notwithstanding the punishment I have sent upon thee for thy former guilt in this kind?

I do well to be angry, even unto death.] I have just cause to be angry, even to that degree as to wish myself dead. The prophet here records his own impatience, without concealing any circumstance of it, as Moses and other holy writers have done.

Ver. 10. *Thou hast had pity on the gourd,* &c.] Thou wast concerned at the loss of that short-lived plant.

Ver. 11. *And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city.*] The lives of so many thousand men are much more valuable than that of a single plant.

Wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left.] *i. e.* Infants, who *know neither good nor evil,* as it is expressed, Deut. i. 39. Isa. vii. 15. 16. If we compute these at a fifth part of the inhabitants of Nineveh, the whole sum will amount to six hundred thousand inhabitants; which are as few as can well be supposed to live in a city of such large dimensions.

And also much cattle?] God's providence extends its care to beasts, as well as men: (see Psal. xxxvi. 6. civ. 27, 28.) so he is willing to spare them, as well as the more noble parts of the creation.

This reason seems to have silenced Jonah's complaints, and made him sensible of his fault, in repining at God's mercies.

MICAH.

PREFACE.

THE Prophet Micah was probably of Judah, because he reckons the time of his prophesying by the reigns of the kings of Judah. He is called the Morasthite here, and Jer. xxvi. 18. from the place of his nativity, Morasthi, which St. Jerome distinguishes from Mareshah, mentioned i. 15. though he places them both in the tribe of Judah. (Lib. de Locis Hebr.)

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet begins with an awful description of God's coming to execute his judgments, first upon Samaria, and then upon Jerusalem.

Ver. 1. *THE word of the Lord that came to Micah concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.*] Concerning both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, whereof Samaria and Jerusalem were the metropoles.

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Ver. 2. *Hear, all ye people; and hearken, O earth, and all that therein is.*] Or, *Hearken, O land* [of Israel], *and all its inhabitants.* A form of speech bespeaking men's attention. (See Deut. xxxii. 1. Isa. i. 2.) The prophets sometimes address their speech to inanimate things, to upbraid the stupidity of men. (See below, vi. 1, 2. Ezek. vi. 2.)

And let the Lord be witness against you.] I call him to witness, that I have forewarned you of the judgments that hang over your heads, unless you speedily repent. And he himself will become a witness against you, and convince you of your sins, in such a manner, that you shall not be able to deny the charge. (Compare Psal. l. 7. Mal. iii. 5.)

The Lord from his holy temple.] From heaven his holy habitation. (See the following verse, and the note upon Jonah ii. 7.)

Ver. 3. *For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place.*] God is described as coming from heaven to judgment, because of the visible effects of his power and presence upon earth. (See Isa. xxvi. 21.)

And he will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.] When he comes to execute his judgments, he will subdue places of the greatest strength, and bring down the men of the highest rank. (See Amos iv. 13.)

Ver. 4. *And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft,* &c.] An allusion to God's coming upon Mount Sinai, when thunder and lightning shook the mountain, and violent rains, which accompanied this tempest, made the hills look as if they were melted down. (Compare Judg. iv. 4, 5. Psal. lxviii. 8. xcvii. 5. Isa. lxiv. 1, 2. Habak. iii. 6. 9, 10.) Or the words may be referred to the general judgment, of which all particular judgments are an earnest; when the heavens and the earth shall be dissolved at God's appearing. (Compare Nahum i. 5. Isa. li. 6.)

Ver. 5. *What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?*] Where is the chief cause of Jacob's or Israel's sin and apostacy? Is it not in Samaria, the chief seat of that kingdom, the residence of the king and his princes, who have set up the idolatry of the golden calves, and made it the established religion of the kingdom?

And what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?] Doth not the idolatrous worship, practised in the high places, receive its chief encouragement from Ahaz, and the great men that join with him in that idolatry? (See 2 Kings xvi. 4.)

Ver. 6. *Therefore I will make Samaria as a heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard.*] It shall be turned into a heap of ruins. (Compare iii. 12. 2 Kings xix. 25. Nehem. iv. 2.) It shall be reduced into such heaps of stones as are laid up together in a field lately ploughed, or a vineyard newly planted, after the stones have been gathered out of it. (Compare Isa. v. 2. Hos. xii. 11.) The Vulgar Latin translates the sentence thus: *I will make Samaria as a heap of stones in a field, when a vineyard is planted.*

And I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof.] Samaria stood upon a hill; (1 Kings xvi. 24.) so, when it was demolished, many stones would fall down from the high and stately buildings into the valley beneath, and leave the foundations naked and bare. (Compare Jer. li. 25.)

Ver. 7. *All the hires thereof shall be burnt with fire.*] *i. e.* The city shall be destroyed; all its wealth and substance shall be consumed in the fire; the increase of which they looked upon as so many rewards of their idolatry. (See Hos. ii. 5. 12.)

For she gathered it of the hire of a harlot, and it shall return to the hire of a harlot.] She imagines that she gaineth her wealth as a reward of her idolatry, and it shall return or be made a prey to idolatrous Assyrians. Nothing is more abominable than the *hire of a harlot,* implying two great wickednesses, covetousness and impurity. (See Deut. xxiii. 18.)

Ver. 8. *Therefore I will wail and howl; I will go stripped and naked.*] I will sympathize with the calamities of my countrymen. (Compare Isa. xxii. 4. Jer. iv. 19.) I will put on the habit and dress of mourners, whose custom it was to go without their upper garments; or with those they wore, rent and torn. This will fitly denote the naked condition to which the ten tribes will be reduced by their enemies. (See Isa. xx. 2—4. and the notes there.)

I will make a wailing like the dragons.] The word *tannin* is often translated a *dragon* by our interpreters; but it signifies most commonly some great fish, such as a *whale,* or *crocodile.* (See the note upon Isa. xxvii. 1. Ezek. xxix. 3.) It seems to be taken for a land-animal here, as Dr. Pocock observes upon the place; and so it is taken Lam. iv. 3. where our English reads, *The sea-monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones:* but the text must be understood of a land-animal, sea-monsters having no breasts.

And mourning as the owls.] Compare Job xxx. 29. Psal. cii. 6. Bochart (de Animal. lib. ii. cap. 14.) thinks the word translated *owls* signifies properly an *ostrich.* It is generally supposed, that the Hebrew *yaanih* is derived from the loud noise this bird maketh. The LXX. translate it here by Σειρῆνες, *sirens;* by which Vossius understands a sort of wasp or hornet, of a melancholy note; which kind never goes in swarms, but wanders about in a solitary manner. (See his Dissert. de Orac. Sibyll. cap. 13.)

Ver. 9. *For her wound is incurable; it is come to Judah: he is come to the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem.*] The captivity and desolation of the ten tribes can neither be prevented, because they persist in their impenitence; nor can any relief be applied to it, because it will end in their utter destruction. And one aggravating circumstance attends it, that it is the forerunner of those evils which will befal Judah and Jerusalem; whose gates Sennacherib shall attempt to besiege, with a design to make himself master of that city and the kingdom. (See 2 Kings xviii. 17. 2 Chron. xxxii. 2. compare ver. 12. of this chapter.)

Ver. 10. *Declare it not in Gath.*] The words are taken out of David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 20. This manner of speech does not imply, in either place, that such ill tidings could be concealed; but only expresseth the prophet's concern, lest the Philistines should take occasion from thence to rejoice over the calamities of his people.

In the house of Aphrah roll thyself in the dust.] Or, *Wallow in the ashes;* as was commonly practised in times of great mourning. (See Esther iv. 3. Jer. vi. 20.) The word *Aphrah* signifies *dust;* and the prophet, it is likely, puts

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it here for *Ophrah*, a town in the tribe of Benjamin; that the name may better suit their present condition.

Ver. 11. *Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir, having thy shame naked.*] Or, *Thy nakedness uncovered.* The word *Saphir* imports a fair and delightful habitation, and denotes either Samaria or Jerusalem. The prophet threatens the inhabitants of that place, that they shall go into captivity in a way very unsuitable to their former softness and luxury; even without so much as a covering to hide their nakedness. (See Isa. iii. 17. xlvii. 2, 3. and the notes there.)

The inhabitant of Zaanan came not forth in the mourning of Beth-ezel.] The inhabitants of Zaanan were so much concerned to provide for their own security, that they took no notice of the mournful condition of their neighbour: so Beth-ezel signifies. Grotius supposes Zaanan to denote Zion, and Beth-ezel to signify Beth-el, called here by another name, importing the *house of separation*, according to his interpretation; because it was the principal seat of idolatrous worship.

He shall receive from you his standing.] The inhabitant of Zaanan may make a conjecture of his own strength or condition, whether he is like to stand or fall by the fate which he sees doth befal the people of Beth-ezel.

Ver. 12. *For the inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good; but evil came down,* &c.] The words may be better translated, *Although the inhabitant of Maroth waited for good; yet evil,* &c. So the particle *ki* is translated when it is repeated in the middle of the sentence, as it is here. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) By Maroth, which signifies *bitterness*, or *trouble*, Grotius understands Ramoth: there were several Ramahs, expressed sometimes by Ramoth, in the plural number; one in Mount Ephraim, 1 Sam. i. 1. another in the tribe of Benjamin near Beth-lehem, Jer. xxxi. 15.

But evil came down from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem.] Such a calamity as stopped not at Ramah, but reached even to Jerusalem; those two places being not far asunder. (See Judg. xix. 10. 13.)

Ver. 13. *O inhabitants of Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast.*] In order to flee from the approaching enemy. Lachish was one of the first cities that Sennacherib besieged, when he invaded Judea, (2 Kings xviii. 13, 14.)

She was the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion; for the transgressions of Israel were found in her.] She was the first among the cities of Judah which practised those idolatries, which the kings and people of Israel had begun.

Ver. 14. *Therefore shalt thou give presents to Moresheth-gath.*] Either to defend thee against the enemy, or to receive thee under their protection. Moresheth-gath was probably a place that once belonged to Gath of the Philistines.

The houses of Achzib shall be a lie unto the kings of Israel.] *Achzib* signifies a lie. There is a town of that name belonging to the tribe of Judah, mentioned Josh. xv. 44. This place the prophet foretells will answer its name, and disappoint the kings of Israel that depended upon its strength and assistance. [See 2 Chron. xxi. 2. xxviii. 19.] Israel is sometimes used for Judah: (see below, iii. 9, 10.) so it may probably be taken here, and ver. 15.

Ver. 15. *Yet I will bring an heir to thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah.*] This is another town belonging to Judah, mentioned Josh. xv. 44. The name signifies an *inheritance:* so the prophet, by way of allusion, foretells that a new heir shall come and take possession of it, *viz.* a conquering enemy.

He shall come to Adullam, the glory of Israel.] The enemy shall enlarge his conquests even to Adullam, one of the frontier cities of Judah, fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xi. 7. Israel is put here for Judah, as in the foregoing verse. The margin reads, *The glory of Israel shall come to Adullam: i. e.* the great and honourable men shall be forced to hide themselves from their enemies, in the cave of Adullam, as David did when he fled from Saul, 1 Sam. xxii. 1.

This may relate to the great depredations which Pekah king of Israel, in conjunction with Rezin king of Syria, made in the kingdom of Judah, in the reign of Ahaz. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 5. 8.)

Ver. 16. *Make thee bald, and poll thee* [or, shave thy hair] *for thy delicate children; for they are gone into captivity from thee.*] Cutting the hair, or shaving it close, were expressions of mourning and lamentation, anciently used among most nations. (See Job i. 20. Jer. vi. 29. Amos viii. 10. and the notes upon Isa. xv. 2.)

Enlarge thy baldness as an eagle.] When she moults her feathers.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The chapter begins with a reproof for the sins of oppression, and contempt of God's word, but concludes with the promise of a restoration. Some learned men think that the reproofs of this chapter relate to the times of king Ahaz.

Ver. 1. *WOE to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds,* &c.] Whose thoughts are big with mischief, so that they contrive schemes of wickedness upon their beds, in order to put them in practice when they arise in the morning. (Compare Psal. xxxvi. 4.)

Because it is in the power of their hand.] *They make their strength the law of justice,* according to the character given of such men, Wisd. ii. 11.

Some take the Hebrew word *El* to signify God, which is its most usual signification; in which sense the Vulgar Latin translates it, "Contra Deum est manus illorum;" *their hand is against God.* But the phrase in the original is used in the same sense in which our translators understand it, Gen. xxxi. 29. Deut. xxviii. 32.

Ver. 2. *So they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.*] They take from him both his house and his land.

Ver. 3. *Behold, against this family do I devise an evil,* &c.] As they devise mischief against others, so will I devise an evil against them, as a due punishment for their sin. As they have unjustly deprived others of their inheritance, so a conquering enemy shall dispossess them, and carry them into captivity. (See the following verse.) The word *family* is equivalent to people, as appears from Jer. i. 15. compare viii. 3. x. 25. of that prophecy; where the *families which have not called upon thy name,* mean the same with the *kingdoms that have not called upon thy name,* Psal. lxxix. 6.

Ver. 4. *In that day shall one take up a parable against*

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you.] A *parable* denotes a speech out of the ordinary way, as the Greek word Παροιμία imports, and illustrated with metaphors or rhetorical figures. (See Job xxvii. 1. Ezek. xx. 49. Habak. ii. 1.) So *speaking in parables* (for so the words should be translated) is opposed to *speaking plainly*, John xvi. 25. 29.

And lament with a doleful lamentation.] The expression alludes to the lamentations made at funerals. (See the note upon Amos v. 1.)

He hath changed the portion of my people; how hath he removed it from me?] He hath removed his people out of their ancient inheritance, that portion which he himself had allotted them, and given it away to other owners.

Turning away he hath divided our fields.] Turning us into captivity; or, as the margin reads, *Instead of restoring us*, he hath divided our lands among our enemies.

Ver. 5. *Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the Lord.*] Israel was the Lord's people or congregation; (compare Deut. xxiii. 1, 2.) they were *the lot of his inheritance*, (Deut. xxxii. 9.) and he divided their land among them by lot: but now they shall be utterly expelled out of it, and sent captives into a foreign country.

Ver. 6. *Prophesy ye not, say they to them that prophesy.*] They do not care to hear the prophets speak ungrateful truths. (See Isa. xxx. 10. Amos vii. 16.) The word is the same here which is used in that text of Amos. (See the note there.) *Say they*, is understood by a like ellipsis, Nahum xi. 8.

They shall not prophesy to them, that they shall not take shame.] Or rather, For *they will not take shame.* It is to no purpose to prophesy to them, for they still persist in a shameless course of sin. (Compare Zech. iii. 5. Jer. vi. 15.) The latter part of the sentence may be thus translated, *Their shame shall not depart*, or be removed from them; *i. e.* God hath determined to bring that shame upon them which their sins deserve.

Ver. 7. *O thou that art named the house of Jacob.*] But dost not act suitably to the piety of thy father Jacob.

Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? are these his doings? &c.] Is God's hand or power shortened? (Compare Isa. lix. 1. Zech. iv. 6.) Are the judgments he brings upon you the genuine effects of his power and goodness? and not rather such acts as your sins do in a manner constrain him to exercise? as punishments are called *his strange work*, Isa. xxviii. 21. Certainly both his laws and the words delivered by his prophets would turn to your good, if you would obey them.

Ver. 8. *Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy.*] This Dr. Wells refers to the invasion of Judah by Pekah, and the devastations which followed upon it. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 5. 8.)

Ye pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely, &c.] Or, *Ye take the robe from off the garment;* so Noldius translates it, p. 611. By the *robe* is meant the upper garment, called the *cloak*, Luke vi. 29. where the phrase seems to be taken from this place. The words import, that the Israelites invaded their countrymen of Judea, who had given them no provocation, and were willing to live peaceably with them; and in a violent manner stripped them of all their substance, even to their wearing apparel.

Ver. 9. *The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses,* &c.] This probably relates to the invasion just now mentioned, when the *Israelites carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters*, 2 Chron. xxviii. 8.

From their children have ye taken away my glory for ever.] Ye have taken their children captive with a design to sell them to the heathen, (see Joel iii. 6.) that they may be bred up in idolatry, and forfeit all their right to the privileges of my temple and worship. The temple is called the *beauty of holiness*, Psal. xxix. 2. xcvi. 9. where the word is the same which is here translated *glory*. Some understand the words of Pekah and Rezin's design to set up another king in Judah, (see Isa. vii. 6.) not allied to the house of David, and thereby to defeat the promises made to that family, that the Messias should descend from thence, and withal deprive the posterity of the Jews of the most glorious part of God's promises to them.

Ver. 10. *Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest.*] The prophet still directs his discourse to the Israelites that invaded Judea, and tells them, that as a just punishment for their oppressing and spoiling their brethren, they themselves should be carried captive out of their land, where God had promised to give them rest. (See Deut. xii. 9. Psal. xcv. 2.)

Because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.] The land, being polluted with your sins, shall *spew you out*, as it did its former inhabitants, the Canaanites, (Lev. xviii. 28.)

Ver. 11. *If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood.*] Or, Of *falsehood.* Noldius gives several instances where the copulative particle supplies the place of the genitive case. (See his Concordance, p. 315.)

I will prophesy unto thee of wine and strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people.] If a prophet pretend to foretell all manner of plenty and prosperity, such a one shall be hearkened to by this people, though it be never so unlikely to come to pass. Such were those that prophesied of *peace*, whom Jeremiah reproves, vi. 14. viii. 11. and *spoke smooth things*, to please their hearers, Isa. xxx. 10. The words may be thus translated, *I will prophesy unto thee for wine and strong drink: i. e.* if it appears, both by his words and actions, that he doth not design the *serving God, but his own belly*, as St. Paul speaks, Rom. xvi. 18. yet such a one shall be followed by those that love soothing teachers. (Compare iii. 5.) *Wine* and *strong drink* are often mentioned together; the latter may best be explained in the words of St. Jerome (Epist. 2. ad Nepotianum): "Sicera Hebræo sermone omnis potio nuncupatur, quæ inebriare potest, sive illa quæ frumento conficitur, sive pomorum succo; aut cum favi decoquuntur in dulcem potionem, aut palmarum fructus exprimuntur in liquorem, coctisque frugibus aqua pinguior coloratur." *The Hebrew word* Sheker *signifies any strong drink, whether it be made with any sort of grain* (like our malt), *or with the juice of apples; or when a sweet liquor is made by the infusion of honey, or when a juice is pressed out of the dates of the palm-tree; or water hath a strength and colour added to it by the infusion of any other fruit.*

Ver. 12. *I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel.*] Here follows a promise of mercy, such as is often subjoined to the threat-

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enings of impending judgments. This promise relates to the general restoration of the Jewish nation, which yet is here and elsewhere confined to that remnant, that shall escape the punishments that will come upon the rebellious. (See the note upon iv. 7.)

I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, &c.] God is often styled *the Shepherd of Israel,* and his care over his people is compared to that of a shepherd over his flock, when he gathers them into the fold, and defends them from beasts of prey, while they are there. (Compare Jer. xxxi. 10.) Bozrah is a noted place in Idumea, where there were large flocks of sheep.

They shall make a noise by reason of the multitude of men.] The noise a multitude makes both discovers their numbers, and is a sign of their being lively and in good condition. The words may be rendered, keeping close to the original, *They shall increase with men:* the same word in the Hebrew signifying both a *noise* and a *multitude.* (Compare Ezek. xxxvi. 37.)

Ver. 13. *The breaker is come up before them.*] He that shall break the bonds of their captivity, or break through all obstacles that hinder their return home. The word *porets* is usually understood in a bad sense, for a thief or a destroyer; but the context here determines it to a more favourable acceptation. To this sense the Vulgar Latin renders it, *Pandens iter, He that opens the way.* The Jewish commentators generally understand the *breaker,* and *their King,* that follows, of the same person, *viz.* the Messiah; as may be seen in Dr. Pocock upon the place. Bishop Pearson cites the words of Moses Hadarsan to the same purpose, in his Exposition of the sixth article of the Creed. The words seem parallel to that expression of Zechariah, (xii. 8.) *As the angel of the Lord before them,* or, at the head of them. (See the note there.) Some of the Jews, indeed, with a little variation, expound *their King* of the Messiah, and the *breaker* of his forerunner Elijah; as Dr. Pocock observes, the Chaldee paraphrase translates it, *Those that are saved;* as if the word were in a passive form.

They have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it.] The expressions allude to a flock of sheep, who, as soon as a passage is opened for one to get out, do all of them follow.

And their King shall pass before them, and [or, even] *the Lord on the head of them.*] The Messiah, who is both their God and their King, (see the note upon Isa. vii. 14.) shall lead and conduct them as their captain and general. (Compare Isa. lii. 12. Hos. i. 11.)

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Both the princes and prophets of Judah are reproved for their sins, and the destruction of Jerusalem is foretold, as a punishment for these enormities.

Ver. 1. *HEAR, O ye heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel.*] Israel stands for Judah here, as appears by ver. 9, 10. (See likewise, i. 14, 15.)

Ver. 2, 3. *Who pluck off their skin from off them,* &c.] Who exercise all manner of cruelty upon their inferiors, as if they were so many butchers cutting meat for the shambles.

Ver. 4. *He will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.*] As they have shewed no pity to others, God will have no pity for them.

Ver. 5. *That bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace.*] Though they speak smooth things, yet are no better than *ravening wolves,* and bring destruction upon those that are deluded by them. (See ii. 11.)

And he that putteth not into their mouth, they even prepare war against him.] If men will not still caress and maintain them, they bring them into trouble by raising false accusations against them, as if they were enemies to the government. (Compare Ezek. xiii. 19.)

Ver. 6, 7. *Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision,* &c.] The false prophets shall see their own prophecies confuted by experience, so that they shall no more pretend to the gift of prophecy, and shall be covered with shame and confusion for making false pretences to it.

And the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.] As they shall have no light or revelation from heaven, so dark days or dismal calamities shall overtake them, as a just punishment for their frauds and impostures. (Compare Isa. viii. 20. xxix. 10. Jer. xv. 9. Amos viii. 9, 10.)

Ver. 7. *Yea, they shall cover their lips: for there is no answer from God.*] Men used to cover their mouth, or their face, when they were under any great affliction. (See Ezek. xxiv. 17.) This likewise shewed that they were utterly silenced, and had nothing to say, either by way of revelation from God, or in behalf of themselves. (Job xl. 4.)

Ver. 8. *But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression,* &c.] Whereas I, that am a true prophet, and moved by God's Spirit, have the honesty and courage to reprove the crying sins of the nation, though practised and encouraged by the greatest men in it; (see ver. 9.) contrary to the base flatterings and soothings of the false prophets. (See Ezek. xiii. 10, &c.) *Geburah* properly signifies *might,* or *courage;* so it is used, Isa. xi. 2. (See the note there.)

Ver. 9. *Hear this—ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel.*] See ver. 1. This address to the great men, shews the prophet's courage and impartiality.

Ver. 10. *They that build up Zion with blood,* &c.] Who think to increase the wealth, or secure the safety, of the public, by putting the innocent to death. (Compare Habak. ii. 12.)

Ver. 11. *The heads thereof judge for reward.*] See vii. 3. Isa. i. 23. Hos. iv. 18. Ezek. xxii. 12. 27. Zeph. iii. 3.

Her priests teach for hire.] It was the duty of the priests to instruct the people, as well as to attend upon the service of the temple; for which cause they had cities allotted to them in all parts of Judea. (See Deut. xxxiii. 10. Ezra vii. 10. Jer. xviii. 18. Mal. ii. 7.) The priests, not content with that plentiful revenue which the law allowed them, made a corrupt gain of their office.

And the prophets divine for money.] See ver. 5. Jer. v. 31. vi. 13. This is to be understood of the false prophets. (See Zeph. iii. 4. Zech. xiii. 2.)

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Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us [or, in the midst of us]? *none evil can come upon us.*] Notwithstanding these general corruptions, they will rely upon God's protection, and think themselves secure, because he hath chosen the temple as the place of his peculiar residence. (Compare Jer. vii. 4. Zeph. iii. 5.) St. Paul alludes to this place, when he describes the Jews as *resting* or *relying upon the law,* Rom. ii. 17. The Greek word ἐπαναπαύη, is the same which the LXX use here.

Ver. 12. *Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field,* &c.] This prophecy had its utmost completion in the final destruction of the city and temple by the Romans. (See the note upon Jer. xxvi. 18.)

And Jerusalem shall become heaps.] The word *heaps* alludes to the heaps of stones laid up together in fields newly ploughed. (See i. 6. compare Psal. lxxix. 1.)

And the mountain of the house [of the Lord] *as the high places of the forest.*] The place where the temple stood, which was upon Mount Moriah, shall be overrun with grass and shrubs, like a thicket or forest.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet foretells the proclamation of the gospel, and the increase of Christ's kingdom, in the latter ages of the world: and exhorts God's people not to be discouraged at the apprehension of their approaching captivity, because the church should in due time surmount all difficulties, and break in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth; as Daniel afterward prophesied, ii. 35. 44.

Ver. 1. *BUT in the last days it shall come to pass.*] The times of the Messias are usually expressed in the prophets by the *last days.* (See the note upon the parallel text, Isa. ii. 2.)

That the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established upon the tops of the mountains.] See iii. 12. The temple standing upon Mount Moriah, is often styled God's *holy mountain;* from thence the phrase is taken to denote the Christian church in the prophetical writings. (See Isa. xi. 9. lxvi. 20. Jer. xxxi. 23. Ezek. xx. 40. Joel iii. 17. Zech. viii. 3.) Our Lord himself compares his church to a *city set on a hill,* Matt. v. 14.

And people shall flow unto it.] Heathens shall resort thither to be instructed in the ways of salvation. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 2. *And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord—and he will teach us of his ways,* &c.] The expressions allude to the Jews' going up in companies to Jerusalem at their solemn feasts. (See the notes upon the parallel text of Isaiah.)

Ver. 3. *And he shall judge among many people—and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares,* &c.] See the notes upon the same place. It is farther observable, that our Saviour was born at a time when there was peace all the world over; after Augustus, having put an end to the civil wars, had shut up the temple of Janus, in token of his having procured a settled peace.

Ver. 4. *But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid.*] This shall be the effect of that peace, foretold in the foregoing verse, when every man may securely enjoy his own possessions, and the fruits of his labour. (See Isa. xxxvi. 16. 1 Kings iv. 25. Zech. iii. 10. compare Jer. xxiii. 4. 6.)

Ver. 5. *For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever.*] Or, *Although all nations should walk every one in the name of his god, yet we will walk,* &c. Since all people are fond of the religion of their forefathers, though false and absurd; it much more becomes us to cleave steadfastly to the service of the true God, and not forsake his laws and ordinances, as we have too often done. And this will be remarkably fulfilled at the general conversion of the Jews, when this prophecy shall receive its utmost completion; as hath been observed in the notes upon the parallel text of Isaiah. (See likewise the following verses of this chapter.)

Ver. 6. *In that day will I assemble her that halteth.*] Or, *I will heal her that halteth:* (compare Zeph. iii. 19.) for so the verb *asaph, assemble,* is translated 2 Kings v. 3. 6. The word which we render *halteth,* signifies in general one that is weak and feeble, or bowed down by any disease or calamity. (See Psal. xxxv. 15. xxxviii. 17.)

And I will gather her that is driven out.] This relates to the calling of the Jews from their several dispersions into the church: (see the notes upon Ezek. xxxiv. 13. 16.) although it may in some degree have been fulfilled in their return from the Babylonish captivity. (Compare Psal. cxlvii. 2.)

Ver. 7. *And I will make her that halteth a remnant.*] To this remnant are many promises made, which may in some degree be applied to the state of the Jews after their return from captivity; (see Zeph. ii. 9. Zech. viii. 6. 11.) but are chiefly to be understood of those who were to be called by the gospel, when the main body of the Jewish nation were rejected. (See ii. 12. v. 3. 7, 8. vii. 18. Isa. i. 9. x. 21, 22. Jer. i. 20. Joel ii. 32. Zeph. ii. 9. iii. 13. and the notes upon those places.)

And her that was cast off a strong nation.] The Jews, when they return from their several dispersions, (see ver. 6.) shall be victorious over all their enemies. (Compare v. 8. Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. and see the note upon Obadiah, ver. 8.)

And the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.] Compare Joel iii. 17. God will dwell and reign among his saints in the New Jerusalem, *that comes down from heaven,* Rev. xxi. 2, 3, &c. and then *the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever,* Rev. xi. 15. compared with xix. 6. Isa. xxiv. 23. Dan. vii. 27.

Ver. 8. *And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion,* &c.] The church, of which the earthly Jerusalem was but a figure, shall be the seat of this sovereign dominion, which God shall render conspicuous to the whole world, spoken of ver. 7. *The tower of the flock,* or *of Eder,* is best explained by *the strong hold of the daughter of Zion,* which follows. The Chaldee paraphrase expounds the words of the Messiah, *in whom the ancient kingdom shall be revived; i. e.* the kingdom of David, the Beth-lehemite; the *tower of Eder* being in or near Beth-lehem, (Gen. xxxv. 19. 21.) This notion is countenanced by Jonathan's Targum upon Gen. xxxv. 19. where mention being made in

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the text of the *tower of Eder, beyond which Israel spread his tent,* he adds, by way of explanation, *from hence King Messias shall manifest himself in the latter days.*

Ver. 9. *Now why dost thou cry out aloud? is there no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished? for pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail.*] Why dost thou cry out, as a woman in the anguish of her travail, as if God himself, thy *king* and *counsellor,* had forsaken thee? (Compare Jer. viii. 19.) Some understand it of the time when Zedekiah and his counsellors were seized by the Chaldeans, (2 Kings xxv. 6. 18, &c.) Calamities are often compared to the pangs of child-bearing. (See Isa. xiii. 8. Jer. xxx. 6. l. 43.)

Ver. 10. *Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion.*] There is reason for your being in pain and anguish; but, as the pangs of a woman in travail, they shall have a happy conclusion; as it follows in the next words.

For now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon.] The Jews' captivity is expressed by their *going out of the city, and dwelling in the field;* because their city and temple being destroyed, they should live in an obscure state, without any visible form of government or worship. The same condition is elsewhere expressed by their living *in the wilderness.* (See the note upon Ezek. xx. 35. and Hos. ii. 14.) So the church under persecution is described as *flying into the wilderness,* Rev. xii. 14.

There shalt thou be delivered, &c.] God shall wonderfully restore thy captivity from thence by Cyrus, as he hath foretold by Isaiah, a prophet contemporary with Micah. (Isa. xliv. 28. xlv. 1. compare vii. 8. 11. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 11. *Now also many nations are gathered against thee, and say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion.*] The heathen round about will take occasion to insult the Jews' calamity, will please themselves with seeing the temple profaned, and gratify their spite with viewing Jerusalem in a forlorn condition. (See Lam. ii. 16.) *To look upon our enemies,* is to behold their fall with delight. (Compare vii. 10. and see the note upon Obad. ver. 12.)

Ver. 12. *But they know not the thought of the Lord—for he shall gather them as sheaves into the floor.*] They are ignorant of God's purpose, which is to punish them with an entire destruction, after he hath executed his judgments upon his own people. (See Jer. xxv. 27—29.) Great calamities are compared to the thrashing of corn in a floor. (See the following verse, and the note upon Isa. xxi. 10.)

Ver. 13. *Arise and thrash, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass.*] The expressions allude to the manner of treading out the corn in the eastern countries, which was by the feet of oxen: (see Deut. xxv. 4.) so the word *horn* is equivalent to the *hoofs* which follow. The words, as they relate to Zion, may be expounded in a spiritual sense, of bringing in the gentiles to the obedience of Christ. (See the following note.) Or else we may suppose this promise will be fulfilled, when all the enemies of the church shall be subdued, and the saints reigning with Christ *shall have power over the nations, and shall rule* (the refractory) *with a rod of iron,* Rev. ii. 26, 27. (Compare this text with v. 8. 15. of this prophecy, and with Isa. xiv. 2. xli. 15. lx. 12. lxi. 5. and see the notes upon those places.)

And I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.] This denotes the conversion of the gentiles, which is elsewhere expressed by their bringing gifts and offerings to God's temple; because that was the most solemn part of religious worship practised among the Jews. (See Psal. lxviii. 29. Isa. xviii. 7. xxiii. 18. lx. 6. 9. and compare Rev. xxi. 24. 26.) The word translated *consecrate,* properly signifies to *devote,* and alludes to the action of conquerors, who use to dedicate part of their booty to God, as a thankful acknowledgment for their victory.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet, that he may comfort the Jews under the calamities foretold in the last chapter, foretells the birth of Christ, whose kingdom should at last become victorious over all its enemies.

Ver. 1. *NOW gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us.*] This verse is to be understood of some foreign invasion of Judea, by a nation that had numerous troops; and may relate to the conquest of Judea by the Babylonians. The *daughter of troops* is a phrase of the same kind with the *daughter of affliction; i. e.* one that is surrounded with affliction: so the *son of death* is one condemned to die, 1 Sam. xx. 31. Psal. cii. 20.

They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.] This may be understood of Zedekiah, who was treated in a contumelious manner by the Babylonians, as a common captive, (2 Kings xxv. 6, 7.) *Smiting on the cheek,* signifies treating one in a despiteful manner, Lam. iii. 31. Matt. v. 39. *The Judge of Israel* is equivalent to *the King of Israel.* (See Amos ii. 5.)

Ver. 2. *But thou Beth-lehem-Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah.*] Ephrath, or Ephratah, was another name for Beth-lehem in the tribe of Judah. (See Gen. xxxv. 19.) And both names are joined together, to distinguish it from another Beth-lehem, situate in the tribe of Zebulun, mentioned Josh. xix. 15. It is called *little among the thousands, i. e.* among the families, or cities of Judah. (Compare Judg. vi. 15. 1 Sam. x. 19.) The expression is taken from the first division of the people into thousands, hundreds, and other subordinate divisions. (See Exod. xviii. 21. 25.) Both the city and family of David were in a mean condition at the time of Christ's birth; whereupon the blessed Virgin, in her song, thankfully commemorates God's extraordinary favour, in honouring that low estate to which they were reduced, with the birth of the Messiah, (Luke i. 48. 52, 53.)

But the word *tsair, little,* hath likewise a contrary signification, as many Hebrew words have, (see the note upon Isa. xii. 17.) and signifies one of *note* or *esteem;* in which sense it is taken by the Chaldee paraphrast upon Jer. xlviii. 4. and by some copies of the LXX. Zech. xiii. 7. (See Dr. Pocock, in his notes upon Porta Mosis, cap. 2. p. 18, 19.) And in this sense St. Matthew understands the text, and translates it, *Art not the least among the princes of Judah,* ii. 6.

Yet out of thee he shall come unto me that is to be ruler in Israel.] The scribes and pharisees understood this prophecy of the birth of the Messiah, as appears from Matt. ii. 5, 6. and so did the generality of the Jews of that age, who

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speak of it as an undoubted truth, that *Christ was to come of the seed of David, and of the town of Beth-lehem, where David was,* (John vii. 42.) The Chaldee agrees with their sentiments, and expressly applies the prophecy to the Messiah: and our Lord was born at Beth-lehem, by an especial act of Providence, that this prophecy might plainly be fulfilled in him. (See Luke ii. 4.) *To come forth* is the same as to be born. (See Gen. x. 14. xvii. 6. xxv. 25. 1 Chron. ii. 53. Isa. xi. 1.)

Whose goings forth have been from of old, even from everlasting.] The words do naturally import an original, distinct from the birth of Christ, mentioned in the foregoing sentence; which is here declared to be from all eternity: for so the words *mikkedem* (translated here *from of old,* but rendered *from everlasting,* Habak. i. 12.) and *mimé olam, from the days of eternity,* do plainly signify. (See Psal. lv. 19. xc. 2. Prov. viii. 23.) If we expound it with the Chaldee paraphrast, *Whose name was foretold of old,* the expression contains a plain description of the Messias.

Ver. 3. *Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she that travaileth hath brought forth.*] The particle *laken,* translated *therefore,* should be rendered *nevertheless,* here, and in some other places; as Dr. Pocock hath observed upon the place: and see the note upon Isa. xxx. 18. Notwithstanding the promise of so great a blessing, God will give up his people into the hands of their enemies, or leave them to be exercised with troubles and afflictions, till the appointed time of their deliverance cometh, which shall be greater than that from Babylon. (See iv. 10.) This deliverance may be understood of the church's bringing forth children by the preaching of the gospel: (see Gal. iv. 27.) but will be more fully completed in the general restoration of the Jewish nation, to be expected in the latter ages. (Compare Isa. lxvi. 7, 8.)

Then the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel.] Or, *Shall be converted with the children of Israel.* (See the note upon Mal. iv. 6.) Then the remnant of the dispersed Jews, (see the note upon iv. 7.) upon their conversion, shall join themselves to the true Israelites, and make one church with them. Both the LXX. and Chaldee read, *The remnant of their brethren.* But if we follow the present Hebrew, we may understand it of the believers that shall be added to the church, for Christ vouchsafes to call all believers his *brethren.* (See Matt. xii. 50. Heb. ii. 11.)

Ver. 4. *And he shall stand and feed* [or, rule] *in the strength of the Lord, and in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God,* &c.] Christ shall diligently perform the office of a shepherd or governor over his church: (compare vii. 14.) and it will appear by the success which attends him, that God is with him, and is *glorified in and by him.* (John xiii. 31, 32.) For his kingdom shall extend itself all the world over, (Psal. ii. 8.) and his faithful servants shall continue secure under his protection.

Instead of the verb *yashalu, they shall abide,* the Chaldee and Vulgar Latin read, *yashubu, they shall be converted,* or *return* from their captivity; which agrees very well with the sense of the verse foregoing.

For now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.] The words of the angel, Luke i. 32. allude to this text, *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest,* &c. He is dignified with such titles as were never given to any creature, as the apostle at large proves, Heb. i. 4, &c. (Compare Isa. lii. 13. and see the note there.)

Ver. 5. *And this man shall be the peace.*] This title in a peculiar manner belongs to the Messiah, and is spoken of as a blessing attending his kingdom. (See Psal. lxxii. 7. Isa. ii. 4. ix. 6, 7. xi. 6. Hag. ii. 9. Zech. ix. 10. Luke ii. 14. Ephes. ii. 14. Heb. vii. 2.) This sentence may be best explained as coherent with the former verse.

When the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our borders.] I take the sense which Mr. Mede hath given to this passage to be most agreeable to the scope and design of the following part of the chapter. See his Works, p. 796. where he expounds the place of the general destruction of some remarkable enemy, or enemies, to God and his truth, which should come to pass before the consummation of all things: an event foretold in several places of Scripture. (See Psal. cx. 5, 6. Isa. xxvi. 20, 21. xxxiv. 1, &c. lxvi. 16. Jer. xxx. 7. 10. Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. Joel iii. 9. 14. Obad. ver. 15, &c. Zeph. iii. 8. Hag. ii. 22. Zech. xii. 1. xiv. 8. Rev. xix. 19. xx. 9.) This enemy is probably called by the name of the Assyrian by Isaiah, xiv. 25. as well as by Micah here. (See the note upon that place.) Mr. Mede ingeniously conjectures, that this name was given him by these two prophets, because that ever since the invasion of Sennacherib, the very name of Assyrian carried terror along with it, being esteemed by the Jews as their most formidable enemy.

Then we shall raise up against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men.] Or, *rulers.* Under his conduct we shall be furnished with commanders sufficient to oppose the enterprises of the enemy. *Shepherds* are elsewhere equivalent to princes or generals. (See Jer. vi. 3. xxv. 34. Nahum iii. 18.) The words *seven* and *eight* are used for an indefinite number: (see Eccles. xi. 2.) so *once* and *twice, six* and *seven,* are used, Job xxxiii. 14. v. 19. Prov. vi. 16.

Ver. 6. *And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and* [or even] *the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof.*] In its borders, where its garrisons are, and its chief strength lies. Assyria is called *the land of Nimrod,* because he was the first king of that country, as appears from Gen. x. 2. where the marginal reading rightly translates the text, *Out of that land he* (*i. e.* Nimrod, spoken of ver. 9.) *went out into Assyria,* or invaded and conquered it; as the phrase, *went forth,* commonly signifies. (See Psal. lx. 10. Zech. xiv. 3.)

Ver. 7. *And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord.*] That remnant, mentioned ver. 3. and iv. 7. shall be the instruments of converting those gentiles among whom they live: (see the notes upon Isa. lxvi. 12. 19.) and thereupon may fitly be represented by the dews and rains which come from heaven, and are the means of making the earth fruitful. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 2. Psal. lxxxii. 6. Hos. vi. 3.)

Which tarries not for man, nor waits for the sons of men.] The dews and the rains are the gift of God, (see Isa. lv. 10. Jer. xiv. 22.) and are spoken of here, by way of distinction from those fountains and canals of water, which men convey into their fields and gardens by their own industry. (Compare Deut. xi. 10, 11.) [Some of the rabbins apply the text to the birth of the Messiah, spoken of ver. 2. who shall be born, not in the ordinary way of generation, but by the miraculous power of God.

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(See the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield's Defence of Christianity, chap. 4. sect. 2.) To the same sense we may probably interpret Psal. cx. 3. *The dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning.*]

Ver. 8. *And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a lion among the beasts of the forest,* &c.] The former verse described the benefits the converted Jews should bring to those gentiles that were disposed to embrace the gospel: this instructs us how terrible adversaries they will prove to such as persist in their enmity to them and to the truth. (Compare Obad. ver. 18, 19. Zech. xii. 6. and see the note upon ver. 5. of this chapter.)

Ver. 10, 11. *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee,* &c.] I will afford deliverance to my people, not in the ordinary way of second causes, but immediately by myself; so that they shall not need to trust in the strength of their forces, or of their garrisons. (Compare Hos. i. 7. Zech. ix. 10.)

Ver. 12—14. *And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy land, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers: thy graven images also will I cut off,* &c.] The prophet may be supposed to mention here those sins wherein the Jews of his own age were chiefly faulty, thereby to signify, that, in aftertimes, when the promises here mentioned should be fulfilled, such offences should not be found among them. (Compare Isa. ii. 6—8. with the context here.) We may in general take notice, that the destruction of idolatry is often mentioned in the prophets as a principal circumstance in their descriptions of the flourishing state of the church, which should come to pass in aftertimes. (See the note upon Isa. i. 29.) This appears to have been the sentiment of the ancient Jews, from that passage in Tobit, xiv. 6. where, speaking of the times of the Messias, he saith, *All nations shall turn and fear the Lord truly, and shall bury their idols.* No nation has been more addicted to the several sorts of divination than the Jews, both in ancient and modern times: (see Juvenal, Sat. vi. ver. 545. and the note upon Mal. iii. 5.) and several of them comply with the idolatries practised in those countries where they are dispersed. See the note upon Zech. xiii. 2. where there is the same prediction of the utter abolishing of idolatry among them.

Ver. 15. *And I will execute vengeance in anger, and fury upon the heathen,* &c.] When I have purged my people from their corruptions, I will severely vindicate their cause, to the utter destruction of all their unbelieving enemies. (See the notes upon ver. 5. 8.)

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter relates to the prophet's own time; wherein he first upbraids the people for their ingratitude towards God: then he instructs them in the true way of performing acceptable service to him: lastly, he reproves them for their injustice and idolatry, and tells them that these sins are the causes of their being unsuccessful in all their undertakings.

Ver. 1. *ARISE, contend thou before the mountains,* &c.] God often appeals to inanimate creatures for the justice of his proceedings, thereby to upbraid the stupidity of men. (See i. 2. Deut. iv. 26. xxxii. 1. Psal. l. 4. Isa. i. 2.)

Ver. 2. *For the Lord hath a controversy with his people,* &c.] He will enter into judgment with them for their impieties, as being injurious to his honour, and for which his justice demands satisfaction. (See Hos. iv. 1.)

Ver. 3. *O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I wearied thee? witness against me.*] The words allude to the forms of courts of justice, wherein actions are tried between man and man. God allows his people to offer any plea in their own behalf, and demands what injustice he hath done them, and what grievances they can complain of, either in the laws or the rules of worship which he hath prescribed them. (Compare Jer. ii. 5. 31.)

Ver. 4. *For I brought thee out of the house of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants,* &c.] On the other side, God puts them in mind of the great favours he had bestowed upon them, in delivering them out of the Egyptian bondage, by the conduct of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam their sister, who is here mentioned as having been endued with the spirit of prophecy, and by whom upon some occasions God made known his will to the Israelites. (See Exod. xv. 20. Numb. xii. 2.)

Ver. 5. *O my people, remember what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam son of Beor answered him.*] Remember how Balak sent for Balaam to curse Israel, and he contrary to his own intentions blessed them. (See Numb. xxiv. 10—12.)

From Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord.] To make the sense perfect, we must supply it from the beginning of the verse, as the Chaldee paraphrast doth, *Remember what I have done for you, from Shittimun to Gilgal; i. e.* from your encamping in the plains of Moab near Shittim, by Jordan: (see Numb. xxii. 1. compared with xxxiii. 48, 49.) where you continued till you passed over that river, and encamped in Gilgal in the land of Canaan. (See Josh. ii. 1. compared with iv. 19.) If you duly consider these things, you will be convinced of God's great goodness to you, and of his faithfulness in fulfilling the promises made to your fathers.

A learned prelate, in his Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, p. 290. supposes the phrase, *From Shittim to Gilgal,* to be a proverbial expression, for *a sudden change of an enemy's wicked passions and designs.* And then the words will imply thus much:—Remember how I would not suffer Balaam, though when led to it by his inclinations and interests, to curse you, though he removed from one place to another, to find a seasonable time and prospect for his enchantments, and surveyed the army of Israel, going over them with his eye, from Shittim where they lay encamped, to the utmost extremity of them over against Gilgal, or Jericho, by Jordan: (see Josh. iii. 1. compared with iv. 19.) *But the Lord thy God* made him *turn his curse into a blessing,* Deut. xxiii. 5.

Ver. 6. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God.*] After this reproof of the people's ingratitude, they are introduced by the prophet, as anxiously inquisitive how they may propitiate God's displeasure, and avert his judgments. They declare themselves, in the following verse, ready to offer any expiatory sacrifices, though never so costly, for that purpose.

Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves

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of a year old?] Will God accept of the ordinary sacrifices, such as we offered upon other occasions as an atonement for sin? (See Lev. iv. 3. ix. 2.)

Ver. 7. *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or ten thousands of rivers of oil?*] Or doth he expect a more costly sacrifice? We are ready, if that will appease him, to offer up to him thousands of rams, and to add in proportion meat-offerings prepared with oil; (see Lev. ii. 1. 4. 15.) though it should cost us an unmeasurable quantity of that liquor. (Compare Job xxix. 6.)

Shall I give my first-born for my transgression? &c.] They farther declare themselves ready to sacrifice their first-born, though looked upon as the strength and stay of their family, if that would appease God's wrath, and procure their pardon. Such inhuman sacrifices several of the idolatrous Jews offered up to their idols; for which they are severely reproved by the prophets. (See 2 Kings xvi. 3. xxi. 6. Jer. vii. 31. xix. 5. Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. xxiii. 37.)

These two verses are an exact description of the temper of hypocrites and habitual sinners, who hope to obtain God's favour by performing the external duties of religion; and are willing to purchase their own pardon upon any terms but that of reforming their lives.

Ver. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good,* &c.] Both the dictates of reason, and the laws of God, sufficiently inform men what are the substantial parts of their duty; *viz.* the practice of justice and mercy, and a reverent behaviour towards God, and looking up to him as our Lord and Maker. This is a more acceptable service than the most costly sacrifices. (Compare Deut. x. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Isa. i. 11, &c. Hos. vi. 6.)

Ver. 9. *The Lord's voice cries unto the city.*] The exhortations God hath given you by his prophets are chiefly directed to the city of Jerusalem and its principal inhabitants, whose injustice and oppression of their neighbours cry aloud for vengeance.

And the man of wisdom shall see thy name.] He that is truly wise will easily discover God's authority in such a message. *Wisdom,* in the Hebrew, is here put for the wise man, the abstract being often used for the concrete: so *righteousness* signifies the *righteous man,* Isa. xli. 2. Some translate the sentence thus, *They will learn wisdom* [or, shall obtain salvation] *who fear thy name.* The derivatives from *yare,* to fear, and *raar,* to see, are often used promiscuously in the Hebrew language.

Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.] Hear what severe judgments are threatened against your sins, and who it is that threatens them, and is able to put them in execution.

Ver. 10. *Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked?*] Notwithstanding all the exhortations and reproofs given you upon this subject, still there are many that use unjust and fraudulent means to enrich themselves, and keep scant measures to sell their goods by, which the law of God often declares to be an abomination to him. (See Lev. xix. 35, 36. Deut. xxv. 13. 16. Prov. xi. 1. xx. 10.) The word translated *measure* is *ephah* in the Hebrew; so the reproof is the same with that of Amos, viii. 5. where he charges the tradesmen with making the *ephah small.* (See the note there.)

Ver. 12. *Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances?*] See Hos. xii. 7.

Ver. 13. *Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee.*] The punishment wherewith I will afflict thee shall waste thy strength, like a consuming sickness, which preys upon the vitals.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt eat and not be satisfied.*] Either thy food shall not give thee due nourishment, or else thou shalt not have enough to satisfy a craving appetite.

And thy casting down shall be in the midst of thee.] The miseries that bring thee low, shall be like an incurable disease in thy bowels. (See ver. 13.)

And thou shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver, &c.] Whatever advantages thou shalt make by thy industry, or whatsoever thou shalt gain by conquest, thou shalt not be able to keep it, but it shall become a prey to thine enemies. A contrary form of speech we read in Isaiah, v. 29. where the prophet, speaking how successful the attempts of their enemies should be, saith, *They shall lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it,* or retake it. The rabbins generally interpret the text here to this sense: Thou shalt conceive seed, but shall not be safely delivered of the child; or, if thou be, it shall be slain by the enemy. The verb *palat,* here used, is spoken of cattle which are safely delivered of their young. (Job xxi. 20.)

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap,* &c.] Thou shalt not enjoy the fruits of thy labours: a curse often threatened for their disobedience. (See Deut. xxviii. 38, 39. Amos v. 2. Zeph. i. 13.)

Ver. 16. *For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab.*] It is said of Omri, that he *did worse than all that were before him,* 1 Kings xvi. 25. and his son Ahab added the worship of Baal to the idolatry of the golden calves, ibid. ver. 32. which is spoken of there as the worse degree of idolatry, because it was the introducing a heathen idol; whereas the golden calves were only an idolatrous representation of the true God. Manasseh followed Ahab in his wickedness. (See 2 Kings xxi. 3.)

That I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof a hissing.] The subject of scorn and derision to their enemies. (See 1 Kings ix. 8. Jer. xviii. 16. Lam. ii. 15.)

Therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people.] The prophet still directs his discourse to the great and rich men, (ver. 12. 15.) and tells them, that since they have given the chief occasion to those reproaches, which unbelievers have thrown out upon God's people, as if they were rejected and cast off by him, therefore they shall bear the principal share of that shame and contempt wherewith their enemies shall treat them. (Compare Psal. xlii. 10. Isa. xxv. 8.)

The LXX. read, *The reproach of the people;* to the same sense with those words of Psal. lxxxix. 50, 51. *I bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people, wherewith thine enemies have reproached—.* Buxtorf, in his Vindiciæ contra Capellum, shews this interpretation to agree with the Hebrew, supposing the word *ammi* to stand for *ammim* in the plural; of which syntax he alleges several instances.

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CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet, speaking in the person of the church, laments the decay of piety, and growth of wickedness: possessing her soul in patience by faith, she foresees her future restoration in the latter times; a subject with which most of the minor prophets conclude their prophecies.

Ver. 1. *WOE is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer-fruits,* &c.] Good men are become like a gleaning after the harvest or vintage, scarce two or three to be found after the most diligent search. (Compare Isa. xvii. 6. xxiv. 13.)

My soul desireth the first ripe fruit.] It would be the same refreshment to me to meet with a truly pious man, as it is to a thirsty traveller to find the early fruits in the summer season. (Compare Isa. xxviii. 4. Hos. ix. 10.)

Ver. 2. *The good man is perished out of the earth,* &c.] The same complaints we find in other holy writers, lamenting the scarcity of good men, and the increase of the wicked. (See Psal. xii. 1. xiv. 2, &c. Isa. lvii. 1.)

They hunt every man his brother with a net.] They make a prey of their neighbours, and even of their friends and nearest relations. (See Habak. i. 14, 15.)

Ver. 3. *That they may do evil with both hands earnestly.*] The words may be translated, *That they may prepare their hands, for* committing *evil:* the verb *herib* sometimes signifies to *fit* or *prepare.* (See Exod. xxx. 7. Hos. x. 1.)

The prince asketh, &c.] See iii. 11.

So they wrap it up.] The prince, the judge, and the great man, agreeing in their ill designs, make a threefold cord of iniquity: or they twist one sin upon another, the latter to maintain or cover the former. The Chaldee renders it, *So they deprave or pervert it; i. e.* the soul, or mind; which word is found in the Hebrew of the foregoing sentence.

Ver. 4. *The best of them is as a brier; the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge.*] Those that have the fairest character among them are set upon mischief. Sinners are elsewhere compared to briers and thorns, both upon the account of their unfruitfulness, and because of their hurtful qualities. (See the notes upon Isa. ix. 18. lv. 13. and compare 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7. Heb. vi. 8.)

The day of thy watchmen, even thy visitation cometh, &c.] The time of vengeance is coming, which hath been foretold by the prophets of former times, as well as the present; called here *watchmen,* as they are by Ezekiel, iii. 7. and by Hosea, ix. 8. then God will visit for all the sins thou hast committed against him. *Watchmen* may signify magistrates, as well as prophets: (see the note upon Isa. lvi. 10.) and then the words import the time when God will call both princes and prophets to account for their unfaithfulness in the discharge of their several offices. (See iii. 11.)

Ver. 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord,* &c.] The church here expresses her confidence in God alone, since no trust can be placed in man.

Ver. 8, 9. *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy,* &c.] Let not the enemies of God and his truth insult over me, as if he had utterly forsaken me. (See ver. 10. Psal. lxxix. 10.) After he hath chastened me for my sins, which I will patiently bear, out of a just sense of my demerits, he will deliver me out of my low and desolate condition, and will cause the light of his countenance to shine upon me, and plead the cause of his oppressed truth. (Compare Psal. xxvii. 1.) This was in some degree fulfilled in their deliverance from the captivity. (See ver. 11. and compare iv. 10.)

Ver. 10. *Mine eyes shall behold her: for now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets.*] As the heathen beheld the desolations of God's church and temple with delight; (see iv. 11.) so it shall come to my turn to see God's judgments executed upon the Babylonish empire, and that brought down to as low a condition as ever they had reduced God's people. (See Isa. li. 26. and compare with the latter part of the sentence, 2 Sam. xxii. 43. Zech. x. 5.)

Ver. 11. *In the day that thy walls shall be built, in that day shall the decree be far removed.*] When God shall visit his people, and repair their decayed estate, (compare Amos ix. 11.) then the tyrannical edicts of their persecutors shall be utterly abolished. This may partly relate to the recalling those edicts which put a stop to the rebuilding the city and temple of Jerusalem. (See Ezra iv. 23, 24. vi. 14. Nehem. ii. 8. 17.)

Ver. 12. *In that day.*] The phrase signifies in the prophets some remarkable time prefixed by God for restoring the Jews' affairs, or some other signal events of Providence. (See the note upon Isa. iv. 2. and the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield's Defence of Christianity, p. 168.)

He shall come unto thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, &c.] By the single person, *he,* is meant the people, or the dispersion of Israel: so the Chaldee paraphrast understands it. (See ver. 15.) I observed in my notes upon Isa. xix. 6. that this text might more perspicuously be translated thus, *He shall come unto thee from Assyria even to the cities of Egypt, and from Egypt even to the river* [Euphrates]: the word *matsor, fortress,* likewise signifying Egypt; as Bochart observes, Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 24. The words imply, that the Jews shall return from their several dispersions whither they were scattered: this the prophets elsewhere express by their return from Assyria and Egypt. (See Isa. xi. 15, 16. xix. 23—25. xxvii. 13. Hos. xi. 11. Zech. v. 10, 11.) Jeremiah compares the captivity of the ten tribes, who were carried away by Shalmaneser into Assyria, to the bondage of their forefathers in Egypt, and promises them a like deliverance, Jer. xxi. 14. xxiii. 7, 8. This may be the reason of joining Egypt and Assyria together in the forementioned texts: though it be also true, that about the time of Shalmaneser's invasion, many of the Jews fled for refuge into Egypt; as appears from Hos. vii. 16. viii. 13. ix. 3. 6.

Ver. 13. *Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein,* &c.] The marginal reading is to be preferred, *After that the land hath been desolate,* &c. The words import, that the general restoration of the Jews shall not be brought to pass till after their land hath lain desolate for some ages, as a testimony of God's displeasure against its ancient inhabitants for their sins, especially that heinous one of rejecting the Messias.

For the fruit of their doings.] The miseries, which are the effects of men's sins, are called the fruit of their ways, or doings. (See Prov. i. 31. Jer. xxi. 14.)

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Ver. 14. *Feed thy people with thy rod, even the flock of thine heritage.*] The words contain the prophet's earnest wish or prayer to God that he would send the Messiah to perform the office of the *good Shepherd,* in feeding or protecting his flock, the remnant of the *true Israelites, in the age of renovation;* as the Chaldee paraphrase explains it; *i. e.* in the times of the Messiah, when *all things shall become new.* The prophets describe the Messias under the character of a shepherd. (See above, v. 4. Isa. xl. 11. xlix. 10. Ezek. xxxiv. 23.)

Which dwell solitarily.] The expression may relate to the state of the Jews in their dispersions, where they are preserved separate from, and unmixed with, the several nations whither they are scattered. But I rather believe the expression is borrowed from Numb. xxiii. 9. and Deut. xxxiii. 28. where Israel is described as *dwelling alone;* so our translators render the word *badad* in both those texts; *i. e.* in a large and plentiful country, secure under the Divine protection, without standing in need of foreign alliances. In this sense the words relate to their future happiness and security. (Compare Jer. xxiii. 6.)

In the wood, in the midst of Carmel.] The same place is called the *forest of Carmel,* Isa. xxxvii. 24. and spoken of there as a place remarkable for its fruitfulness: compare Isa. x. 18. xxxv. 2. where our translation reads, *The glory of his forest and his fruitful field,* or his *Carmel,* as it is in the original. Bashan, which follows here, and Carmel, are joined together as the most fruitful parts of Judea, Isa. xxxiii. 9. Nahum i. 4.

Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.] These countries were noted for their rich and fat pastures. (See Numb. xxxii. 1. 33. Deut. xxxii. 14.) The expressions denote, that the Jews shall enjoy full and free possession of their land after their return to it, with the same security and happiness with which they possessed it, in their most flourishing state, under the reigns of David and Solomon. (See 1 Kings iv. 25. compare Zech. x. 10.) We are likewise to suppose these temporal blessings to be emblems and figures of the spiritual benefits conveyed by the gospel. (Compare Isa. lxv. 10. Jer. l. 19. Zeph. iii. 13. and see the notes there.)

Ver. 15. *According to the days of thy coming out of Egypt will I shew him marvellous things.*] The words are an answer to the prophet's prayer in the foregoing verse; wherein God tells him, that the wonders he will perform in bringing back his people into their own country, shall be as conspicuous as those which he shewed in their deliverance out of Egypt, and giving them the first possession of it. The sense is equivalent to that of Psal. lxviii. 22. *The Lord hath said, I will bring my people again as I did from Bashan; I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea.*

Ver. 16. *The nations shall see, and be confounded at all their might.*] The heathen shall feel the same confusion as men do under a great disappointment, when they shall see that power and force defeated, which they had gathered together to oppose God's people, and hinder them from enjoying the quiet possession of their land. (See Ezek. xxxviii. 8, &c.) Others understand *their might* of the might and power of God's people, whom no force will be able to withstand. (See v. 8.)

They shall lay their hands upon their mouths, their ears shall be deaf.] The evident tokens of a Divine presence with his people shall stop the mouths of their adversaries, so that they shall be struck dumb with admiration and astonishment. (See Job xxi. 5. xxix. 9. Isa. lii. 15.) They shall hardly believe their own ears, when they hear those wonderful works which God hath wrought for them.

Ver. 17. *They shall lick the dust like a serpent.*] The enemies of God's people shall be very humble and submissive, and ready to fall down at their feet. (Compare Psal. lxxii. 9. Rev. iii. 9. Isa. xlix. 23. lx. 14. and see the notes there.) To the same sense we may understand those words of Isa. lxv. 25. *Dust shall be the serpent's meat:* where the prophet applies the curse threatened to the serpent, Gen. iii. 14. to the times of the millennium; as if then that curse should be completely fulfilled, when the righteous should have an entire victory over Satan and all his offspring, and tread them under their feet, so as never to rise up again to annoy them. (Compare Rom. xvi. 20.)

They shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth.] They shall be afraid to stir out of their lurking holes; and if they creep out like worms, they shall presently hide their heads again. (See Psal. xviii. 45.)

They shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and fear because of thee.] When they see Almighty God appear so conspicuously in thy favour. The text is parallel to that of Jer. xxxiii. 9. *They shall fear and tremble for all the goodness, and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.*

Ver. 18. *Who is a God like thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?*] The *remnant of God's heritage,* are those Jews, which are reserved to be partakers of the benefits which shall be made good to that nation, upon their conversion and restoration here spoken of. (Compare iv. 7. v. 7, 8.) God shall then make manifest his mercy towards them, in pardoning all their former stubbornness and disobedience, and receiving them into his former favour, upon their repentance: (see Zech. iii. 10. xii. 10. compare Jer. l. 20.) thereby fulfilling that gracious declaration he made to Moses, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

He retains not his anger for ever, because he delights in mercy.] To the same purpose he is said to *blot out men's iniquities, and not remember their sins,* to their condemnation, Isa. xliii. 25. *because he delights in mercy,* as it follows here; so acts of judgment are called his *strange work,* Isa. xxviii. 21. such as he would not put in execution, if they were not necessary for the great ends of government.

Ver. 19. *He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us.*] Or, *He will again have compassion upon us;* for the verb *shub,* to *turn,* is often used adverbially. (See the note upon Isa. vi. 13.)

He will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.] Thou wilt utterly abolish them, that *they shall not have dominion over us;* as thou didst destroy Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, (Exod. xiv. 13.) This victory will be obtained by the merits of Christ, and the grace of the gospel. (See Colos. ii. 14. Rom. vi. 14.)

Ver. 20. *Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers,* &c.] The promises given to Abraham were made *to him, and to his seed after him,* Gen. xvii. 8. So the Scripture speaks of the blessings bestowed upon the children, as if

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they were actually made good to their progenitors. (See Gen. xlvi. 4. Exod. vi. 4.) Thus God is said to *perform his truth unto Jacob, and his mercy unto Abraham;* or to *deal mercifully with our fathers,* as the sense runs in the original, Luke i. 72. by fulfilling the promises to their posterity, the whole family being reputed one aggregate body. And these promises will receive their final accomplishment in the conversion and restoration of the Jewish nation in the latter times. That people are said to be *beloved for their fathers' sakes,* Rom. xi. 28. and therefore we have reason to expect, that the mercies promised to their fathers should, in God's due time, be made good to them: *for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,* Rom. xi. 29.

NAHUM.

PREFACE.

THE destruction of Nineveh, here prophesied of, is recorded in the book of Tobit, xiv. 15. It is said there to be taken by Nebuchodonosor and Assuerus; which account Archbishop Usher, in his Annals, A. M. 3378. Dr. Prideaux, Script. Connex. p. 47, 48. and other learned men, understand of Nabupolassar, father to Nebuchadnezzar (called in the Greek translation Nebuchodonosor), and Cyaxares king of Media, called by Daniel Ahasuerus, Dan. ix. 1. This remarkable transaction is placed by Dr. Prideaux in the twenty-ninth year of king Josiah, about twenty-four years before the destruction of Jerusalem; and the fixing it to this time exactly agrees with the account given by the heathen historians, Herodotus and others; as St. Jerome has observed in his preface upon Jonah. The Ninevites would not take warning by Jonah's prophecy; so not only Nahum, who probably lived in the reign of Hezekiah, but also Zephaniah, who lived in the time of Josiah, foretold the destruction of Nineveh, ii. 13.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The *burden of Nineveh* is the title of this prophecy, being the chief subject of it: though this chapter is in the nature of a preface to the succeeding prophecy; setting forth God's goodness to his people, and his severity towards his enemies. Concerning the sense of the word *burden,* see the note upon Jer. xxiii. 33.

Ver. 1. *THE book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.*] The title of Elkoshite is probably taken from the place where he lived. St. Jerome informs us, that there was a village in Galilee called Elkegai; the ruins of which were shewed to him, when he travelled over those parts. (See the preface to his comment upon Nahum.)

Ver. 2. *God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth,* &c.] As he is very jealous of his honour, so he will not fail to execute his judgment on those that affront and dishonour him: and though he doth not always punish sinners immediately, yet he will exercise his severity upon them in due time.

Ver. 3. *The Lord is slow to anger, and great* [rather, although he be great] *in power, and* [or, but] *will not at all acquit the wicked.*] The last sentence runs in the Hebrew, *nakkeh, lo ye nakkeh;* which is capable of a double interpretation, either as our translation renders it, or else it may be translated, *He will utterly destroy:* in which sense it is taken, Exod. xxxiv. 7. Numb. xiv. 18. The sense which our interpreters follow agrees best with the context here. (See the note upon Jer. xxx. 11.)

The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.] An allusion to his coming down upon Sinai, when darkness and tempests surrounded him; (see Exod. xix. 16. 18. Deut. v. 22, 23. compare Psal. xviii. 7. xcvii. 2.) and he will come again in the same manner to the last judgment; of which, particular judgments are the earnest. (See Psal. l. 3. Dan. vii. 13.)

Ver. 4. *He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry,* &c.] The rivers and the sea itself are dried up at his rebuke, as the Red Sea and Jordan were of old; (compare Isa. l. 2. Habak. iii. 8.) and the most pleasant and fruitful countries, such as Bashan, Carmel, and Lebanon, are parched up with drought when he is displeased. (See Isa. xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2. Micah vii. 14.)

Ver. 5. *The mountains quake at him, the hills melt,* &c.] This may likewise allude to God's coming down upon Mount Sinai; (compare Exod. xix. 18. Judg. v. 4. Psal. lxviii. 8. xlvii. 5. Micah i. 4.) or else it may relate to the last judgment, as the following words plainly do. (See the note on ver. 3.)

Ver. 6. *His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.*] God is a *consuming fire,* when he comes to execute his judgments, Deut. iv. 24. and as fire is of a sufficient force to dissolve the hardest rocks, so God's vengeance can humble the most obdurate sinners.

Ver. 7. *He knoweth them that trust in him.*] *i. e.* He takes a particular care of them. (Compare Psal. i. 7. 2 Tim. ii. 19. and see the note upon Hos. xiii. 5.)

Ver. 8. *But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof.*] An army's overrunning a country is often compared to an inundation. (See Isa. viii. 7, 8. Dan. ix. 26. xi. 10. 20. 40.) Thus God will bring

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the great city of Nineveh to utter ruin, so that there shall be no remains thereof in aftertimes. For the ruins which are to be seen of Mosul, are on the opposite side of the river Tigris.

The place thereof.] The *affix* or relative plainly relates to Nineveh, against which city this prophecy is directed, ver. 1.

And darkness shall pursue his enemies.] *i. e.* Ruin and destruction. (Compare Isa. viii. 22.)

Ver. 9. *Adversity shall not rise up the second time.*] I will make an utter destruction all at once: *When I begin, I will also make an end,* as it is expressed 2 Sam. iii. 12. The words may be understood with relation to the destruction of Nineveh prophesied of in the following chapters; *viz.* that at the same time an end should be put to the family which then reigned over Assyria, and the seat of the empire should be translated to Babylon. (See the note upon iii. 18.)

Ver. 10. *For while they be folden together as thorns.*] Or, *For as they are folden together like thorns.* The particle *ad* translated *while,* may be a term of comparison. (See Noldius, p. 668.) The destruction of sinners is elsewhere compared to the burning of thorns. (See the note upon Isa. ix. 18.)

And while they are drunken as drunkards.] Compare iii. 11. God's vengeance is often called the *cup of his fury,* because it deprives men both of strength and reason. (See the note upon Jer. xxv. 15.)

Ver. 11. *There is one come out of thee, that imagineth evil,* &c.] This probably is meant of Sennacherib, that uttered so many reproaches and blasphemies against the true God. (See ver. 14, 15.) Nineveh was one of his royal seats, at the time when Nahum delivered this prophecy.

Ver. 12. *Though they be quiet* [or rather, prosperous], *and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down when he shall pass through.*] Though the Assyrians be never so numerous, and puffed up with their prosperous success against Egypt; (see the note upon iii. 8.) which will encourage Sennacherib to march directly against Jerusalem; yet God shall cut them off at one stroke by his angel, who slew in one night in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand, (2 Kings xix. 25.) The verb translated *pass through,* is often used of a hostile invasion. (See Isa. viii. 8. Dan. xi. 10. Joel iii. 17.) It is taken in that sense, ver. 15. of this chapter, and in both places is to be understood of Sennacherib, the enemy mentioned ver. 11.

Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more.] Rather, *no longer,* by Sennacherib or his forces. (See ver. 13, 14.) So the particle *nûd* is plainly taken, Ezek. xii. 28. Hos. i. 6. (See Noldius, p. 682.)

Ver. 13. *For now I will break his yoke from off thee,* &c.] Hezekiah and his people shall no longer be tributaries to the king of Assyria, as they have been for a considerable time. (See 2 Kings xvi. 17. xviii. 14.)

Ver. 14. *The Lord hath given a commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy name be sown.*] God had decreed that Sennacherib's family should not long preserve their royal state and dignity: his son and successor, Esarhaddon, was now probably at man's estate; for he succeeded his father in a little time after his defeat, (2 Kings xix. 37.) and reigned with great felicity almost forty years; but his next successor, or the next but one, was dispossessed of his kingdom by Nabupolassar, father to Nebuchadnezzar, whose family enjoyed the empire of Assyria, or Babylon, as it came then to be called, till the conquest by Cyrus. (See Dr. Prideaux, under the fifteenth and twenty-ninth years of Josiah.) Some explain the words thus: *Thou shalt do no more remarkable actions, whereby thy name may be remembered.* So the Chaldee understands it.

Out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image, and the molten image.] When God executes his judgments upon any heathen prince or nation, he is said to punish the idols of that people, because the conquerors triumph over their idols as well as their worshippers, and bring in their own idols into the room of those they vanquish. (See the notes upon Isa. xix. 1. xlvi. 1. Jer. l. 2.)

I will make thy grave; for thou art vile.] We may supply the sense from the former sentence. The house of thine idol shall become thy grave, when thou shalt be dishonourably slain by thine own sons, (2 Kings xix. 37.) as a just punishment for thy blasphemies against the God of Israel, (ibid. ver. 6. 16.)

Ver. 15. *How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.*] The same words are to be found in Isaiah, lii. 6. There they relate to the joyful news of the Jews' return from Babylon, and in a more eminent sense to the glad tidings of the gospel: here they may be fitly understood of the good tidings of the miraculous defeat of Sennacherib's army, and the raising of the siege of Jerusalem, which was the consequence of it; to which the following words do plainly relate.

O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows.] Thou hast now a free access to the temple, to keep the stated feasts with their usual solemnity, and particularly to perform the vows thou madest to God in thy late distress.

For the wicked [or, the wicked one] *shall no more pass through thee.*] See ver. 9. 12. 14.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

This and the following chapter contain a description of the taking of Nineveh by the Babylonians and Medes. (See the note upon i. 1.)

Ver. 1. *HE that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face.*] An enemy that will break down thy walls and destroy thine inhabitants, O Nineveh, is come to besiege thee. The words may be literally translated, *The hammer is come up against thee;* in the same sense as the Chaldeans are called the *hammer of the whole earth,* Jer. l. 23. The original word indeed is not the same in both places, but they are synonymous.

Keep the munition, watch the way.] There is need of thy utmost industry to defend thyself in strengthening the garrisons, and guarding the passes. (Compare iii. 13, 14.)

Make thy loins strong, &c.] Stir up all thy strength and courage.

Ver. 2. *For the Lord hath turned away the excellency of Jacob as the excellency of Israel.*] Some translate the words thus, *The Lord hath returned* [or, will revenge] *the pride,*

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or injurious dealings, *against Jacob, and the pride against Israel; i. e.* he will requite the injuries and oppressions which Sennacherib and Shalmaneser, the kings of Assyria, have exercised upon Judah and Israel. This interpretation agrees better with the scope of the text, than that which most translators follow, and suits very well with the Hebrew idiom. Compare Joel iii. 19. Habak. ii. 8. 17. Obad. ver. 10. where the second of two substantives is taken in the same sense by our translators.

For the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine-branches.] The Assyrian conquerors have plundered them of all their wealth, and bereaved them of their children, often compared in Scripture to branches. (See particularly, Gen. xlix. 22. compared with Deut. xxxiii. 17.)

Ver. 3. *The shield of his mighty men is red, the valiant men are in scarlet.*] This may be understood either of the colour of their shields and clothes when they were made, or of their being died in blood afterward. (Compare Isa. lxiii. 2.)

The chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation.] Or, Like flaming torches. (See the following verse.) The Hebrew particles *beth* and *caph*, as they are alike in figure, so they are often in signification. (See Noldius, p. 162.) Thus those words of Isaiah, xlviii. 10. might be best translated, *I have refined thee, but not as silver; i. e.* not with so fierce a fire.

And the fir-trees shall be terribly shaken.] The spears and lances made of fir, and which were so long and large, that they looked like so many trees.

Ver. 4. *The chariots shall rage in the streets.*] They shall drive furiously against one another; as it follows.

They shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.] They shall resemble flames or lightning in their swiftness, and their wheels continually striking fire out of the stones and pavements of the streets. (See iii. 2.)

Ver. 5. *He shall recount his worthies:* [but] *they shall stumble in their walk.*] The king of Nineveh shall muster together his choicest troops; but they shall be disordered, and give way, or be discomfited, as they march against the enemy.

They shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the defence shall be prepared.] On, the other side, the besiegers shall make their regular approaches towards the walls of Nineveh, and prepare their defences against the assaults of the besieged.

Ver. 6. *The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved.*] Or, *melt.* At length the enemies shall possess themselves of all the avenues towards the several streams of the river Tigris, and so become masters of the city. This shall make the heart of the king and all his court to melt for fear, and quite lose all their courage. To this sense the Chaldee paraphrase explains the latter part of the verse.

Ver. 7. *Huzzab shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up.*] Rather, *removed,* or taken away. (Compare Jer. xlviii. 15. Psal. cii. 24.) By Huzzab, the Chaldee understands the queen of Nineveh: but the word may probably mean Nineveh itself; the word denoting a strong or impregnable fortress.

Her maids shall lead her as with the voice of doves, &c.] Nineveh is described as a great princess carried captive with her maids of honour attending her, and bewailing her's and their condition, with beating their breasts, and other expressions of lamentation; denoting the lesser cities under their jurisdiction, that should be sharers with her in the same calamity. So Babylon is represented as a *tender and delicate lady,* undergoing the hardships of a captivity. Isa. xlviii. 1. 5. 7, 8.

As with the voice of doves.] Birds remarkable for their melancholy note. (Compare Isa. xxxviii. 14. lix. 11.)

Ver. 8. *But* [or, surely] *Nineveh is of old as a pool of waters: yet they shall flee away.*] The words may be translated, *The waters of Nineveh are as a pool of waters; i. e.* as the city is well watered by being situated upon the river Tigris, so it is vastly populous. A multitude is elsewhere compared to many waters. (See Jer. li. 13. Rev. xvii. 1. 15.) But they shall all flee for fear of the enemy, and run away like water. (Compare Psal. lviii. 7.) The sense in the LXX. of Dr. Grabe's edition runs very clear, if it can be reconciled with the original, *Nineveh is like a pool of water; waters are her wall, or defence.*

Stand, stand, shall they cry, &c.] When the commanders bid them stand to their arms, none shall turn back to make head against the enemy, but shall shift for themselves as fast as they can. (See ver. 10. iii. 17.)

Ver. 9. *Take the spoil of silver,* &c.] The enemy may easily plunder the city of all its riches and costly furniture, for there is none to make any resistance.

Ver. 10. *She is empty; and the heart melteth.*] The inhabitants have no heart nor courage to defend themselves, (see iii. 13.) but leave the city to be plundered and laid waste by the enemy.

The knees smite together, &c.] Expressions of much fear, and terrible apprehensions of the approaching evils. (Compare Jer. xxx. 6. Dan. v. 6. Joel ii. 6.)

Ver. 11, 12. *Where is the dwelling of the lion, and feeding-place of the young lions?* &c.] What is become of the stately palaces of the king and princes of Nineveh, who like so many lions preyed upon the neighbouring countries, and enriched their city with spoils they took from others? (Compare Job iv. 10, 11. Psal. xxxiv. 10. Ezek. xix. 2. 7.)

The lion—strangled for his lionesses, &c.] The lions provide food for the females, till their young ones are able to shift for themselves.

Ver. 13. *I will burn their chariots in the smoke.*] They shall be destroyed in the fire which consumes the city. (See iii. 15.)

The sword shall devour the young lions, &c.] See ver. 12.

And the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.] Thou shalt no more send ambassadors to distant countries, either to encourage thine allies, or to terrify thine enemies. (See Isa. xviii. 2.)

CHAP. III.

See the Argument of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 1. *WOE to the bloody city,* &c.] Where princes and great men shed innocent blood to enrich themselves with the spoils of the slain. (Compare Ezek. xxii. 2, 3. xxiv. 6—9.)

The prey departeth not.] They are still increasing their conquests by ruin and oppression, till it will come to their

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own turn to be spoiled and conquered. (Compare Isa. xxxiii. 1.)

Ver. 2. *The noise of a whip,* &c.] See ii. 3, 4. and compare Jer. xlvii. 3.

Ver. 4. *Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favoured harlot,* &c.] Great cities are often called harlots, upon the account of those vices which prevail in them, and infect others by their example. (See Isa. xxiii. 16.)

The mistress of witchcrafts.] The arts of luxury which are encouraged in such places are called witchcrafts, because they have a sort of charm in them to draw others aside. (Compare Isa. xlvii. 9. Rev. xviii. 23.)

That selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.] That makes whole nations a prey to their enemies, by teaching them the arts of softness and effeminacy, and so rendering them weak and defenceless. *Families* are equivalent to kingdoms. (See the note upon Jer. i. 15. and compare Amos iii. 2. Zech. xiv. 18.)

Ver. 5. *I will discover thy skirts upon thy face,* &c.] I will send thee into captivity naked and bare. (See Isa. xx. 4. 8. xlvii. 2, 3. Jer. xiii. 22. Micah i. 11.) Thus will I expose thy shame to the world; which was a punishment often inflicted upon harlots. (See the note upon Ezek. xvi. 37.)

Ver. 6. *I will cast abominable filth upon thee,* &c.] I will deprive thee of all thine ornaments, and will cover thee with shame and reproach, and make a public example of thee. Such was the usage that common prostitutes met with. (See Ezek. xxiii. 25, 26.)

Ver. 7. *All that look upon thee shall flee from thee.*] As being affrighted at the sight of thy dismal condition.

Who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for her?] An allusion to the lamentations used at funerals, and performed by persons hired for that purpose. (See the notes upon Jer. ix. 17, 18. Ezek. xxviii. 2.) The words imply, that if we seek for any mourners to perform this office over departing Nineveh, none will be found to do it; every one rejoicing over her destruction.

Ver. 8. *Art thou better than populous No?*] Which was sacked, and its inhabitants made captives, as it follows. The Hebrew reads, *No Ammon;* the same city which is called *Hammon No,* Ezek. xxx. 15. and *Ammon Minnu,* Jer. xlvi. 25. where our English reads, the *multitude of No,* as it does render it *populous No* here; though the place probably took its name from *Ham,* the founder of the Egyptian kingdom, (thence called *the land of Ham,* Psal. cvi. 22.) who was worshipped there under the name of *Jupiter Hammon:* accordingly the LXX. render it *Diospolis,* upon that place of Jeremiah: it was likewise called *Thebes* by Homer, who describes it as famous for its hundred gates.

That was situate among the rivers, &c.] Which was defended by the river Nile on the one side, and the Red Sea on the other, as by so many walls and ramparts.

Ver. 9. *Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength.*] Dr. Prideaux's Scripture History, under the fifteenth of Hezekiah, with great reason supposes this calamity to have been brought upon No by Sennacherib, about three years before he besieged Jerusalem, in the time of Hezekiah. At that time Sevechus, the son of Sabaccon, or So, mentioned 2 Kings xvii. 4. was king both of Egypt and Ethiopia; so they are mentioned here as confederates, and Isaiah foretells that they should be vanquished by Sargon, or Sennacherib: Isa. xx. 4. Whereas the destruction of No, foretold by Jeremiah, xlvi. 25. and Ezekiel, xxx. 14. was, after this, brought to pass by Nebuchadnezzar.

Put and Lubim were thy helpers.] *Put,* or *Phut,* is rendered *Libya* by our translators, Ezek. xxx. 5. and the *Libyans,* Jer. xlvi. 9. but this text proves that they were a distinct people. *Phut* probably denotes *Mauritania.* (See Bochart's Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 33.)

Ver. 10. *They cast lots for her honourable men.*] The conquerors used to cast lots what captives should come to each man's share. (See Joel iii. 3. Obad. ver. 11.)

Ver. 11. *Thou shall be drunken.*] See i. 10.

Thou shalt be hid, thou also shalt seek strength, because of the enemy.] Or, *Thou shalt repair to thy fortress, because of the enemy.* Thou shalt not dare to shew thyself to the enemy, but shalt betake thyself to thy *munitions* (see ii. 1.) and places of strength. (Compare ver. 13. 17.)

Ver. 12. *All thy strong holds shall be like fig-trees with the first ripe figs,* &c.] As figs drop off when they are ripe, so shall thy strong holds fall into the enemy's hands, upon the first assault.

Ver. 13. *The gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies,* &c.] The several passages by which the enemy may invade thee shall be left defenceless: (see ii. 1.) so that they may easily set on fire thy fortifications.

Ver. 14. *Draw the waters for the siege.*] In order to maintain the siege.

Go into the clay, and tread the mortar, make strong [or repair] *the brick-kiln.*] In order to repair the breaches of thy walls, or make new ones within, if the old ones should be taken by the enemy. In those countries they used brick instead of stone. (See Gen. xi. 3.)

Ver. 15. *There the fire shall devour thee.*] Whilst thou art repairing the old fortifications, or making new ones, the enemy shall set thy works on fire. The particle *sham, there,* may signify *then.* (See Noldius, p. 767.)

It shall eat thee up like the canker-worm.] The sword of thine enemies, who shall be as numerous and destructive as locusts, or canker-worms, shall destroy thee. (See Joel i. 4.)

Make thyself many as the canker-worm, &c.] Though thou multiply thine armies, like locusts or caterpillars, yet the enemy shall destroy them.

Ver. 16. *The canker-worm spoileth and flieth away.*] As the locusts destroy the fruits of the earth, and fly away to another place, so shall thy soldiers pillage all the wealth thou hast gained by traffic, and then leave thee.

Ver. 17. *Thy crowned are as the locusts,* &c.] The word *Minnazaraik* may be literally rendered *the Nazarites:* that title is given to persons remarkable for their youth and beauty, (Lam. iv. 7. see the note upon Amos ii. 11.) and so may not improperly be applied to the officers in the Ninevites' army: these the prophet compares to locusts and grasshoppers, both for their number, (see ver. 15.) and for another quality, that they shun the heat of battle, just as the grasshoppers do the heat of the sun.

Thy captains.] The Hebrew word is *Taphsir* or *Tiphsar,* as it is read Jer. li. 27. which some suppose to be derived from the Persian word *Satrapas,* the letters being transposed.

Ver. 18. *Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy*

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nobles dwell in the dust.] By *shepherds* are meant captains or generals. (Compare Jer. vi. 3. xxv. 34.) These are said to *slumber*, as having lost their courage, or as being gone to their last sleep, are dead and buried. (Compare Psal. lxxvi. 5, 6.) By the *king of Assyria*, Dr. Prideaux, in the place abovecited, understands Saracus, who was now vanquished by Nabupolassar (who had before possessed himself of the kingdom of Babylon), and Cyaxares the king of Media. (See the Argument of this prophecy.) The fall of this prince is elegantly described by Ezekiel, xxxi. 3, &c. The words of Jeremiah, l. 18. *I have punished the king of Assyria*, are to be understood of the same person.

Thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them.] Their generals are called *shepherds* at the beginning of the verse: the same metaphor is here continued, and the people are said to be dispersed, now their leaders are fled or destroyed, as sheep are scattered where they have no shepherd. (Compare 1 Kings xxii. 17.)

Ver. 19. *There is no healing of thy wound.*] Thy destruction is unavoidable. The Chaldee expounds it, *None is sorry or grieved at thy destruction:* which sense agrees very well with the original, and what follows: *They that hear the bruit of thee* [and thy fall] *clap their hands over thee*, as rejoicing over thy calamities. (Compare Lam. ii. 15. Ezek. xxv. 6. Zeph. ii. 15.)

For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?] All the neighbouring countries have felt the effects of thy cruelties and oppressions.

HABAKKUK.

PREFACE.

THE Prophet Habakkuk was probably contemporary with Jeremiah, and prophesied in the reign of Josiah; for the subject of his prophecy is the same with that of Jeremiah, and upon the same occasion; *viz.* the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, for their heinous sins and provocations. We may observe, as Nahum, the preceding prophet, foretold the destruction of the Assyrians, who carried the ten tribes captive; so Habakkuk foretells the judgments that should come upon the Chaldeans, who completed the captivity of the two remaining tribes.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet complaining of the growth of iniquity among the Jews, God foreshews him the desolations the Chaldeans will make in Judea, and the neighbouring countries, as the ministers of his vengeance. The prophet thereupon falls into a holy expostulation with God about these proceedings, moved thereunto, as it seems, by the impatience of the Jews, who justified themselves in comparison of their conquerors: to which he receives an answer in the following chapter.

Ver. 1. *THE burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.*] The word *burden* is commonly explained of a burdensome prophecy, big with ruin and destruction. (See the note upon Jer. xxiii. 33.) But a learned prelate, in his Defence of Christianity from the Prophecies of the Old Testament, p. 10. observes, that the Hebrew, *massa*, signifies no more than barely a prophecy, and so is translated in our English Bibles, Prov. xxxi. 1. and is often translated by *vision and prophecy* in the LXX. and other ancient versions; the word being used in that sense, from the prophet's *bearing* or feeling within him the influence of God's Spirit: for which reason they were called in Greek, Θεοφόροι, and Πνευματοφόροι.

Ver. 2. *How long shall I cry unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save?*] The prophet proposes the common objections against providence, taken from the prosperity of the wicked, and the oppression of the righteous, which has been a stumbling-block even to good men. (See Job xii. 1. 6. xxi. 7. Psal. xxxvii. lxxiii. Jer. xii. 1.)

Ver. 3. *And there are that raise up strife and contention.*] Or, *There is strife, and contention carries it:* they that are best skilled in the arts of contention carry the cause.

Ver. 4. *And judgment doth never go forth.*] Or, *Doth not go forth to perfection;* is never rightly and duly administered.

For the wicked doth compass about the righteous.] Doth overpower him.

Ver. 5. *Behold ye among the heathen, and regard and wonder marvellously*, &c.] For a punishment to such exorbitant practices, behold God's making the heathen, *viz.* the Chaldeans, (ver. 6.) instruments of his vengeance: this is a judgment, you despisers of God's prophets will hardly believe, when you consider that at present the Chaldeans are your friends and confederates: as appears by Josiah's fighting with the king of Egypt, as being a confederate of the king of Assyria or Babylon. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 29. and Dr. Prideaux, under the thirty-first year of Josiah.) St. Luke quoting this text according to the LXX.'s translation, Acts xiii. 41. reads it thus, *Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish.* The learned Dr. Pocock, in his miscellaneous notes in Portam Mosis, cap. 3. shews, that the interpretation is agreeable to the present Hebrew copy: the word *bagojim*, which we translate *among the heathen*, he derives from the verb *baga*, which still signifies, in Arabic, *to be proud*, or

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scornful: the following words the same translation renders, *And wonder and perish;* which sense he proves the word *tamah* will admit.

Ver. 6. *For, lo, I will raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation,* &c.] Who should make several invasions into Judea, and at last utterly conquer it. (See 2 Kings xxiv. xxv.) They are said here to be cruel in their temper, and vigorous in their warlike expeditions. (Compare ver. 8.)

Ver. 7. *Their judgment and their dignity* [or, authority] *shall proceed of themselves.*] They will be their own judges of what is right or wrong. The marginal reading in our English Bible does not seem to agree with the original.

Ver. 8. *Their horses are more fierce than evening wolves.*] Or, Are swifter than evening wolves, when they go out for their prey, and are pinched with hunger. (See Psal. civ. 20. Jer. v. 6.) The words might be translated to an easier sense: *Their horsemen are fiercer than evening wolves, and shall spread themselves,* or shall be multiplied.

And their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as an eagle, &c.] The words plainly allude to Deut. xxviii. 49, 50. (Compare Jer. v. 15.) The Chaldeans are said to come *from far* in respect of their neighbours the Philistines, Syrians, and Moabites, who used to infest Judea.

Ver. 9. *Their faces shall sup up as the east wind.*] They shall destroy every thing where they march, as the east wind blasts the fruits of the earth. (Compare Ezek. xvii. 10. Hos. xiii. 15.) Some render the words, *Whatsoever they gather, they shall carry it towards the east,* meaning to Babylon, which lay north-east from Judea.

And they shall gather captivity as the sand.] Not only in Judea, (see Jer. lii. 28—30.) but in all the neighbouring countries which they shall conquer. (See the following note.)

Ver. 10. *And they shall scoff at the kings,* &c.] The Hebrew uses the singular number as well here as in the following verse; and is to be understood of the king of Babylon, who conquers kings and princes, and treats them with scorn and contempt: so they used Zedekiah and his princes, (see 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7. 18. 21.) and so they shall serve the kings of Egypt and Tyre, and the princes of Moab, Edom, and the Philistines; who shall all of them successively be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. (See Ezek. xxv. xxvi. xxix. xxxii.)

For they shall heap dust, and take it.] Cast up mountains against them, and so take them. (See Jer. xxxii. 24. xxxiii. 4.)

Ver. 11. *Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and transgress,* &c.] The prophet speaks of the several kings of Babylon as if they were one and the same person; (see the note upon Isa. xxiii. 15.) and saith, that he shall change his mind with his fortune, and impute his success to his idol Belus; which was remarkably true of Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's successor: (see Dan. v. 4.) but we may understand the words of Nebuchadnezzar himself, if we translate the latter part of the verse thus, *This his strength is his God; i. e.* imputing all his success to his own prowess: (compare ver. 16.) and afterward, for those arrogant words of his, mentioned Dan. vi. 30. he was degraded into a beast.

Ver. 12. *Art not thou from everlasting—we shall not die.*] Thou that livest for ever, and whose word is as unchangeable as thyself, wilt preserve us from utter destruction, and in due time make good thy promises to us. (See Psal. cii. 27, 28.)

Thou hast ordained them for judgment, &c.] Thou hast appointed the Chaldeans to be instruments of thy vengeance upon sinners. (See 2 Kings xix. 25. Isa. x. 5—7. Psal. xvii. 13. Ezek. xxx. 25.)

Ver. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.*] With any complaisance, or approbation.

Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?] Seemest to connive at, or dost not shew any dislike at, the violence of those idolatrous Chaldeans.

Ver. 14, 15. *And makest men as the fishes of the sea,* &c.] Suffereth the Chaldeans to treat them no better than fishes, who become a general prey to the fisherman's net or angle.

Ver. 16. *Therefore they sacrifice to their net, and burn incense to their drag.*] They impute all their victories to strength and skill, and make no acknowledgments to God for their success. (See ver. 11. Isa. x. 13. Deut. viii. 17, 18.)

Ver. 17. *Shall they therefore empty their net?*] Carry away the riches and treasures of their conquest (see 2 Kings xxiv. 13.) in order to undertake more; just as fishermen empty their nets to fill them again. But the words may be rendered, *Shall he* (see ver. 10.) *cast* or spread *his net?* The Hebrew verb is used of drawing a sword or spear: (see Ezek. xxviii. 7. Psal. xxxv. 3.) to this sense the Greek and Chaldee here understand it.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

In answer to the complaints of the prophet in the foregoing chapter, God tells him that he will in due time perform the promises made to his people, of deliverance by the Messiah; and that in the mean time good men will support themselves by faith; and then foreshews him the ruin of their great adversary, the Babylonian empire, and the judgment he will inflict upon them for their covetousness, their cruelty, and idolatry.

Ver. 1. *I WILL stand upon the watch-tower,* &c.] It was the business of a watchman, in the time of war, to descry from an eminent station what messengers were coming, and to make known the message as soon as possible. (See 2 Kings ix. 17, &c.) The prophet puts himself in such a posture, that he may receive God's answer to the complaints he made in the foregoing chapter.

And what I shall answer when I am reproved.] Or rather, *What I shall answer as to what I have argued; viz.* to the expostulations I made with God just before.

Ver. 2. *Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables,* &c.] When the prophets are commanded to write any thing, it denotes the great importance of it, that the notice of it may be transmitted to posterity. (See the note upon Isa. viii. 1. xxx. 8.) So God here commands the prophet, to write the contents of this vision in such legible characters as were used in public tables that were hung up in temples and market-places, that every one might have cognizance of them.

Ver. 3. *For the vision is for an appointed time.*] God has determined a set time when it shall be fulfilled, and not before. (Compare Dan. viii. 19. xi. 27. 35, 36.) According

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to the common translation of the following words, by this vision we are to understand the destruction of the Babylonian monarchy, which is plainly foretold from the fifth verse to the end of the chapter, and is a proper answer to the complaint or argument the prophet had made in the foregoing chapter. But the learned Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, in his Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, p. 160. observes, that the prophet, by way of preface to that prediction, confirms the Jews in the general expectation of their deliverer the Messias, whose coming had been so often promised, and which profane persons began to question, when they saw God gave up his people into the hands of a cruel and idolatrous nation.

But in the end, it shall speak, and not lie.] The same learned prelate, p. 162. observes, that the verb *puach* properly signifies to *break forth*, as the morning light does; (see Cant. ii. 17. iv. 6.) to which sense the LXX. and Vulgar Latin translate it here; so he renders the sentence, *At the end, it* (or, he) *shall break forth, and not deceive.*

Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.] There are two different words in the Hebrew, which our English expresses by that one word *tarry:* so the same learned person translates the sentence thus, *Though he tarry, expect him; because he that cometh will come, he will not go beyond* the appointed time, but will make good the promises of deliverance given to your fathers. To this sense the LXX. render the words, very agreeably to the original; and the apostle follows their interpretation, (Heb. x. 37.) and understands them of the Messias, who is often called, *He that cometh, or should come, into the world:* (see Psal. cxviii. 26. Zech. ix. 9. John vi. 14.) the verb stands impersonally in the Hebrew text; but in such a syntax the person is commonly understood.

Ver. 4. *Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him.*] The Septuagint translate the sentence thus: *If he* (*i. e.* the just, as it follows) *draw back, my soul* (the present Hebrew copies read *his soul*, understanding it of God) *shall have no pleasure in him.* This version Bishop Pearson hath proved to be agreeable to the original text, Prolegom. to the LXX. and the apostle confirms this exposition by following that translation, Heb. x. 38.

Ver. 5. *Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth he at home,* &c.] If we suppose a new paragraph to begin here, according to the exposition given of the foregoing verses, the sense would run plainer if the words were thus translated, *Moreover he that, like a man transgressing by wine, is proud, shall not continue,* or prosper. The copulative joined to the last word in the Hebrew is often redundant. The words would yield a plainer sense, if they were thus translated: *Moreover,* (like) *a man transgressing by wine, he is proud, and shall not continue,* or prosper. To this sense, the Chaldee paraphrast and Vulgar Latin explain the words; the particle of comparison, *as,* being often understood. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 8.) The prophet having assured the Jews of a deliverance in God's appointed time, proceeds now to denounce his judgment against the Babylonian monarchy, speaking of it as comprised under one person at the head of it. (See the note upon i. 11.) Here he describes him as one intoxicated with his successes, and not knowing how to set any bounds to his ambition; but still, as his conquests enlarge, his desire of having more increases. *Hell,* or *death,* and the *grave,* are proverbial emblems of an insatiable temper. (See Prov. xxvii. 29. xxx. 16.)

But gathereth to him all nations, &c.] Extends his dominions far and near. (See i. 17.)

Ver. 6. *Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb,* &c.] A *parable* or *proverb* signifies a metaphorical or figurative saying out of the common way, as the Greek word Παροιμία imports; so it is opposed to *speaking plainly,* without figure or such-like ornament, John xvi. 29. Thus the ancient sages clothed their instructions in apt stories and suitable comparisons; upon which account Solomon joins together *a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings,* Prov. i. 6. Such were the symbols of Pythagoras, and some other celebrated wise men among the gentiles. Of this kind is the parable, or taunting and satirical proverb, here uttered against the king of Babylon, and the insatiable ambition of that monarchy.

Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? &c.] Woe to him that is still increasing his own dominion by invading his neighbours; surely he will not continue long so to do without some remarkable check from Providence! and so what he thus increases will *not be for himself* (for so the words in the former part of the sentence may be translated), but for the Medes and Persians, who shall conquer him, and enrich themselves with his spoils. (See the following verse.)

And to him that ladeth himself with thick clay.] His gold and silver, which is nothing originally but earth or clay, shall turn to no benefit, but be rather his burden; adding weight to his sins and punishment.

Ver. 7. *Shall not they suddenly rise that shall bite thee,* &c.] Cyrus took the city of Babylon (and thereby put an end to the Babylonish empire) by a sudden assault, taking advantage of a festival, celebrated by night according to custom, and then draining the river without being perceived, and making it fordable for his army; according to the account Herodotus and Xenophon give of the taking of Babylon, wherein they exactly agree with the prophecy of Jeremiah, chap. l. li. foretelling the same event.

Ver. 8. *Because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land,* &c.] As a just return for thy cruelty in the slaughter of many thousands killed by thee in battle; and particularly for the violence offered to the land of Judea, and the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants. The words might have been more plainly translated, *for the violence against the land,* &c. for so the same phrase is rendered, Obad. ver. 10. (Compare here ver. 17. and Jer. li. 35.)

Ver. 9. *That he may set his nest on high,* &c.] Strong fortresses and citadels are compared, for their height, to nests, which birds are led by their instinct to make upon the tops of trees, to place themselves and their young ones out of the reach of danger. (Compare Jer. xlix. 6. Obad. ver. 4.)

Ver. 10. *Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people,* &c.] Thy cruelty towards others will turn at last to thy own confusion, and utter extirpation of thy family, of which there will be left *neither name nor remnant, son nor grandson;* as God threatens Nebuchadnezzar, Isa. xiv. 22. Belshazzar being the last of that family, whose death put an end to the Babylonian monarchy.

Ver. 11. *For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the*

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beam out of the timber shall answer it.] The houses and towns which have been destroyed by the Chaldeans, shall cry for vengeance against the destroyers. It is a great question, what is the proper signification of the Hebrew *caphis*, being found but in this one place of the Bible: our translators render it *beam;* others think it signifies a *brick.*

Ver. 12. *Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood,* &c.] Who hath raised the greatness of his capital city Babylon upon the ruins of many other cities, and the destruction of their inhabitants. (Compare Micah iii. 10.)

Ver. 13. *Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire?* &c.] The latter part of the verse is with very little alteration repeated, Jer. li. 58. where he describes the destruction of Babylon. I observed in my notes upon that place, that the sentence might be better translated thus: *The people shall labour for that which shall be* [fuel] *for the fire, and the people shall weary themselves for a thing of nought; i. e.* all the pains the Chaldeans have taken in enlarging and beautifying their city, shall be lost in the flames which shall consume their stately buildings. (See the notes upon Jer. li. 25.)

Ver. 14. *For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,* &c.] For God's providence in governing the world shall conspicuously appear in the downfal of the Babylonian empire; especially as it is described in the prophets as an earnest and type of the fall of mystical Babylon, which will be a decisive stroke, that will thoroughly vindicate oppressed truth and innocence.

Ver. 15. *Woe to him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him,* &c.] The desolation of any country is often compared to drunkenness: (see the note upon Jer. xxv. 15.) so the king of Babylon, who subdued the neighbouring countries round about him, and perhaps got an advantage over some of them by gifts and presents, or by counterfeit leagues and friendship, is compared to a man that gets an advantage over another by persuading or forcing him to drink too much. The word *chemath,* translated *bottle,* signifies likewise that heating or poisonous quality which attends wine taken in excess; (compare Hos. vii. 5.) and is often taken for any poisonous juice. (See Deut. xxxii. 24. 33. Job vi. 4. xx. 16. Psal. lviii. 4.)

That thou mayest look on their nakedness.] The too frequent effects of drunkenness, is to engage others to commit lewdness, and thereby expose them to shame; so the king of Babylon intoxicates the minds of his neighbours, by his arts of policy, in order to discover the weakness of their country or government, called *the nakedness of the land,* Gen. xlii. 9. and thereby get the better of them.

Ver. 16. *Thou art covered with shame for glory: drink thou also,* &c.] Thy glory shall now be turned into shame: for it shall come to thy turn to feel the fury of God's judgments, often expressed by the *cup of his wrath;* when thy people shall be made captives, and stripped bare without any covering to their nakedness. (See Isa. iii. 17. Nahum iii. 5.)

Ver. 17. *For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee.*] God shall execute his vengeance upon thee for the violence thou hast offered to the temple at Jerusalem; (compare Jer. l. 28. li. 11.) which is here compared to the cedars of the forest of Lebanon, for its height and stateliness of its buildings. (Compare Zech. xi. 1.) Or else the prophet compares the cruelty of the Medes and Persians to the violence of wild beasts in the forest of Lebanon: so the following words import.

And the spoil of beasts, which made them afraid.] The relative *which,* added by our translators, obscures the text; which might be more plainly rendered, *The spoil of* (or, made by) *beasts shall make them afraid,* or *make thee afraid;* as the Septuagint and the Chaldee, with a very little alteration, read the text. As thou hast spoiled others, without any sense of common humanity, so the army of the conqueror shall deal by thee; (see ver. 8.) and shall tear thee in pieces, as wild beasts do their prey. (See Isa. xiii. 15. 18.)

Because of men's blood, &c.] See ver. 8.

Ver. 18. *What profiteth the graven image,* &c.] The last sin the prophet takes notice of, for which God will execute his judgments upon Babylon, is idolatry: (compare Jer. l. 2. li. 44. 47.) and he tells the king of Babylon, that when he sees Bel and the rest of his graven images carried away by the conquerors in triumphant procession, (see Isa. xlvi. 1, 2.) he will be convinced that his idols could bring no advantage or protection to their worshippers.

The molten image, and a teacher of lies.] The setting up, and paying adoration to them, tend to encourage the ignorant in their absurd fancy, that God is like the work of men's hands, and that images have some Divine power lodged within them: to the same purpose the stock is called, *the doctrine of vanities,* Jer. x. 8.

To make him dumb idols.] Who *have mouths and speak not,* Psal. cxv. 5. (Compare 1 Cor. xii. 2.)

Ver. 19. *Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake,* &c.] Woe to him that calls upon idols, as if they could awake and hear his prayers, as God is said to *awake,* when he answers our prayers; (see Psal. xliv. 23.) or as if they could give their worshippers directions how to escape the evils which threaten them.

It is laid over with gold and silver, and (or, but) *there is no breath at all in it.*] They are beautified with a great deal of cost, on purpose to delude their ignorant worshippers, and make them fancy some divinity lodged within them; whereas they are altogether without life or sense.

Ver. 20. *But the Lord is in his holy temple,* &c.] The true God has his throne in heaven, as the place of his peculiar residence; (see Jonah ii. 7.) from whence he will answer the prayers of his servants, though the temple of Jerusalem should be destroyed.

Let all the earth keep silence before him.] Or, *Stand in awe before him,* as the LXX. render it: the consideration of his sovereignty and dominion should strike them with a reverential awe, and especially should dispose them to a profound submission towards him, when they see him execute his judgments in the world, as he will shortly do upon the Chaldeans. The expression is taken from the reverent behaviour which inferiors shew by keeping silence in the presence of their betters; or it alludes to such a silence as is kept in courts of justice, when a judge pronounces the sentence. (See Job xxix. 9, 10. Psal. lxxvi. 8, 9. Zeph. i. 7. Zech. ii. 13.)

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet in this hymn recounts, in a poetical style, God's wonderful works, in conducting his people through

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the wilderness, and giving them possession of the promised land: from whence he encourages himself, and other pious persons, to rely upon God for making good his promises to their posterity in after-ages.

Ver. 1. *A PRAYER of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth.*] Or, as the marginal reading explains it, *According to the tunes called in Hebrew Shigionoth;* which were musical compositions used in the public service of the temple. (Compare the title of Psal. vii.) It is called a prayer, because it begins in the form of a supplication, although the following parts are rather in the nature of a hymn, or a thanksgiving.

Ver. 2. *O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make* [it] *known,* &c.] I have heard what thou hast revealed to me concerning thy judgments upon thy people: the terribleness of them strikes me with a reverential awe and dread; (compare ver. 16.) yet I earnestly beg of thee, if it be thy gracious will, to exert thy power, and renew thy former wonders, for the deliverance of thy people, before the seventy years determined for their captivity be expired: and in the midst of judgment to remember mercy.

Ver. 3. *God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran.*] The prophet, to encourage the faithful still to trust in God, recounts some remarkable instances of the protection he afforded their forefathers in the wilderness, where they were destitute of all visible means of sustaining themselves. First of all, he takes notice of the wonders he did for them when they came near the border of Edom, when the Edomites came out with a mighty force to oppose their passage: (see Numb. xxi. 20.) the like wonders he had shewed in their former journeys from Mount Sinai to Paran: Numb. x. 12. (Compare Deut. xxxiii. 2.)

Ibid. and Ver. 4. *His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. His brightness was as the light.*] He manifested his glory by that terrible appearance of his presence upon Mount Sinai, where the lightnings shone in the air, Exod. xix. 16. and the pillar of fire enlightened the earth, and conducted them in their journeys: Exod. xiii. 21.

Ver. 4. *He had horns coming out of his hands: and there was the hiding of his power.*] The Hebrew word *keren* signifies both *horns* and *rays of light.* (See Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30.) So the marginal reading here is to be preferred: *He had bright beams coming out of his side.* The Schechinah or symbol of the Divine presence had rays of light issuing out on every side, and yet that was but a hiding or veil to the Divine Majesty, who *covereth himself with light as with a garment,* Psal. civ. 2.

Ver. 5. *Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet.*] As thunder and lightnings are his harbingers; (see Psal. xviii. 8.) an emblem of his being *a consuming fire,* Deut. iv. 24. when he comes to execute vengeance upon his enemies; of which the Egyptian plagues, and the discomfiture of Sihon and Og, were a terrible proof.

Ver. 6. *He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations.*] Like a conqueror, he divided the land of Canaan among the tribes of Israel; having first scattered and discomfited the former inhabitants.

And the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow.] The mountains and hills are said to quake at God's presence, Nahum i. 5. so here the whole land of Canaan is said to tremble, and even the mountains themselves, the most solid and impregnable parts of it, because the hearts of the stoutest of the old inhabitants fainted and lost their courage. (See Josh. ii. 24.) [By the *mountains* and *hills* may be meant the greater and lesser principalities or kingdoms in the land of Canaan, see Psal. lxxii. 3.] The mountains and hills are spoken of as emblems of eternity, because time seems to make no change or alteration in them. (See Gen. xlix. 26. Deut. xxxiii. 15.)

His ways are from everlasting.] His purposes are decreed from all eternity, and will infallibly be executed in their appointed time.

Ver. 7. *I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction,* &c.] I beheld the Arabians, called Scenitæ, from their dwelling in tents, and their neighbours the Midianites, in great consternation, upon the approach of the Israelites towards their borders: (see Numb. xxii. 3. Exod. xv. 15.) whom they afterward destroyed in battle. (Numb. xxxi. 2, &c.)

Ver. 8. *Was the Lord displeased against the rivers?* &c.] When God dried up the channel of the Red Sea, (Exod. xiv. 22.) and afterward that of the river Jordan, (Josh. iii. 16, 17.) it was not out of any displeasure against the waters, but for the safety of his people, for whose deliverance he appeared in as illustrious a manner, as if he had been seen riding in the clouds, and carried *upon the wings of the wind,* as in a chariot. (Compare Deut. xxxiii. 26. Isa. xix. 1. Psal. lxviii. 4. civ. 3.)

Ver. 9. *Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word.*] Thou didst fight for Israel, and didst make bare thine arm in their defence, as evidently as if thou hadst been seen with a bow in thine hand; that thou mightest fulfil the oaths and promises thou hadst made to give the tribes of Israel full possession of Canaan: thy word being in itself as immutable, as when it is confirmed by the solemnity of an oath. (See Heb. vi. 18.)

Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.] Thou didst cleave the hard rocks, and the earth about them, and make the waters to run down in a great stream or channel, like a river, which followed them a great part of their journey. (See Psal. lxxviii. 15, 16. cv. 41. 1 Cor. x. 3.)

Ver. 10. *The mountains saw thee, and they trembled.*] Mount Sinai, and the hills adjoining, felt the effects of thy presence. (Compare Exod. xix. 16. 18. Judg. v. 4. Psal. lxviii. 8. lxxvii. 16. cxiv. 4.)

The overflowing of the water passed by.] Or rather, *The stream of water overflowed;* for in that sense the verb *abar* is often used. (See Isa. viii. 8. Dan. xi. 10.)

The deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high.] The waters gushed out of the bottom of the rock with a mighty noise, as if the fountains of the great deep had been opened, (Psal. lxxviii. 16.) and forced its way upward, as a man gets up an ascent by the strength of his hands.

Ver. 11. *The sun and moon stood still in their habitation.*] At the command of Joshua. (See Josh. x. 12.)

At the light of thine arrows they went, &c.] When the people marched against their enemies, God sent hailstones and lightnings from heaven to discomfit them. (See Josh. x. 11. and compare Psal. xviii. 14. cxliv. 6.) Or the words may be translated thus; *Thine arrows went at the light and*

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shining of thy glittering spear. Hailstones, the artillery of heaven, came down upon the heads of the enemies, accompanied with thunder and lightning. As the blaze of lightning is here elegantly compared to the *glittering of a spear*, so the lustre of arms is often compared by the poets, particularly Homer, to the flashes of lightning; so we read Iliad. xi. ver. 65.

Πᾶς δ' ἄρα χαλκῷ
Λάμφ', ὥςτ' στεροπὴ πατρὸς Διὸς Αἰγιόχοιο.

His brazen arms like flames of lightning shone,
Which the great Thunderer launches from his arm.

The same thought occurs again, Iliad. x. ver. 155. (See the note upon Ezek. xxi. 15.)

Ver. 12. *Thou didst march through the land* [of Canaan] *in indignation, thou didst thrash the heathen in anger.*] *i. e.* Thou didst subdue them, not only by giving success to the arms of the Israelites, but likewise thyself fighting against them from heaven, (ver. 11. 13. compare Isa. xxi. 10. xli. 15. Jer. li. 33.)

Ver. 13. *Thou wentest forth for salvation with thine anointed.*] With thy peculiar favourites, such as Moses, Joshua, and David, all set apart by thy appointment to be leaders and rulers of thy people. (Compare Psal. cv. 15.)

Thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked.] The heads (see ver. 14.) or confederate princes of the Canaanites. (See Josh. x. 3. xi. 1.)

By discovering the foundation to the neck.] Or, *Rasing the foundation*, as the word *aroth* signifies, Psal. cxxxvii. 7. by undermining them from bottom to top.

Ver. 14. *Thou didst strike through with his staves the head of his villages.*] Or, *Thou didst strike through the head of his warriors among his tribes*, or families. Thou didst discomfit all the petty kings of their several *clans*, or families, carrying on the war against Joshua. (See Josh. xii. 9, &c.) The word *perazav*, his *villages*, in our translation, the Septuagint translate *warriors*, or *generals:* and so they understand it, Judg. v. 7. 11. which sense agrees best with this place.

When they came out as a whirlwind to scatter me.] Armies are elsewhere compared to whirlwinds. (See Zech. ix. 14.)

Their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly.] The metaphor is taken from wild beasts, who carry their prey into their dens, and there devour it.

Ver. 15. *Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses*, &c.] Thou didst conduct thy people through the Red Sea, and the river Jordan, as safely as if they had rid on horseback. (See ver. 8.)

Ver. 16. *When I heard*, [thy judgment decreed against thy own people, ver. 2.] *my belly trembled*, &c.] I was all over in a shaking and consternation, and no strength remained in me. (Compare Jer. xxiii. 9. Dan. x. 8.)

That I might rest in the day of trouble, &c.] Noldius, p. 108. 110. of his Concordance, hath given the easiest sense of the latter part of the verse, translating it thus: *Yet I shall rest in the day of trouble, when he shall come up against the people, even he who shall invade them with his troops:* the prophet speaks in the person of the pious man; I shall rest secure under the Divine protection, when the Chaldeans shall come to invade Judea. (See ver. 17, 18.)

Ver. 17, 18. *Though the fig-tree shall not blossom*, &c.] Though all outward means of nourishment or preservation should fail, yet will I still trust and depend upon God's promises.

Ver. 19. *The Lord will make my feet like hinds' feet, and will make me walk upon my high places.*] This verse is taken out of Psal. xviii. 33. He will restore my former strength, nimbleness, and agility, in war, and make me again possessor of the chief places of strength in my native country. (See Deut. xxxii. 13. xxxiii. 29. Psal. xviii. 33.)

To the chief singer [or musician] *on my stringed instruments.*] This hymn was designed to be sung in the temple-service, (see ver. 1.) and for that purpose was delivered to the chief musician, to be set to musical notes. (Compare the title of the fourth Psalm.) This direction might probably be given by order of king Josiah.

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ZEPHANIAH.

PREFACE.

THIS Prophet lived in the reign of Josiah, as he himself informs us, and prophesieth chiefly against Judah, who continued very corrupt, notwithstanding the king's pious zeal for reformation, and the good example he gave to his subjects.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet denounces God's severe judgments against Judah for their idolatry, and other heinous sins.

Ver. 1. *THE word of the Lord that came to Zephaniah, the son of Cushi—the son of Hizkiah.*] Hizkiah is read with the same points in the Hebrew with Hezekiah, the name of the king of Judah: but Zephaniah being here reckoned as the fourth by descent from Hizkiah, that person cannot be the same with king Hezekiah, there being not a sufficient distance of time between them for four descents.

Ver. 2, 3. *I will utterly consume all things from off the land—I will consume man and beast,* &c.] A general desolation is threatened, by enumerating the particulars that shall be involved in it. (See the note upon Hos. iv. 3.)

Ver. 3. *And the stumbling-blocks with the wicked.*] Or, *Of the wicked;* for the particle *eth* often denotes the genitive case. (See Noldius, p. 122.) Stumbling-blocks are the same with idols, called *the stumbling-blocks of iniquity,* Ezek. vii. 19. xiv. 3, 4.

Ver. 4. *And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place.*] Those altars, or places of worship, dedicated to the service of Baal, which escaped the reformation of king Josiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 5. compare Jer. iii. 6.

And the names of the Chemarims with the priests.] Or, *The names of the idolatrous priests;* for so the word *Chemarim* is translated, 2 Kings xxiii. 5. (compare Hos. x. 5.) I will destroy these together with the priests of the tribe of Levi, who have joined in the worship of idols. (See Ezek. xliv. 10.)

Ver. 5. *And them that worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops.*] See the note upon Jer. xix. 13.

And them that worship and swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham.] That join the worship of idols to that of the true God, who is *a jealous God,* and will not admit of any rival in his worship. (See Hos. iv. 15.) Malcham is the same with Moloch, to whom the people of Judah continued to offer their children, as Jeremiah upbraids them, vii. 31. xix. 5. notwithstanding the reformation that Josiah had made, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Swearing is an act of religious worship, or a solemn invocation of God, as a witness and a judge, (see Deut. x. 20.) and therefore expressly forbid to be used to idols, (Josh. xxiii. 7.)

Ver. 6. *And them that are turned back from the Lord; and those that have not sought the Lord.*] Both those that are apostates to idolatry, and such as live without any sense of religion, and *without God in the world.*

Ver. 7. *Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God: for the day of the Lord is at hand.*] Keep silence in token of an awful reverence towards God, now he is coming to execute his judgments upon the land. (Compare Psal. lxxvi. 8, 9. Habak. ii. 20. Zech. ii. 13.) *Humble thyself under his mighty hand,* without repining or murmuring at his corrections, which thy sins do justly deserve. (See Psal. xxxix. 9.)

For the Lord hath prepared his sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.] The slaughter of the wicked is called *a sacrifice,* because it is in some sense an atonement to God's justice. (Compare Isa. xxxiv. 6. Jer. xlvi. 10. Ezek. xxxix. 17. Rev. xix. 17.) The latter part of the sentence alludes to the custom of those that offered sacrifice, which was to invite their friends to partake of the feast which accompanied it. So God will call the Chaldeans to have a share in this slaughter.

Ver. 8. *I will punish the princes, and the king's children.*] As having been the encouragers of idolatry, by their authority and ill example. Both the sons of Josiah who succeeded him in the throne, are said to *have done evil in the sight of the Lord,* 2 Kings xxiii. 32. 37.

And all such as are clothed with strange apparel.] There were peculiar vestments belonging to the worship of each idol. (See 2 Kings x. 22.) So in aftertimes there were peculiar habits belonging to the priests of Saturn, and priestesses of Ceres, which are mentioned in the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas, cap. 18. and in Tertullian, de Pallio, cap. 4. The text may likewise be explained of such men as wore women's apparel, and such women as wore that belonging to men; which was contrary to an express law, Deut. xxii. 5. and was a rite observed in the worship of some idols.

Ver. 9. *In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold.*] Or rather, *Leap over the threshold.* The expression probably denotes some idolatrous rite, like that which was practised in the temple of Dagon, where the *priests did not tread upon the threshold,* 1 Sam. v. 5. To this sense, the Chaldee paraphrast interprets it of those, that walk after the laws or rites of the Philistines. Others expound it of those, who enter into other men's houses, and take away their goods by violence; according to what follows: *who fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.*

Ver. 10. *And it shall come to pass in that day—that*

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there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish-gate.] At that time, (see ver. 12.) there shall be an outcry of the Babylonish army coming to invade the city on the side of the fish-gate; *i. e.* the gate which stood near the fish-market. (See 2 Chron. xxxiii. 14. Nehem. iii. 3.)

And a howling from the second gate.] Or rather, *From the middle part of the city.* (See 2 Kings xxii. 14.)

And a great crashing from the hills.] From the mountains of Sion and Moriah, whereon the temple and the king's palace were built. (See 2 Chron. iii. 1.)

Ver. 11. *Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh.*] A part, or street, of Jerusalem: the Chaldee interprets it of the inhabitants near the brook Kidron.

For all the merchant people are cut down, &c.] They that carry on their trades by going to marts or fairs, with great sums of ready money. The original reads, *The people of Canaan,* which word signifies a merchant: (Hos. xii. 7.) but the Chaldee understands it of those who resemble the Canaanites in their idolatries and corrupt manners: so Judah's mother is called *a Hittite,* and her father *an Amorite,* because they did after the works of the Canaanites, the ancient inhabitants of the land, Ezek. xvi. 45.

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles.*] I will deliver up Jerusalem into the hands of the Chaldeans, who shall let no corner of it escape them, but shall diligently search the houses, and plunder the wealth of them. (See the following verse.)

And punish the men that are settled on their lees, &c.] Who having lived securely in ease and plenty, (compare Jer. xlviii. 11.) have not *God in all their thoughts,* but imagine that he doth not concern himself with the affairs of the world, and that neither good nor evil is brought to pass by his providence.

Ver. 13. *Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, and not inhabit them,* &c.] The enemy shall plunder their goods, and then demolish their houses; so that they shall not enjoy these possessions which they have gotten by fraud or violence. (See ver. 9. and Amos v. 11.)

Ver. 14. *The great day of the Lord is near*—(compare Joel ii. 1. 11.) *even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.*] A great noise and distraction shall attend the taking of Jerusalem. (See ver. 10. Isa. xxii. 5.) Some translate the latter part of the sentence thus, *The voice of the day of the Lord is bitter: then the mighty man crieth out.* The adverb *sham,* translated *there,* signifies time as well as place. (See the note upon Isa. xlviii. 16. Hos. ii. 15.)

Ver. 15. *That day is a day of wrath, of trouble and distress,* &c.] See ver. 18. Joel ii. 2. Amos v. 18.

Ver. 16. *A day of the trumpet and alarm.*] See Jer. iv. 19.

Ver. 17. *And I will bring distress upon men, and they shall walk as blind men,* &c.] Not knowing whither to go, or which way to take for safety. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 29. Isa. lix. 10.)

And their blood shall be poured out as the dust, and their flesh as the dung.] Or, *Their carcasses as the dung:* so the Chaldee explains the word *flesh.* The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be slain in the streets of the city, and their carcasses left there to rot and putrefy.

Ver. 18. *Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them.*] This is spoken of the merchants and rich citizens. (See ver. 11—13. and compare Ezek. vii. 19.)

But the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy.] God's vengeance is frequently compared to fire; see Nahum i. 6. This shall consume the land and its inhabitants for their heinous offences, and chiefly for their idolatry; because that sin does peculiarly entrench upon his honour, which is incommunicable to others, whereupon he is called a *jealous God,* Exod. xx. 5. xxxiv. 14.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet exhorts the Jews to repentance before God's judgments overtake them; which he likewise denounces against the neighbouring countries, the Philistines, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia, and Assyria; which were all subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, either before or after the captivity of the Jews. (See Jer. xxv. 20—22. 26. Ezek. xxv. xxix. xxxi. and Dr. Prideaux, under the twenty-first, thirty-first, and thirty-second years of Nebuchadnezzar.)

Ver. 1. *GATHER yourselves together.*] Assemble yourselves in order to make a public humiliation. (See Joel ii. 16.)

O nation, not desired.] The Greek and the Chaldee interpret it, *O nation, that will not receive instruction,* and is not to be amended but by the discipline of God's judgments. Glassius (Grammat. p. 410.) renders it to the same sense, *O nation, not to be moved with desire; i. e.* of growing better. The word *niksaph* is taken for *having a desire* or *longing,* Gen. xxxi. 30. Psal. lxxxiv. 2.

Ver. 2. *Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff.*] The words are differently translated by interpreters, but much to the same sense: they may be rendered nearer to the Hebrew thus, *Before the day bring forth the decree, which shall pass away, as chaff* is dispersed before the wind. The judgments of God, consuming the wicked, are often compared to the dispersing of chaff. (See Job xxi. 18. Psal. i. 3. Isa. xvii. 13. Hos. xiii. 3.)

Ver. 3. *Seek righteousness, seek meekness.*] Continue to seek and practise them. (Compare Psal. xxxiv. 14.)

It may be ye shall be hid from the Lord's anger.] This is the most likely way of securing the Divine protection in the time of a general destruction. (See the note upon Jer. xxxvi. 3.) Such a protection is elsewhere expressed by being *hid* or *covered* under the shadow of his wings. (Compare Psal. xxxii. 7. xci. 1.)

Ver. 4. *For Gaza shall be desolate, and Ashkelon a desolation.*] There will be no escaping into the neighbouring countries, such as the Philistines are, in particular; for their cities shall likewise become a prey to the forces of Nebuchadnezzar. (See Jer. xlvii. 1. with the Argument to that chapter.)

They shall drive out Ashdod at noon-day.] The same forces will take the courage to attack Ashdod (another city of the Philistines, 1 Sam. v. 1.) in the open day, and not to betake themselves to nightly stratagems. (See Jer. vi. 4. xv. 8.)

Ver. 5. *Woe to the inhabitants of the sea-coasts, the nation of the Cherethites.*] The Philistines who live upon

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the coast of the Mediterranean Sea; (compare Ezek. xxv. 16.) called there as well as here, Cherethites, or Cherethims. The word is translated Κρῆτες, *Cretans*, by the LXX. in this and other places where it is found: they are supposed to have been a colony removed from Crete to Palestine. (See the note upon Jer. xlvii. 4.)

O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, &c.] The Canaanites, properly so called, are the same with the Philistines, and seated in that part of Palestine. (See Josh. xiii. 3.)

Ver. 6. *And the sea-coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds*, &c.] A proverbial description of an utter desolation. (Compare ver. 14, 15. and see the note upon Isa. xiii. 20. xvii. 2.)

Ver. 7. *And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah*, &c.] The sea-coast (ver. 5.) shall in after-times belong to the Jews, who shall possess all the Philistines' country: as it appears they did in the first times of Christianity. (See Acts viii. 26. 40.) Those that returned from the captivity are called a *remnant*, Hag. i. 12. ii. 2.

They shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening.] The words are an allusion to what is said ver. 6. As the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, &c. were places for wild Arabs, or other wandering people to pitch their tents, and feed their flocks; so they shall hereafter become the settled habitations of the Jews. (Compare Isa. lxv. 10.

For [or, when] *the Lord shall visit them, and turn away their captivity.*] What is promised in this verse, was partly fulfilled after their return from Babylon, and may hereafter receive a farther completion. (See Obad. ver. 19. and the note there.)

Ver. 8. *I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon.*] These countries were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem. (See the Argument to Jer. xlviii.) They are threatened with destruction, both here and Jer. xlviii. 17. xlix. 1. and Ezek. xxv. 3. 8. for their insulting over the Jews in their calamities.

And magnified themselves against their border.] Have invaded the territories of the Jews, when they were carried captive, (see Jer. xlix. 1.) and used the inhabitants with great cruelty, as they had done in former times. (See Amos i. 13.)

Ver. 9. *Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah*, &c.] Proverbial expressions of utter desolation. (See Deut. xxix. 23. Isa. xiii. 19. xxxiv. 13. Jer. xlix. 18. l. 40.)

And a perpetual desolation.] Never more to be possessed by its former inhabitants.

And the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.] Judas Maccabeus and his brethren subdued the Ammonites, as appears from 1 Macc. v. 6. But this and the seventh verse will receive their utmost completion at the general restoration of the Jewish nation: those that then escape, and return from their several dispersions, are elsewhere called by the name of the *residue* and the *remnant*. (Compare iii. 13. and see the note upon Micah iv. 7.)

Ver. 10. *This shall they have for their pride*, &c.] See Isa. xvi. 6. Jer. xlviii. 29.

Ver. 11. *For he will famish all the gods of the earth.*] He will deprive them of their worship and sacrifices, which the gentiles thought to be the food of their gods. (See Deut. xxxii. 38.) The LXX. render it, *He will destroy their gods.* The destruction of idolatry is usually mentioned when the prophets describe the flourishing state of the church. (See the note upon Micah v. 13, 14.)

And men shall worship him, every man from his place.] Or, *In his place.* And so the phrase may best be rendered Ezek. iii. 12. (See Noldius, p. 553.) Men shall worship him every where, and not only in Jerusalem. (Compare Mal. i. 11. John iv. 21.)

Even all the isles of the heathen.] Or, *The isles of the gentiles*, as the phrase is translated, Gen. x. 5. (See the note upon Isa. xi. 11. xli. 1.) The Jews call all places *islands*, to which they went by sea.

Ver. 12. *Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword.*] Ye shall be subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, who is *a sword* in my hand; (Psal. xvii. 10.) *i. e.* an instrument to execute my vengeance. The Ethiopians seem to comprehend the Egyptians too, whose confederates they were, and so underwent the same fate with them, when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Egypt. (See Jer. xlvi. 9. Ezek. xxx. 5. 9.)

Ver. 13. *And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation.*] As Nebuchadnezzar subdued the countries lying southward of Judea, Egypt, and Ethiopia, (ver. 12.) so will he extend his conquests towards the north, and destroy Savacus the king of Assyria, whose royal seat was Nineveh. (See the Preface to Nahum, and the note upon iii. 18.) This action preceded the desolations mentioned in the foregoing verses. Archbishop Usher placeth it in the sixteenth year of king Josiah, and Dr. Prideaux in the twenty-ninth year of the same reign.

And dry like a wilderness.] The inhabitants of Nineveh are compared to *many waters*, Nahum ii. 8. She shall be now exhausted of her people, and be uninhabited like a wilderness.

Ver. 14. *And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her*, &c.] See ver. 6.

All the beasts of the nations.] The Chaldee interprets it, *The several kinds of wild beasts:* as if the Hebrew *goji, nations*, were to be understood of the several species of wild beasts, as the word is used of several sorts of caterpillars, Joel i. 6. In like manner the ants are called *a people*, Prov. xxx. 25.

Both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows.] These birds frequent desolate and forsaken places, and shall take up their habitation in the ruinous houses of that once populous city. (Compare Isa. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 11. 14.)

For he shall uncover the cedar work.] The fine carved work or ceilings made of cedar, (see Jer. xxii. 14.) shall be exposed to the injuries of the weather, and so quickly come to ruin.

Ver. 15. *This is the rejoicing city, that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me.*] Its inhabitants indulged themselves in their ease and pleasures, and they arrived at that degree of presumption, as to fancy that no strength or power could bring them down from their height, or make them cease to be the capital city of the

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world. Babylon is charged with the same degree of pride and carnal security, Isa. xlvii. 8.

Every one that passeth by shall hiss, and wag his head.] See Nahum iii. 19.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Jerusalem is severely reproved and threatened for her sins: yet the righteous are comforted with the hopes of a general conversion and restoration of the nation in God's due time.

Ver. 1. *WOE unto her that is filthy* [or glutinous] *and polluted, to the oppressing city!*] The city Jerusalem, which is defiled with the sins of luxury and cruelty. (See ver. 3, 4.)

Ver. 2. *She obeyed not the voice.*] Of God's messengers, the prophets.

Ver. 3. *Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves.*] Like so many beasts of prey, they devour the people by oppression and injustice. (Compare Ezek. xxii. 27. Micah iii. 9—11. Habak. i. 8. Zech. x. 13.)

They gnaw not the bones until the morrow.] They devour all presently, and leave not so much as the bones till the next day, as the most voracious creatures commonly do.

Ver. 4. *Her prophets are light and treacherous persons.*] This is to be understood of the false prophets, who seduced the people by lying pretences to inspiration. (See Jer. xxiii. 11. 32. Hos. ix. 7. Micah iii. 11.) The LXX. often render the Hebrew *nabi, prophet,* by ψευδοπροφήτης, *false prophet,* in Jeremiah, and Zech. xiii. 2.

Her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.] They have presumed to attend upon my service in the temple after they had polluted themselves with idolatry, and thereby have profaned my holy place; (see i. 4.) and have broken the ordinances of my law, by not observing the differences that it prescribes between what is clean and unclean. (See Ezek. xxii. 26.)

Ver. 5. *The just Lord is in the midst thereof, he will not do iniquity.*] The inhabitants of Jerusalem presume upon God's protection, having placed his name in their temple: so they say, Micah iii. 11. *Is not the Lord among us?* or *in the midst of us,* as the word is here translated; but they should withal consider, that he is just and holy, who will neither do iniquity, nor suffer it, without calling the offender to account.

Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.] He doth not fail to give us every day fresh evidences of his justice, though the wicked continue hardened in their sins, and are grown past shame. (See Jer. vi. 13. Micah ii. 6.) The expression, *every morning,* alludes to the custom of administering justice in the morning. (See Psal. ci. 8. Jer. xxi. 12.)

Ver. 6. *I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I have made their streets waste,* &c.] I have executed my vengeance upon that great city Nineveh, (ii. 13.) and have brought my judgments nearer to you, by giving up your brethren of the ten tribes into the hands of Shalmaneser, who hath put an end to that kingdom, and hath carried its inhabitants captives into a strange land. (See 2 Kings xvii. 6.)

Ver. 7. *I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction.*] God is introduced as speaking after the manner of men, and expecting what effect such proceedings might in reason have produced. (Compare Isa. v. 4. Jer. viii. 6.) In this sense we may most probably understand that expression of Isaiah, (lxiii. 8.) *He said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour: i. e.* God might justly conclude, that after such experience of his goodness, they would not prove false or treacherous to him.

So their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them.] Or, *Whereinsoever I punished them.* (See Noldius, p. 175.) I might reasonably expect, that lesser corrections might reform them; and I need not be forced to proceed to such an utter excision, as I executed upon the ten tribes. (See ver. 6.)

But they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.] They still increased their corruptions, notwithstanding all the advances king Josiah made to a general reformation. (See the notes upon i. 4, 5.) The phrase, *rising early,* denotes diligence and assiduity. (See Jer. vii. 13. xxv. 3. xxxv. 15.)

Ver. 8. *Therefore wait upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I arise to the prey,* &c.] The connexion of this verse with what went before would better appear, if we translate the particle *laken, nevertheless;* as it plainly signifies Jer. v. 2. Micah v. 3. and in other places. Notwithstanding these provocations, saith God, I exhort the godly among you to expect the fulfilling the promises I have made of restoring the Jewish nation to my wonted favour, in the latter ages of the world; in order to which great *crisis,* I will execute remarkable judgments upon the unbelievers and disobedient. (See the note upon Micah v. 5.)

For my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms to pour out upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger.] This may perhaps be meant of the same general summons which Joel speaks of, when the nations shall be gathered *into the valley of Jehoshaphat.* (See Joel iii. 2. 12. and the notes there.)

For all the earth shall be devoured by the fire of my jealousy.] The tender regard I have for my honour, which hath particularly been injured by that idolatry which is spread over the world, will provoke me to execute my vengeance upon the whole earth. (See i. 18.)

Ver. 9. *For then I will turn to the people a pure language,* &c.] Or, *I will restore to the people a pure language; i. e.* I will turn them from their idolatry and other wickedness, (see ver. 13.) to glorify me *with one mind and one mouth.* The same thing is expressed by *speaking the language of Canaan,* Isa. xix. 18. This is a blessing reserved for the latter ages, after the conversion of the Jews, and the coming in of the fulness of the gentiles, when *there shall be one Lord, and his name one,* Zech. xiv. 9.

To serve him with one consent.] The Hebrew reads, *With one shoulder.* The metaphor is taken from beasts drawing together under one yoke; or men's setting their shoulders together to carry the same burden.

Ver. 10. *For from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.*] The Jews who are dispersed into the most distant countries, such as was Ethiopia, which lay beyond Egypt, shall come into the Christian church, and make their

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religious acknowledgments there. The expression, *From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia*, may be translated, *From the borders of the rivers of Ethiopia*, both here and Isa. xviii. 1. where the same phrase occurs; the word in the Hebrew signifying indifferently the *hither*, or *farther* side of a river. Ethiopia is described in both places as lying among the rivers, which may probably be understood of the several sluices and channels which the inhabitants are forced to keep open, thereby to prevent the Nile from overflowing their own country, or Egypt. (See Dr. Heylin's Geography, in Ethiopia.)

The daughter of my dispersed, is the same with *my dispersed*, as the *daughter of Zion* is equivalent to *Zion*. (See the note upon Jer. iv. 31.) The phrase of *bringing an offering*, is taken from the sacrifices and oblations brought to the temple; and is in other places of the prophets applied to those that come into the Christian church. (See Isa. xviii. 7. lx. 6, 7. 9. Mal. i. 11.)

Ver. 11. *In that day thou shalt not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me.*] Or, *Thou shalt not be put to shame for all thy doings.* (Compare ver. 19.) Thou shalt not be made a public example by such remarkable judgments, (see ver. 15.) which have formerly made thee a reproach among the heathen. (See Amos iii. 2. Micah vi. 16. and the notes there.)

For I take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride; and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.] I will purge out of thee those hypocrites who continued in their sins, and relied upon their outward privileges, such as being of the stock of Abraham, or having the temple of the Lord placed among them, as if these would secure them from guilt or punishment; and thereupon despised the gentiles as not worthy of the same favours with themselves. (See the notes upon Micah iii. 11.)

Ver. 12. *I will also leave in thee an afflicted and poor people.*] Or, *A meek and poor people:* the blessings of the gospel are peculiarly promised to the *poor*. (See Isa. xi. 4. xiv. 32. lxi. 1. Zech. xi. 11.) Christ and his apostles apply these promises to those that were converted by their preaching, Matt. v. 3. xi. 5. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. James ii. 5. which texts are meant of such as are endued with a true spirit of poverty, such as consists in a lowliness of mind, contempt of the world, and a resigned will. Afflictions are very useful to produce such a temper of mind, and therefore are often the lot of true disciples. (See Acts xiv. 22. Heb. xii. 7. 1 Pet. i. 7.) By the *afflicted* may be meant those that *come out of great tribulation*. (See Ezek. xxxviii. 8. and the note upon Isa. iv. 2.)

Ver. 13. *The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies*, &c.] The *remnant of Israel* is explained in the note upon Micah iv. 7. These shall be holy; the *rebels being purged out of them*, (Ezek. xx. 38.) as Jerusalem itself shall then be holy. (Compare Isa. xxxv. 8. lx. 21. Joel iii. 17. 21. Zech. xiv. 21. and see the notes there.)

For [or, therefore] *they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.*] The great Shepherd the Messias shall both feed and protect them. (Compare Ezek. xxxiv. 28. Micah iv. 4. v. 4. vii. 14.)

Ver. 14. *Sing, O daughter of Zion*, &c.] These hymns of joy properly belong to the times of the gospel, and especially to the triumphant state of the church. (Compare Isa. xii. 6. liv. 1. Zech. ii. 10. xi. 9.)

Ver. 15. *The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy.*] God hath removed thine enemies, who were the instruments of his vengeance.

The King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee.] He gives manifest tokens of his presence in thee, and protection over thee. (Compare ver. 5. 17. Isa. iv. 5, 6. Rev. vii. 15. xxi. 3.)

Thou shalt not see evil any more.] For all thine enemies shall be subdued. (See the former part of the verse, and compare Isa. xxxv. 10. li. 22. Joel iii. 17. Rev. xxi. 4.)

Ver. 16. *Let not thine hands be slack.*] Or *weak*, as the word is rendered in the parallel text, Isa. xxxv. 3. The prophet *comforts the feeble-minded*, those whose spirits were sunk under their former afflictions; and exhorts them to perform their duty with cheerfulness and diligence, as being assured of God's assistance and protection. (Compare Heb. xii. 12.)

Ver. 17. *He will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love.*] He will take pleasure in doing thee good. (Compare Deut. xxx. 9. Isa. lxii. 5. lxv. 19. Jer. xxxii. 41.) He will *rest*, or take satisfaction in continuing his favour towards thee. (Compare Hos. xiv. 4.)

Ver. 18. *I will gather them that were sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee*, &c.] I will assemble those Israelites who are dispersed in their several captivities, both that of Babylon and those of following times, who mourn for the loss of the public assemblies, (compare Lam. ii. 6.) and were grieved at the reproaches wherewith their enemies upbraided them, as if they were utterly forsaken of God. (Compare Psal. xlii. 3.)

Ver. 19. *I will save her that halteth, and gather her that is driven out.*] See Micah iv. 6, 7.

And I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.] God will give visible tokens of his care over them, in gathering them from their several dispersions over the world, and bringing them back into their own country. (See Ezek. xxxviii. 8. 12. and the following verse.)

Ver. 20. *At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you.*] I will gather you from your several dispersions, in order to bring you back into your own land. (Compare Isa. xi. 12. xxvii. 12. lvi. 8. Ezek. xxviii. 25. xxxiv. 13. Amos ix. 14.)

For I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes.] I will make you the subject of men's praise and admiration, who shall be induced to glorify God, when they shall see the wonderful works he hath wrought for you, in restoring you from your several dispersions, and giving you a joyful meeting together.

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HAGGAI.

PREFACE.

OF what family this Prophet was, he hath given us no intimation: but the time when he prophesied he has distinctly noted, *viz.* in the sixth year of Darius Hystaspes. The occasion of this prophecy was the stop that was put to the building of the temple, after the foundation had been laid, according to the commandment of Cyrus, about seventeen years before.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet reproveth the people's delays in rebuilding the temple, and tells them, this their neglect was the cause they prospered no better: he encourageth them to set about it, and promises God's assistance in it.

Ver. 1. *IN the second year of Darius the king.*] Compare Ezra iv. 24. v. 12. This is the same Darius who is called in the heathen writers Darius Hystaspes; as shall be proved in the note upon ii. 3. and Zech. i. 12.

Came the word of the Lord by Haggai unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah.] Called Zorobabel the son of Salathiel, Matt. i. 12. Luke iii. 27. He was grandson to Jeconiah king of Judah, who was carried captive to Babylon; (see 1 Chron. iii. 17. 19.) whom king Cyrus made Æchmalotarches, or *governor of the Jews*, who returned from the captivity; as being the eldest person of the royal family: he had the name of Shezbazzar given him by the Chaldeans; (see Ezra i. 8. compared with ii. 2.) as Daniel was called by them Belteshazzar, (Dan. i. 7.)

And unto Joshua the son of Josedech the high-priest.] Called Jeshua in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah: his father Josedech, or Jehozadah, was carried captive to Babylon. (See 1 Chron. vi. 15.)

Ver. 2. *This people say, The time is not come that the Lord's house should be built.*] They pretended they had not the encouragement and protection of the king of Persia. This prophecy seems to be delivered before Darius had granted his decree for building the temple. (Compare Ezra v. 1. with vi. 1.)

Ver. 4. *Is it time for you—to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?*] You complain of the times; yet they have not been so difficult, but that you have found means and opportunity to build fine houses for yourselves, though ye are content to let the house of God lie in ruins. It argues a great contempt of God and religion, when men think no cost or finery too much to bestow upon themselves, and the meanest accommodation good enough for the service of God.

Ver. 5, 6. *Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little,* &c.] Consider both your ingratitude in thus neglecting to restore my house and worship, and what you have got by these your dealings, *viz.* how none of your undertakings thrive, or are successful; nor do you enjoy the fruits of your labours. (See Micah vi. 15. compare Ezek. viii. 10.)

He that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.] Whatever gains he makes, they are followed by such losses, as leave him no richer than he was before: or provisions are so dear, (see ver. 11.) that men can but just live by their labour.

Ver. 8. *Go ye up to the mountains, and bring wood, and build the house.*] Go to any of the forests upon the mountains, (see Nehem. ii. 8.) and cut down timber to carry on the building. They entered upon the work before they had any decree from Darius to forward the work. (See Ezra v. 2, 3.) It is probable, that afterward they had leave to fetch cedar from Mount Lebanon. (See Ezra iii. 7.)

And I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified.] Or, *I will place my glory there,* as the Chaldee expounds it. (See ii. 7.)

Ver. 9. *Ye looked for much, and it came to little.*] See ver. 6. and ii. 16.

And when ye brought it home, I did blow [or, I had blown] *upon it.*] I had blasted the fruits of the earth, while they were in the field. (See ver. 11. and ii. 17.)

Because of my house that is waste, and ye run every man to his own house.] Ye make what haste ye can to build your own houses, and let mine lie in ruins.

Ver. 10, 11. *The heaven is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit,* &c.] I have punished you with great drought, wherein the dew itself ceases to fall. (See 1 Kings xvii. 1.) This blasted and withered the fruits of the earth; a curse formerly denounced against you for your disobedience. (See Lev. xix. 24. Deut. xxviii. 23.)

Ver. 12. *Then Zerubbabel,* &c.] Compare Ezra v. 2.

Ver. 13. *Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger.*] Or, prophet. (Compare Isa. xliv. 26. Mal. iii. 1.)

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet encourageth the builders by a promise, that the glory of the second temple should be greater than that of the first; and that in the following year God would bless them with a fruitful harvest. In the conclusion he foretells the setting up the kingdom of Christ, under the name of Zerubbabel.

Ver. 3. *WHO is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?* &c.] When the foundation of the house was

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laid in the second year of Cyrus, many of the ancient men that had seen the first house, wept to see how much the second temple would fall short of the glory of the first. (Ezra iii. 12.) The second year of Cyrus was fifty-three years after the destruction of the first temple; so the oldest men among those that returned home might very well remember how glorious that was. The prophecy was uttered fifteen years after the foundations of the second temple were laid; so there might some still survive that saw the first. This is an evident proof, that the Darius mentioned in this prophecy must be Darius Hystaspes: for they that suppose Darius Nothus to be here meant, must allow the distance of one hundred and sixty-six years between the destruction of the first temple and the time of this prophecy: and it cannot be imagined, that any number of men could be capable of comparing the difference between the two temples, at that distance of time: see this farther proved in the note upon Zech. i. 12.

Ver. 5. *According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth with you.*] I will fulfil those promises I made with you, when I delivered you out of Egypt; that, upon your obedience, I would not *leave you, nor forsake you,* but guide and prosper you in all your undertakings. (See Nehem. ix. 20. Isa. lxiii. 11.)

Ver. 6. *Yet once it is a little while.*] Or, *Once more,* as the LXX. render it, whom St. Paul follows, Heb. xii. 26. The phrase implies such an alteration as shall not give way to any farther change, as the apostle there expounds it. The space of time from this prophecy to the coming of the Messias may be called *a little while,* in comparison of the several ages expired since the first promise of a Redeemer. A learned prelate, in his excellent Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, (p. 88.) translates the words to this sense: *After one kingdom* [*viz.* the Grecian, which succeeded the Persian monarchy, at this time subsisting] *it is but a little while; and* [or, after that] *I will shake all nations,* &c.

I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land.] Great commotions and changes in the world are expressed by shaking the heavens and the earth. (See Ezek. xxv. 15. xxxviii. 19. Joel iii. 16.) These expressions may denote here the great commotions that should be in the Roman empire (see the last note), from the death of Julius Cæsar till near the birth of Christ: or it may in general signify the introducing such a kingdom or religion, of which the Messiah is to be the head; which shall in the end *break in pieces,* and destroy all the other dominions of the world. (See the notes upon ver. 21, 22.)

Ver. 7. *And the Desire of all nations shall come.*] He shall come to this house, that shall answer the wishes and desires of mankind, by supplying all those defects that hindered them in the performance of their duty. Such a guide and director, as the wisest men among the heathens wished for, and whose coming was the *hope of Israel,* and completion of all the promises made to their fathers: Acts xxvi. 6. xxviii. 20. see Gen. xii. 3. xlix. 10. where the old translations read the latter part of the verse to this sense: *His* (or, to him) *shall be the expectation of the people,* Mal. iii. 1.

And I will fill this house with glory.] Though it wants the *cloud of glory* overshadowing the mercy-seat, which was a symbol of the Divine presence peculiar to Solomon's temple, (see Psal. lxxx. 1.) yet I will honour this second temple with a much greater glory; *viz.* the presence of the Messiah, in whom shall *dwell all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,* Colos. ii. 9. where he shall publish his saving doctrine to the world. (See Luke xix. 47. xx. 1. xxi. 38. John xviii. 20.)

Ver. 8. *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.*] Solomon's temple was more richly adorned with silver and gold than this; and I, that am the Lord of all the world, could easily command the riches of it, and bring them together, for beautifying this my house, if I took delight in richness of ornaments.

Ver. 9. *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former; and* [or, for] *in this place will I give peace.*] The glory of this second temple shall exceed that of the former, not in riches or costly ornaments, but in this respect, that there the *Prince of peace* shall make his appearance, and the *gospel of peace* shall be preached and published. (See Isa. ix. 6. Micah v. 5. Eph. ii. 14.) The modern Jews expect a third temple, in which this prophecy will be verified; whereas the prophet plainly speaks of the same temple which they then saw, and *was in their eyes as nothing,* in comparison of the former. The ancient Jews speak of the temple, from the time of Zerubbabel to its destruction under Vespasian, as one and the same temple; particularly Josephus, de Bello Jud. lib. viii. cap. 18. (See the abovecited treatise.)

Ver. 11. *Ask now the priests concerning the law.*] Whose office it was to *put a difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean,* Lev. x. 10.

Ver. 12. *If one bear* [or, carry] *holy flesh in the skirt of his garment,* &c.] By the rules of the law, things immediately dedicated to God's service did convey some degree of holiness to common things that touched them; so the *altar sanctified the gift* that was laid upon it, Exod. xxix. 37. and *whatsoever touched the flesh of the sin-offering was holy,* Lev. vi. 27. But this rule did not extend so far as to make the garment that touched any of the offerings capable of conveying holiness to any thing else.

Ver. 13. *If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these things, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.*] The law was plain in that case, (see Numb. xix. 11.) The least defect is sufficient to make a thing evil or sinful; whereas to make it good and perfect, a concurrence of all good qualities is requisite.

Ver. 14. *So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the Lord,* &c.] In like manner, saith God, the inward contempt and disregard of my worship, which this people discover by their backwardness to carry on the building of my temple, makes every thing they undertake, and even the sacrifices they offer on my altar, hateful and unacceptable.

Ver. 15. *Consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord.*] From the time that a stop had been put to the building of the temple, after the first foundations of it were laid. (Compare Ezra v. 3.)

Ver. 16. *Since those days were, when one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten,* &c.] The fruits of the earth did not yield their usual increase, because of the unkindly seasons wherewith I punished them. (See the following verse, and i. 2. Zech. viii. 10.)

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Ver. 17. *Yet ye turned not unto me, saith the Lord.*] Ye did not lay my judgments to heart, nor consider that they were inflicted for your sin, in neglecting to rebuild my temple, and restore my worship in it.

Ver. 18. *Consider now from this day and upward,* &c.] The word *mollah, upward,* signifies likewise *forward,* (see 1 Sam. xvi. 13.) and so it should be translated here. In the fifteenth verse the prophet exhorted them to reflect upon the calamities they had suffered from the time the building of the temple was left off: now he bids them look forward from the day the building was renewed, (see i. 15.) and they would find a visible change of their affairs for the better.

Even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid.] The prophet expresses the carrying on of the building as if it were a new foundation, because the work had been so long interrupted. (Compare Zech. viii. 9.)

Ver. 19. *Is the seed yet in the barn,* &c.] Is the harvest already laid up in the barn? or any fruits of the earth gathered in? No, certainly; this is but the ninth month (answering to our November), when no judgment can be made what will be the increase of the year following: yet from this time I promise you the blessing of a fruitful year, as an encouragement to you to carry on the building. (Compare Zech. viii. 12.)

Ver. 21. *Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah.*] The same title which is given to him, i. 1. wherein he was the type of the Messiah, to whom the following words belong.

Ibid. and Ver. 22. *I will shake all nations; and I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms,* &c.] This prophecy plainly relates to the second coming of Christ, or to that illustrious appearance of his kingdom, which shall put a period to the kingdoms of the earth, and *the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdom of the Lord and his Christ.* (See Dan. ii. 44. Rev. xi. 15.)

I will overthrow the chariots, and them that ride in them, &c.] Compare Micah v. 5. 10. and see the notes there.

Ver. 23. *In that day I will take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant—and make thee as a signet,* &c.] I will invest thee with my power and authority, as the head of my church, and judge of the world. So kings depute their viceroys by giving them their signet, (see Gen. xli. 42.) which was particularly the custom of the Persian monarchs, whose deputy Zerubbabel was; (see Esth. iii. 10. viii. 2.) or else the expression may denote one particularly near and dear unto God, who was always under his eye and care. (Compare Jer. xxii. 24. Cant. viii. 6.) This could not be fulfilled in Zerubbabel, who did not, in all likelihood, live many years after the finishing of the temple; and, to be sure, did not see any of those great changes here foretold: and therefore the Messias must be here described under the name of Zerubbabel; as he elsewhere is under that of David. (See the abovecited treatise, p. 248.)

ZECHARIAH.

PREFACE.

ZECHARIAH was the son of Barachiah, and the grandson of Iddo: he is called the *son* of Iddo, Ezra v. 1. vi. 14. the grandson being often called the son in the Scriptures; as hath been observed upon Dan. v. 2. He was contemporary with Haggai, and prophesied in the second year of Darius Hystaspes. (See the note upon Hag. ii. 3. and upon Zech. i. 10.) There is an Iddo mentioned Nehem. xii. 4. among those Levites that came from Babylon with Zerubbabel; from whence Dr. Alix infers, that the prophet Zechariah's grandson must have prophesied some considerable time after the first return from the captivity, and therefore would understand the Darius here mentioned to be Darius Nothus. This argument is altogether inconclusive; for if Iddo was advanced in years when he returned, he might have a grandson thirty years of age in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, which was sixteen or seventeen after the first of Cyrus. And it appears that Zechariah was a young man when he saw the vision related at the beginning of this prophecy. (See ii. 4.) Beside, there is no necessity of supposing the Iddo that was grandfather of Zechariah to be the same person that is mentioned in Nehemiah. In the books of Ezra and Nehemiah there is mention of two Ezras, (compare Ezra vii. 1. with Nehem. xii. 1.) of two Nehemiahs, (compare Nehem. i. 1. with iii. 16.) and there is a Daniel mentioned Ezra viii. 16. a distinct person from the famous prophet of that name: and it may as well be supposed that there were two Iddos.

The design of the first part of this prophecy is the same with that of Haggai, *viz.* to encourage the Jews to go on with rebuilding of the temple, by giving them assurance of God's assistance and protection: from whence he proceeds to foretell the glory of the Christian church, the true temple or house of God, under its great high-priest and governor Christ Jesus, of whom Zerubbabel and Joshua the high-priest were figures. The latter part of the prophecy, from chap. ix. probably relates to the state of the Jews under the Maccabees, and then foretells their rejecting the Messias, and their conversion afterward, and some remarkable passages that should happen to them in the latter ages of the world.

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CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

After an exhortation to repentance, the prophet relates two visions shewed to him, implying the restoration of the Jewish state, and security from their enemies, while they were rebuilding the temple.

Ver. 1. *IN the eighth month, in the second year of Darius,* &c.] See the Preface.

Ver. 2. *The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers,* &c.] Though God hath been justly displeased with your fathers, and punished them and their children with seventy years' captivity, yet now he declares himself willing to be reconciled to you upon your repentance.

Ver. 4. *Be not as your fathers, to whom the former prophets have cried, saying,* &c.] Such exhortations the former prophets gave your forefathers, particularly Jeremiah, whose words are here referred to. (See Jer. xxv. 5. xxxv. 15.) Do not imitate them in their obstinacy.

Ver. 5, 6. *Your fathers, where are they? and do the prophets live for ever?* &c.] Though the prophets, and those to whom they delivered their message, are dead, yet the commandments delivered by their ministry still continue in full force; which appears by the judgments which came upon your fathers for transgressing them, as they themselves could not but acknowledge. And the same punishments will overtake you, if ye continue disobedient.

Ver. 6. *And they returned and said, Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do to us,* &c.] Your fathers were forced to acknowledge with sorrow, that God had exactly fulfilled all his threatenings denounced against them. (See Lam. ii. 17.)

Ver. 7. *The eleventh month, which is the month Sebat.*] This is the Chaldee name of the eleventh month; as Nisan, Elul, Chisleu, Tebeth, and Adar, are the names of other months mentioned in the books written after the captivity. The Jews distinguish their months only by the order of their succession, as the first, second, &c. So that if the books of Kings were writ by Jeremiah, as some suppose, the Chaldee names of the months which occur 1 Kings vi. 2. 38. viii. 2. were added afterward by Ezra.

Ver. 8. *I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse.*] A *red horse* is an emblem of war and bloodshed, (see Rev. vi. 4.) The man, or angel, (ver. 11.) riding upon him, denotes the Logos, or Son of God, appearing as the *captain of God's hosts,* or armies. (See Josh. v. 13, 14. and the notes upon ver. 12, 13. 20.)

And he stood among the myrtle-trees that were in the bottom.] As if he and his companions were refreshing themselves in a shady valley, after the fatigues of war. The vision denotes the peace which ensued after Darius had executed God's vengeance upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and made himself master of their city by the stratagem of Zopyrus. (Compare ver. 11. and see Dr. Prideaux, under the fourth, fifth, and sixth years of Darius.)

And behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white.] These may denote the various successes of Darius's arms during his reign, which were sometimes fortunate, at other times not so.

Ver. 9. *The angel that talked with me.*] The angel that made known this night-vision to me: so an angel is said to *speak with Jacob in a dream,* Gen. xxxi. 11.

Ver. 10. *And the man that stood among the myrtle-trees answered and said.*] This was an angel of an order superior to him that was mentioned ver. 9. who prevents that angel, and takes upon him to return an answer to the prophet's question; or else sends his answer to Zechariah by that angel mentioned ver. 9. as Christ sent his Revelation to St. John *by an angel,* Rev. i. 1.

These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.] To these angels he hath entrusted the administration of the affairs of the Persian empire. (See vi. 10.)

Ver. 11. *And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle-trees.*] They answer this *man,* (ver. 8.) or angel, as if he were their superior and commander: (see ver. 10.) he is distinguished from the other *angel of the Lord,* ver. 12. by the circumstance of *his standing among the myrtle-trees.*

Behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.] Now all the enemies of the Persian empire in general, and of all the Jews in particular, (see ver. 9.) are quiet: so this seems a proper time for setting forward the building of the temple, which hath been so long interrupted.

Ver. 12. *Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts.*] The angel mentioned ver. 9. makes his supplication to the superior angel, ver. 8. 10. who was indeed the Logos, or Son of God, being called by the name of Jehovah, here and ver. 13. 20. (Compare iii. 1, 2. xii. 8. 10.)

How long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah.] Cyrus only gave orders for the rebuilding the temple, (Ezra i. 3. vi. 3.) so a great part of the city lay in ruins till Nehemiah procured an order from Artaxerxes for rebuilding it. (See Nehem. i. 3. ii. 3. 8. 17. vii. 4.) The Jews, after the captivity, repaired to the several cities where their inheritance lay, (Ezra ii. 70.) but had not ability to rebuild or fortify them in a regular manner.

Against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?] There are three ways of computing the seventy years' captivity taken notice of in Scripture. The first is, beginning from the fourth year of Jehoiakim to the first of Cyrus; this is Jeremiah's account, Jer. xxv. 1. 11. which Daniel follows, Dan. ix. 2. Another may be computed from the besieging of Jerusalem, in the ninth year of Zedekiah, and in the tenth month, for which a solemn fast was kept by the Jews: (compare 2 Kings xxv. 1. with Zech. viii. 19.) this computation ends in the second year of Darius, which is the reckoning Zechariah here follows. Or, lastly, if we compute the beginning of the seventy years from the destruction of Jerusalem, and the first temple, which came to pass in the eleventh year of the same reign, (ibid. ver. 2.) they will be accomplished in the fourth year of Darius; and this computation agrees with what is said below, vii. 1. 5. The two last ways of reckoning the seventy years may be reduced to one, only by supposing, that the prophet in this verse sets down a complete number for an incomplete, and calls that space of time seventy years, which wanted very little of it: a way of speaking, of which several instances may be produced.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord answered the angel with good and*

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comfortable words.] The *Lord of hosts,* mentioned in the foregoing verse.

Ver. 14. *I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy.*] Or, *I am zealous for Jerusalem with great zeal;* for so the word *kinnah* often signifies. See Isa. ix. 7. xxvi. 11. lxiii. 15. where the translators read, *Their envy at the people;* but the words might be better rendered, *Thy zeal for the people.* God here tells the prophet by his angel, that he has a great concern for the welfare of his people, of which he will give evident proofs.

Ver. 15. *I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease.*] Who have not yet felt the severity of my judgments, but they shall not escape unpunished. This may be understood of the Babylonians, Samaritans, and other neighbours of the Jews, who had not been made such examples of God's severity, as the Jews were. (Compare Jer. xxv. 29.)

For I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward [or, increased] *the affliction.*] I made the Babylonians instruments of my vengeance upon the Jews, but they exceeded their commission, and acted as they were prompted by their own ambition and cruelty. (Compare Isa. xlvii. 6. and see the note there.) The former part of the verse may be thus translated; *For I was but for a little time displeased;* I punished them with a seventy years' captivity: a short punishment in comparison of the many years that they had offended me; but these their many enemies have brought new troubles upon them after their return home, and hindered them from rebuilding their temple. (See Ezra iv. 1. 4, &c.)

Ver. 16. *I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies,* &c.] I am returned to dwell in Jerusalem, and will remove all former marks of my displeasure, and will cause the temple to be rebuilt in it for the place of my residence, (see ii. 10.) which I had for some time forsaken.

And a line shall be stretched upon Jerusalem.] In order to rebuild the streets and walls of it. (See ii. 2.)

Ver. 17. *My cities through prosperity shall yet spread abroad.*] The lesser cities shall likewise be multiplied, and increase in inhabitants.

For the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.] The Lord shall comfort Zion by shewing his wonted kindness to her after her affliction, (compare Isa. li. 3.) and making Jerusalem the place of his residence. (See ver. 16.)

Ver. 18. *Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns.*] *Horns* often signify the power and strength of princes or people; the metaphor being taken from those cattle whose strength lies in their horns. The four horns may denote the Samaritans, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Philistines, who were the great hinderers of the Jews rebuilding the temple; (see Nehem. iv. 7.) or else they may signify in general those their enemies, among whom they were dispersed to the four winds of heaven, (ii. 6.)

Ver. 19. *Those be the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.*] Israel being mentioned distinctly from Judah, means those of the ten tribes, which were carried away into Babylon with the tribe of Judah, and returned with them. (See the note upon viii. 13.)

Ver. 20. *And the Lord* [see ver. 13.] *shewed me four carpenters.*] Or *smiths,* according to the number of the horns. These were to repair the destructions which the horns had made.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The flourishing state of Jerusalem is foretold, and the Jews still remaining at Babylon are warned to leave it, that they may not be involved in the calamities which are coming upon it.

Ver. 1, 2. *BEHOLD, a man with a measuring line in his hand,* &c.] An angel in human appearance; see ver. 3. This angel appeared with a measuring line in his hand, to take the proportions of the city, in order to the rebuilding it, as architects used to do. (See Ezek. xi. 3.)

Ver. 3. *And, behold, the angel that talked with me,* &c.] See i. 9.

And another angel went out to meet him.] Or, *The other angel; i. e.* the angel *with the measuring line in his hand.*

Ver. 4. *And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying.*] The second angel spoke to the former, to inform me farther concerning the flourishing state of Jerusalem. Zechariah might probably be a *young man* when he was first honoured with the gift of prophecy, as Jeremiah and Daniel were. (See Jer. i. Dan. i. 17.)

Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein.] The inhabitants of Jerusalem will multiply so fast, that the houses within the walls will not be able to contain them, and their cattle will increase in proportion. (See Jer. xxxi. 27.) Under the captivity the land was made a desolation *without man or beast;* (Jer. xxxiii. 12.) now the contrary blessing is promised.

Ver. 5. *For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.*] Its inhabitants may safely live without the walls of the city, (ver. 4.) for I the Lord will defend it by my angels, as so many flames of fire surrounding it; (Psal. cvi. 4.) as I did Elisha against his enemies, (2 Kings vi. 17.) And my especial presence shall be its protection, of which the *cloud of glory* in the first temple was a figure. This promise will receive its utmost completion in that New Jerusalem described Rev. xxi. 10. where the *glory of God and the Lamb* are said to be *the light thereof,* ver. 11. 23. (Compare Isa. lx. 19.)

Ver. 6. *Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north.*] Chaldea, and Babylon the principal city of it, are called by that name, because they lay northward of Judea. (See Jer. i. 14. iv. 6. vi. 1.) The Jews who still remained in Babylon and the country thereabout, are exhorted to return with all speed from thence, for a reason assigned, ver. 9.

For I have spread you abroad [or, scattered you] *as the four winds of heaven.*] Compare Ezek. xvii. 21. As I have scattered you and your brethren of the ten tribes all the world over, so in due time I will gather you from your several dispersions, of which your present restoration from Babylon shall be an earnest.

Ver. 7. *That dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.*] *The daughter of Babylon* is the same with *Babylon.* (See Psal. cxxxvii. 8. and the note upon Jer. iv. 31.)

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Ver. 8. *After the glory he hath sent me unto the nations that spoiled you.*] After I have given you the promise of restoring Jerusalem to such a glorious state (so the Chaldee explains it), I, the prophet Zechariah, am sent to execute God's judgments upon the Chaldeans, who spoiled you of all your wealth and ornaments.

For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.] God is very sensible of every injury offered to his people: (compare Psal. cv. 15.) it is like hurting the eye, which is the most tender and sensible part of the body. (See Psal. xvii. 8.) And though he made the Babylonians instruments of his vengeance, yet now he will call them to account for exceeding their commission. (See the note upon i. 15.)

Ver. 9. *For, behold, I will shake my hand upon* [or, over] *them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants.*] The words are a continuation of God's message, who proceeds to speak thus to the Jews by Zechariah: I will hold my rod over the Babylonians, (compare Isa. xi. 15. xix. 16.) and I will deliver their city into the hand of the Persians, who were formerly their servants, (see the note upon Isa. xxii. 6.) who shall become masters of its wealth. This threatening was fulfilled when Darius took Babylon after a siege of twelve months, beat down its walls, and put three thousand of the principal citizens to death. (See Dr. Prideaux, under the fifth and sixth years of Darius.)

And ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me.] These words are to be understood as spoken by the prophet himself; when this judgment is executed upon the Chaldeans, it will be an undoubted sign and proof of the truth of my mission. (Compare Ezek. xxxiii. 33.)

Ver. 10. *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and will dwell in the midst of thee.*] Here God speaks again to his people, and saith he will give them manifest tokens of his presence among them. (See the note upon ver. 5. and compare Lev. xxvi. 12. Ezek. xxxvii. 27.)

Ver. 11. *And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people.*] The church shall be enlarged by the accession of the gentiles to it; and shall receive a farther increase, when, upon the conversion of the Jews, the fulness of the gentiles shall be brought into it. This promise relates chiefly to the *latter times.* (Compare viii. 21—23.)

And thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee.] The fulfilling of these my words, saith the prophet, shall be an undeniable evidence of the truth of my mission. (See ver. 9.)

Ver. 12. *And the Lord shall inherit Judah, his portion in the holy land.*] God shall give visible tokens that the land of Judea and its inhabitants are his peculiar people; according to the tenor of that covenant he made with their fathers, *The land is his,* Lev. xxv. 32. and therefore is called the *holy land,* as Jerusalem is named the *holy city:* where the temple shall again be built, a token of his presence: and as the people shall constantly profess themselves his worshippers, so he will afford them gracious instances of his favour and protection. This may perhaps be more fully verified at the general restoration of that nation.

Ver. 13. *Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.*] Let all men be silent in token of the profoundest reverence and submission, (see Habak. ii. 20.) when God comes down from heaven, (compare Micah i. 3.) or gives visible signs of his appearance to execute judgment upon his adversaries, or to shew mercy unto his servants. Heaven is called the *habitation of God's holiness,* Deut. xxvi. 15. Isa. lxiii. 15.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Under the figure of Joshua the high-priest, clothed with new priestly attire, is set forth the glory of Christ, as the corner-stone of the church.

Ver. 1. *AND he shewed me Joshua the high-priest standing before the angel of the Lord.*] The *angel that talked with me,* (ii. 3.) represented to me a new vision: *viz.* that of *Joshua the high-priest standing before the angel of the Lord,* or the Logos, mentioned i. 11. He is called the *Lord* in the following verse.

And Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.] *i. e.* To be his *accuser,* as the devil is called, Rev. xii. 10. so here he is represented as aggravating the faults, or infirmities of Joshua, the representative of the whole body of the Jews (see the following words); by this means to prevail with God to permit the Jews to be still under the power of their adversaries. So the *prince,* or tutelar angel, *of the kingdom of Persia,* is represented as resisting the angel Gabriel, Dan. x. 13. 20. It was the custom in courts of judicature, for the accuser to stand at the *right hand* of the accused. (See Psal. cix. 6.)

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem.*] The Logos, or Son of God, said unto Satan, *The Lord,* even God the Father, *rebuke thee,* and not suffer thy mischievous imagination against Jerusalem and the temple to prosper: he that hath chosen that place for his especial residence. This text seems parallel with Gen. xix. 24. where it is said, *The Lord rained fire from the Lord out of heaven;* a text alleged, both by ancient and modern writers, to prove, that a distinction of persons in the blessed Trinity, was a doctrine delivered in the Old Testament, though but imperfectly. The words may be rendered, *The Lord hath rebuked thee,* or rejected thy plea; having long ago chosen Jerusalem.

Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?] Is not this small remnant returned from captivity, miraculously rescued from utter destruction, like *a brand plucked out of the fire?* And can it be thought that God will not preserve them? (Compare Amos vi. 11. Jude ver. 23.)

Ver. 3. *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments.*] Denoting the sins and pollutions of the people, of whom he was the representative. (See ver. 2. 4.) The sins particularly taken notice of, might be their *marrying with strangers,* contrary to the law: (see Ezra ix. 2. 11, 12. Nehem. xiii. 24.) so the Chaldee understands it.

Ver. 4. *And he answered, and spake to those that stood before him,* &c.] To the inferior angels that were in his retinue. (Compare ver. 5. 7. i. 8—11. and see the note upon Dan. x. 10.)

And unto him [i. e. Joshua] *he said, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.*] In token of my pardoning the public and na-

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tional sins of the Jews, and that I will restore them to a more prosperous condition, I have commanded the angels, my attendants, to clothe thee with new and clean raiment, an emblem of purity, (Rev. xix. 8.) as well as of joyfulness and prosperity. (See Eccles. ix. 8. Isa. lxi. 10.) The word rendered in our English, *change of raiment*, the LXX. translate Ποδήρη, *a garment down to the foot*, meaning the linen ephod, which was the priests' habit; regarding the sense rather than the literal signification of the word.

Ver. 5. *And I said.*] *i. e.* I, the Lord, farther said, or commanded.

Let them set a fair mitre upon his head, &c.] As the new garments put upon Joshua were such as belonged to the high-priest, and were contrived for *glory and beauty*, (Exod. xxviii. 2.) so the mitre was the proper ornament for his head, (ibid. xxix. 6.)

And the angel of the Lord stood by.] The angel *that talked with me* (see ver. 6. and ii. 3.) still stood by, or attended, and made that solemn protestation which follows.

Ver. 7. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts.*] If thou wilt take care that the several offices which belong to the service of my temple, be carefully performed by thyself, and the priests and Levites placed under thy command, then thou shalt exercise all that authority and jurisdiction which belongs to the high-priest's office, in respect of those controversies and questions which are brought before him to determine: (see Lev. x. 10. Deut. xvii. 12. Jer. xviii. 18. Mal. ii. 7.) and thou shalt preside as chief over my house, without any interruption, or molestation. The word *mishmar, charge*, is often used in the book of Numbers, to denote the several offices and duties of the priests and Levites.

And I will give thee places to walk among them that stand by.] Or, *Stand before me*, (see iv. 14.) Hereafter I will give thee a place in heaven among these angels my attendants. The priesthood under the Old Testament, and the evangelical ministry under the New, is compared to the angelical office: (see Mal. ii. 7. Rev. i. 20.) so they that discharge this office well, shall have an eminent degree of glory in heaven, and be made equal to the angels themselves. (See Matt. xix. 28. xxiv. 47. Luke xxii. 29, 30.)

Ver. 8. *Hear now, O Joshua the high-priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee.*] The angel directs his speech to Joshua and his assessors, or assistants in council, of whom Zerubbabel without question was one. The rabbins call these the *heads of the captivity*, and the *men of the great synagogue;* by whom they suppose the Jewish affairs, both ecclesiastical and civil, to have been settled after the captivity, and the canon of the Old Testament to have been completed. The angel bespeaks their attention to what follows, as containing matter of great importance.

For they are men wondered at.] The margin reads, *Men of wonder.* The word *mophet* signifies not only a *wonder*, but likewise a *sign*, or a *type*. Thus Isaiah's *walking naked and barefoot was for a sign and wonder* [or rather, a type or example] *to Egypt and Ethiopia;* (Isa. xx. 3.) *i. e.* a sign or emblem that they should be carried away captive without any covering to their nakedness: so the word is used again, Isa. viii. 18. So when Ezekiel was commanded to *dig through the wall and carry out his goods in the twilight*, xii. 7. he was therein a *sign* [*mophet*], ver. 11, 12. to the Jews, and to Zedekiah himself; foreshewing what he and they should do, when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldean army. So, likewise, Ezek. xxiv. 24. he is said to be a *sign* unto them *in not mourning for the death of his wife;* because *according to all that he had done, should they do;* where the same word is used in the original. The word is to be understood in this sense in the text before us, which should be translated, They are men intended for signs or tokens, they are *typical men*, as a learned prelate very properly translates the phrase, in his Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, chap. 3. sect. 1. 4. To the same sense the Vulgar Latin translates it, *Viri portendentes; Men that foreshew something to come.* They, with Joshua the high-priest at the head of them, are a figure of the restoration of the church under the government of the Messias.

For, behold, I will bring forth my servant, The BRANCH.] I will point out, or foretell, the coming of the Messiah into the world, as a person altogether distinct from Joshua, or any other present among you, and I will make him known to you under the name of the *Branch:* a title often given to the Messiah in the prophets, as descending from the stock of David: see Isa. iv. 2. Jer. xxiii. 5. and again in this prophecy, vi. 12. in all which places the word in the original is *Tsemach.* The Chaldee explains every one of these texts of the Messias; who is elsewhere called God's *Servant*, in an eminent sense, because he was *sanctified and sent into the world* upon a message of the highest importance. (See Isa. xlii. 1. xlix. 3. lii. 13. liii. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.) The word *Tsemach, Branch*, the LXX. render here and in most of the parallel texts, Ἀνατολὴ, *the East*, or *sun-rising;* from whence it is applied to Christ, Luke i. 78. and is translated there *the day-spring:* thence the name of Oriens was probably given to the supposed king of the Jews, in the Roman writers. (See Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. 13.)

Ver. 9. *For, behold, the stone which I have laid before Joshua.*] I have ordered a principal stone (see the following note) to be laid before Joshua (in allusion to the present building of the temple, about which his thoughts are employed); denoting the Messias, represented by the former prophets as a *corner-stone*, or *foundation, elect and precious.* (See Psal. cxviii. 22. Isa. xxviii. 16.)

Upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the engraving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts.] As it is usual to adorn the principal stones of a building with carvings and hieroglyphics, such as heads, eyes, and the like; so will I perform in reality what artists do in imagery: *viz.* I will appoint the seven angels of the highest order to attend upon the Messias, represented by this stone, and to execute his commands all the world over, for the good of his church. (Compare iv. 10. Rev. v. 6.) The *one stone* here mentioned is the same with the *head-stone*, iv. 7. and might be better translated here the *chief* or *principal stone:* in which sense the word *achad* is used, Gen. xlviii. 22. as the Chaldee there explains it.

And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.] I will proclaim a free pardon of sins by the publishing of the gospel: (see Jer. xxxi. 34.) or the words may relate to the pardoning the Jews upon their general conversion. (Compare xiii. 1. Jer. l. 20. Micah vii. 18, 19.) The following verse favours this exposition.

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Ver. 10. *In that day, saith the Lord.*] At that remarkable time, when I will forgive all your iniquities, ver. 9. (See the note upon xii. 3.)

Ye shall call every man [to] *his neighbour under the vine and under the fig-tree.*] Men shall call or discourse with their neighbours in a friendly and sociable manner, as they are sitting at ease under the shadow of their vines and fig-trees. A proverbial expression, denoting peace and plenty: compare Micah iv. 4. where the words follow the promise of a universal peace. (See the notes there, and upon Isa. ii. 4.)

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

Under the figure of the golden candlestick and the two olive-trees, is represented the success of Zerubbabel and Joshua, in rebuilding and finishing the temple.

Ver. 1. *AND the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man is wakened out of his sleep.*] The last vision was so pleasing to me, that it cast me into a deep sleep; (compare Jer. xxxi. 26.) from which the angel that before had talked with me, (ii. 3.) awaked me, to discover to me the following vision.

Ver. 2. *I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold,* &c.] This figured the temple-service, and the whole polity of the Jewish constitution, which depended upon the restoration of the temple. (See the note upon ver. 14.)

And his seven lamps thereon.] According to the fashion of the golden candlestick in the temple. (Exod. xxv. 37.) As that candlestick figuratively signified the church, whose office it was to enlighten others: (see Rev. i. 20.) so the *seven lamps* mystically represented the *seven spirits of God,* (Rev. iv. 5.) *i. e.* the various dispensations of his providence over it. (Compare ver. 10. of this chapter.)

Ver. 3. *And two olive-trees by it,* &c.] Which did in a secret unperceivable manner convey oil for supplying the lamps. (See ver. 6.)

Ver. 5. *Knowest thou not what these be?*] The words may be rendered, both here and ver. 13. *Knowest thou what these be?* (See the note upon Jer. xxxviii. 15. and Noldius's Concord. p. 256.)

Ver. 6. *Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.*] Zerubbabel and Joshua, with the Jews under their conduct, shall finish the temple, and re-establish the Jewish state, not by force of arms, or of human power, but by the secret assistances of my providence; just as the lamps are supplied with oil, in a secret and invisible manner. (See ver. 12. 14.)

Ver. 7. *Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shall become a plain.*] *Removing mountains,* and *levelling them into plains,* are proverbial expressions, to denote the overcoming the greatest difficulties, and removing all obstacles that lie in our way: (see Isa. xl. 4. Matt. xxi. 21.) so the angel here encourages Zerubbabel to go on with his undertaking, assuring him that nothing shall be able to withstand him.

And he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, saying, Grace, grace, unto it.] He shall put the top or finishing stone upon the walls of the temple; which action the standers-by shall accompany with their wishes and prayers, that God's grace and favour may protect that holy place so happily finished, and with such joyful acclamations as they used at laying its foundations. (See Ezra iii. 10, 11.) The *chief,* or principal, *stone,* mentioned iii. 9. denoted the Messias, called *the Branch,* ver. 8. and the words before us mystically represent the same person: *viz.* that God shall bring forth, or bring him into the world, as the top or head-stone, the last and finishing ornament and perfection (expressed by *Grace, grace, i. e.* the chief grace) of the church, God's spiritual house, (Eph. ii. 21.) To this sense the Chaldee paraphrase expounds the words, *His Messias shall come forth, who was named from all eternity, and shall obtain the empire of all the kingdoms of the earth:* and St. Jerome tells us upon the place, that the ancient Jews explained it so.

Ver. 9. *The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this house; his hands also shall finish it.*] He shall have the happiness of seeing the great work which he had begun finished and brought to perfection. (See Ezra iii. 10. vi. 15.)

And thou shalt know, &c.] See ii. 9.

Ver. 10. *For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel.*] Or, *For whoso hath despised the day of small things, they shall rejoice,* &c. The particle *mi* is sometimes used, without an interrogation, for *whosoever.* (See Noldius, p. 602.) Whoever despised the small beginnings of this building, when the foundations of the temple were first laid, may now utter their joyful acclamations, when they see, under the conduct of Zerubbabel, the walls rise, and the top-stone laid upon them in order to their finishing, (ver. 7.)

With those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.] The LXX. translate the words to a better sense, taking them for a distinct sentence from what goes before, *These seven are the eyes of the Lord,* &c. The sentence relates to the *head-stone,* (ver. 7.) upon which these *seven eyes* were to be engraved, (iii. 9.) hieroglyphically representing the angelical ministry, which always attend upon this head or Prince of the church. The Scriptures mention this as a prerogative of the Messias, that the angels were to minister to him: (see Psal. xci. 11, 12. Matt. iv. 11. John i. 51. 1 Tim. iii. 16.) and it is a saying recorded by the oldest writers among the Jews, that the *Messias should be higher than the angels;* a doctrine often delivered by St. Paul, Eph. i. 21. Phil. ii. 10. Heb. i. 4.

Ver. 11. *Then answered I, and said unto him.*] The verb *anah* is not only used of answering to a question, but likewise signifies to begin or continue a discourse: (see Job iii. 2.) and so the word *answer* is used, Matt. xi. 25.

Ver. 12. *What be these two olive-branches?*] Young olives. (See ver. 3.)

Which through the golden pipes empty the golden oil, &c.] There were two greater pipes in the candlestick through which the oil was conveyed into the five lesser. (See ver. 3.)

Ver. 14. *These are the two anointed ones, that stand by* [or, before] *the Lord of the whole earth.*] These signify the kingdom and the priesthood, as they are exercised at present by Zerubbabel and Joshua (and belong to their respective families), who having finished the temple, and restored the public worship of God, will constantly attend upon his

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service, and take care that it be duly performed there. The candlestick represented the Jewish church and temple, (ver. 2.) and these two, Zerubbabel and Joshua, supply the place of the two olive-trees, that feed it with oil and keep it bright and burning. To *stand before the Lord,* (for so the words should be rendered, as they are vi. 5.) and to minister to him, are the same. (See Deut. x. 8. 1 Kings xvii. 1.)

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

By the representation of a *flying roll,* God's judgments are denounced against robbery and perjury: and the Jews are warned against such sins as occasioned their former captivity, for fear of incurring the same, or a worse calamity.

Ver. 1. *I TURNED, and lifted up mine eyes.*] Or, *Again I lifted up mine eyes:* for the Hebrew verb *shub,* to *return,* is often used adverbially. (See Eccles. iv. 1. ix. 11. and the note upon Isa. vi. 13.)

And, behold, a flying roll.] *The roll of a book,* as it is expressed, Jer. xxxvi. 1. Ezek. ii. 9. The ancient way of writing being upon long scrolls of parchment. It is described as *flying,* to denote the swiftness of God's judgments.

Ver. 2. *The length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth ten cubits.*] Such scrolls were usually longer than they were broad; so this was represented as ten yards in length, and five in breadth. The curses therein contained, might probably be writ in capital letters. (See the note upon Isa. viii. 1.)

Ver. 3. *This is the curse that goeth over the face of the whole earth.*] Or rather, *Of the whole land;* meaning the land of Judea. This roll contained the curses; *i. e.* the judgments denounced against the Jews, who were guilty of the sins here specified. (Compare viii. 17. Deut. xi. 29. xxviii. 15. xxx. 19. Nehem. x. 29.)

For every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side, according to it, &c.] The roll was written upon both sides, as that mentioned Ezek. ii. 10. On one side was contained the judgments against stealing, and on the other against false-swearing. These two sins are joined together, because in the Jewish courts men were compelled to purge themselves by oath, in the case of theft; so they often would forswear themselves rather than discover the truth. (See Hos. iv. 2. Prov. xxix. 24. xxx. 9.) *Stealing* may here particularly denote the defrauding the temple of the tithes and offerings that were to be brought thither for the maintaining of God's worship; a sin for which the Jews of that age are severely reproved. (See Mal. i. 8, &c. iii. 8, 9. Nehem. xiii. 10, 11.)

Ver. 4. *And I will bring it forth, and it shall enter into the house of the thief; and it shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof.*] The curse denounced in this roll, or book, shall take hold of the man and his family, and shall never leave them till they are utterly consumed. It shall be like the leprosy that infects a house, and cannot be purged till the house itself be pulled down. (See Lev. xiv. 45.) The oracle at Delphi denounced a like punishment against perjury, as it is recorded by Herodotus, lib. iii.

—— Κραιπνὸς δὲ μετέρχεται, εἰσόκε πᾶσαν
Συμμάρψαι ὀλέῃ γενεὴν καὶ οἶκον ἅπαντα.

The curse shall swiftly enter, and shall bring
The man himself, and all his house to ruin.

Ver. 5. *Then the angel that talked with me* [see iv. 1.] *went forth.*] Or, *Went on.* The verb *yatsa* signifies *to go, to go on,* or *forward:* so it is used 2 Chron. xxi. 19. Jer. xxv. 32. and so it may signify at the end of this verse, and in the next, where it occurs again.

Ver. 6. *And I said, What is it? and he said, This is an ephah that goeth forth.*] Dr. Wells observes, that this vessel or barrel was made in the shape of an *ephah:* yet it was of a much bigger size, large enough to contain a woman in it; which was the reason Zechariah did not know what it was. An *ephah* contained about the quantity of our bushel, and being the measure of dry things, denotes the Jews' unjust dealings in buying and selling. (See Amos viii. 5.)

He said moreover, This is their resemblance through all the earth.] Or, *Through all the land.* By this you may make an estimate of their unjust dealings all the land over. (Compare ver. 3, 4.) The LXX. give a very easy sense of the words: *This is their iniquity throughout all the land;* changing only one letter in the original text, and reading *onam* for *enam.*

Ver. 7. *And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead.*] To denote the weight or severity of the judgments here threatened.

And this is a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah.] What thou seest besides, is a woman in the midst of, or within, the *ephah;* as Noldius interprets it, Concordant. p. 83. The Hebrew reads *one woman,* but the adjective *one* is sometimes equivalent to the article *a,* or *the,* commonly placed before substantives. (See Dan. viii. 3. x. 5.)

Ver. 8. *And he said, This is wickedness.*] Public states or societies are oftentimes represented by women, and as the mothers of their people or inhabitants, as we see in the ancient coins. By the same analogy corrupt societies are figuratively expressed by harlots, and women of lewd characters; such are Aholah and Aholibah, described Ezek. xxiii. so here the corrupt state of the Jews is set forth by a wicked woman.

And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; [or, within the ephah, see ver. 7.] *and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof.*] To signify, that when a people have filled up the measure of their iniquity they sink under the weight of their sins, and cannot escape the judgment of God.

Ver. 9. *I looked, and, behold, there came out* [or, appeared] *two women, and the wind was in their wings,* &c.] These may probably signify the empires of Assyria and Babylon. Empires and kingdoms are commonly described as having wings, to denote the swiftness of their conquests. (See Deut. xxviii. 49. Jer. xlix. 22. Hos. viii. 1.)

And they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven.] *i. e.* The Assyrians carried away captive the ten tribes, and then the Babylonians took away the remainder of the Jews, and made an entire riddance of the people of the land.

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Ver. 11. *And he said unto me, To build it a house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established,* &c.] Or, *To build her,* i. e. the woman, *a house,* &c. The design of the vision is to instruct the Jews, that as their fathers were carried into a seventy years' captivity to Babylon; so, if their posterity should not take warning by their punishment, a worse captivity should befal them, one of so long a continuance, as should make them despair of ever returning home, and resolve to settle themselves in those countries where they were dispersed. This is expressed by removing them to Babylon; which was a proverbial expression for utter ruin and desolation: just like that of sending them into Egypt, which God threatens the Jews with in the prophets, as a judgment of which they had the most dreadful apprehension; so it became a proverbial speech for extreme misery. (See Deut. xxviii. 64. Isa. x. 24. Hos. viii. 13. ix. 3.) [A learned prelate, in his Vindication of the Defence of Christianity, b. i. chap. 1. sect. 4. supposes the vision to denote the translation of sin or punishment from Judea to Babylon, of which the two kingdoms of Media and Persia were the instruments; denoted by the *two women* who had the *wings of a stork.* Babylon itself being signified by the woman enclosed in an ephah, or bushel, and covered with a *leaden* lid, implying that it was sealed up there, and irrecoverably doomed to destruction, agreeably to the other prophecies denounced against Babylon. See Isa. xiii. 19. Jer. l. 40.]

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

The first vision in this chapter, of the four chariots drawn by several sorts of horses, denotes the succession of the four empires. The second, concerning the crowns put upon the head of Joshua, sets forth the glory of Christ the Branch, who is to be both King and High-priest of the church of God.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, there came four chariots from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass.*] Horses and chariots are the usual emblems of conquerors. (See Isa. xxi. 7. 9. and x. 3. of this prophecy.) The four chariots denote the four great empires, which subdued the biggest part of the then known world. And they are represented as coming from between two mountains; because mountains are the natural barriers which divide kingdoms, which are here, though they be as strong as brass, supposed to be broke through by those that invade and conquer their neighbours. And it is observable, that some of the mighty conquerors owed the beginning of their greatness to their successful passage through the straits of mountains, where a small force might have maintained the passes against a powerful army. So the beginning of Alexander's success against the Persians, was his passing through the Portæ Ciliciæ without any opposition: the like success the Roman emperor Severus had against Pescenninus Niger at the same place: and the great incursions the Turks made through the Portæ Caspiæ, was the first step towards making them appear formidable in the world.

Ver. 2. *In the first chariot were red horses.*] To signify the bloody cruelties of the Babylonish empire, especially towards the Jews. (See i. 15. Jer. li. 34. Habak. i. 6. 10, 11. viii. 12. compare i. 8. Rev. vi. 4.)

And in the second chariot were black horses.] Black is the colour of mourning; (compare Rev. vi. 5.) so this denotes the sad and mournful estate of the Jews under the successors of Cyrus in the Persian empire, when their enemies forged calumnies against them, and thereby put a stop to the building of the temple; (see Ezra iv. 4, &c. Nehem. iv. 1, 2. 4, &c. ix. 36, 37.) and the whole nation was in danger of being destroyed by the interest of Haman in the Persian court.

Ver. 3. *And in the third chariot were white horses.*] Signifying the victories of Alexander, the third great monarch, and his kindness to the Jews in confirming their religion, laws, and liberties. (See Dr. Prideaux, under the fourth year of Darius Codomannus.) Conquerors use to ride on white horses in the days of triumph. (See Rev. vi. 2.)

And in the fourth chariot were grisled and bay horses.] Or, *Strong horses,* as the Vulgar Latin renders the word. These may denote the various forms of the Roman government, the fourth empire. (Compare Dan. ii. 33. 40, 41. and see ver. 6, 7.)

Ver. 5. *These are the four spirits of the heavens.*] The angels which preside over each of these monarchies. (See the note upon Dan. x. 13.)

Which go forth from standing before the Lord of the whole earth.] Who receive their commission from the supreme Lord of all, to govern the affairs of these empires according to his direction. (See iv. 14. 1 Kings xxii. 19.)

Ver. 6. *The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country.*] The black horses which thou sawest in the vision belonging to the second chariot, and denoting the Persian empire, go forth to conquer the Babylonians, often expressed by the *north* in the prophets. (See Jer. i. 14. iv. 6. vi. 1. Ezek. i. 4.) The angel saith nothing of the red horses, belonging to the first chariot, because that empire was at an end.

And the white go forth after them.] Alexander and his armies go forth to conquer the Persians.

And the grisled go forth into the south country.] This probably denotes the Romans conquering Egypt, frequently called the *south country* in Scripture. (See Dan. xi. 6, &c.) This was the last country the Romans subdued under Augustus, whereby they became masters of the greatest part of the known world.

Ver. 7. *And the bay went forth and sought to go, that they might walk through the earth,* &c.] These seem to signify another branch of the Roman empire, that extended their conquests in the latter times: and these can be no other than the Goths and Vandals, whose power rose out of the ruins of the first Roman empire, and who set up the kingdom of the *ten horns,* mentioned Rev. xiii. 1. xvii. 3.

So they walked to and fro through the earth.] They took possession of it. (See Gen. xiii. 17.)

Ver. 8. *Then cried he upon* [unto] *me.*] These words are uttered by God, appearing out of the Schechinah. (See the note upon i. 13. 20.)

Behold, these that go forth towards the north country have quieted my spirit [or, my wrath] *in the north country.*] The black horses, denoting the Persian empire, that have conquered the Babylonians, (see ver. 6.) have appeased my wrath by executing that vengeance upon them which they

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deserved for their cruelty towards my people. (See ver. 2.) The word *ruach, spirit,* often signifies anger. (See Judg. viii. 3. Eccles. x. 9.)

Ver. 10, 11. *Take them of the captivity—which are come from Babylon—Then* [or, even] *take silver and gold,* &c.] The exiles who remained in Babylon, shewed their regard for the temple that was then in building, by sending their gifts and oblations to Jerusalem for carrying on the work, and adorning the temple after it was built. These offerings they sent by the persons here named, as they did afterward by Ezra and his companions. (See Ezra vii. 16. viii. 25, 26.)

Ver. 11. *Then* [rather, even] *take* [the] *silver and* [the] *gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua.*] There is no necessity of supposing the silver to be used in making those crowns: that is mentioned to shew the liberality of the offerers, and might be laid up for the ornament or service of the temple. (See Ezra viii. 24. 30. Hag. ii. 8, 9.) The use of the gold is here specified: a plate or crown of gold was an ornament placed upon the mitre of the high-priest. (See Exod. xxviii. 36. xxix. 6. Lev. viii. 9.) Two such crowns of gold are ordered here to be made, and both of them to be placed upon the head of Joshua, to signify that the Messias, the Branch spoken of in the next verse, of whom Joshua was a type, should be both a king and a priest, and so should have a right to wear the two crowns that belong to each of those officers.

Ver. 12. *Behold the man whose name is The* BRANCH.] See, in the person of Joshua the high-priest, the type or representation of the man whose *name is the Christ that shall be revealed,* as the Targum paraphrases the text. (See the note upon iii. 8.)

And he shall grow up out of his place.] The Hebrew phrase doth literally signify, Shall grow up *from under him; i. e.* as a branch or twig grows out of the stock of a tree; so the Messias should spring from the family of David: or the expression may mean, that he shall succeed Joshua in the high-priesthood, which shall be unchangeably fixed in his person.

And he shall build the temple of the Lord.] Zerubbabel was to build the material temple, (see iv. 9.) but the building God's spiritual temple, the church, was a work reserved for the Messias. (See Matt. xvi. 18. Eph. ii. 20—22. Heb. iii. 3.) This text the Chaldee paraphrast understands of the Messias, and so it was understood by the Jews in the time of our Saviour. Herod at that time had a mind to be thought the Messias; his flatterers had put this thought into his head, who from thence were called the Herodians, (Matt. xxii. 16.) as many of the ancient writers suppose. This put him upon rebuilding the temple, a work foretold in this place to be undertook by the Messias.

Ver. 13. *He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and shall be a priest upon his throne.*] This is a plain description of Christ, who was foretold to be both a king and priest, (Psal. cx. 4.) who should bear the glory of a king, and withal perform the office of a priest. The ancient Jews expected their Messias should retain both these characters. The author of the first book of Maccabees informs us, xiv. 41. that in gratitude to Simon the brother of Judas Maccabeus, they appointed him their *governor and high-priest for ever* (*i. e.* himself and his posterity), *until there should arise a faithful Prophet,* or, till the faithful Prophet should arise, meaning the Messias. (Compare Heb. iii. 2.)

And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.] The kingdom and priesthood being joined in the same person, there shall be no more clashing of jurisdictions between those two offices, represented by the *two olive-trees,* iv. 12. 14.

Ver. 14. *And the crowns shall be to Helem—for a memorial in the temple of the Lord.*] The crowns, when they have been set upon Joshua's head, (ver. 11.) shall be delivered to the persons here mentioned, that they may be laid up for a memorial in the temple, for what use they had been made; as there were several gifts laid up in the temple in aftertimes, which were presents offered there by the kings of Egypt, and other great men, out of respect to the place. Helem, here mentioned, is probably the same person with Heldai, and Hen with Josiah; such variety of names belonging to the same person may be often observed in the books of the Kings and Chronicles.

Ver. 15. *And they that are afar off shall come and build in the temple* [or, build the temple] *of the Lord.*] The gentiles shall be added to the church, (compare Isa. lvii. 19.) and shall make a considerable increase of this spiritual building.

And ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you.] See ii. 11.

And this shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God.] And ye of the Jewish nation shall be first sharers in the benefits arising from Christ's kingdom and priesthood (and then those *that are afar off*), if you diligently hearken to the voice of God, speaking to you both by his prophets and by his Son.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Some Jews were sent from Babylon to inquire of the priests and prophets, whether they were obliged to continue the fasts that had been appointed upon the occasion of the destruction of Jerusalem and the ensuing captivity. The prophet is commanded to take this occasion of enforcing upon them the observance of the weightier matters of the law, *viz.* judgment and mercy, for fear of their incurring the same calamities their fathers suffered upon their neglect of those duties.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius.*] See the note upon ver. 5.

Ver. 2. *When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezer and Regem-melech, and their men, to pray before the Lord.*] The verb in the Hebrew is in the singular number, *He had sent:* but our interpreters understand it plurally, by an enallage of the number, which is frequent in the Hebrew; and the Vulgar Latin interprets it to the same sense. According to this syntax, the words might be as well translated thus, *When Sherezer and Regem-melech, and their men, had sent unto the house of God.* These, probably, were men of some note among the Jews that still continued at Babylon, who either came of their own accord, or were sent by the exiles there to the temple at Jerusalem, to offer up sacrifices at the altar, and make prayers for themselves and their friends in the temple, where the building was

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carrying on with good success. The temple was the only place where they could offer sacrifice, to which their solemn prayers were always joined. (See 1 Sam. xiii. 12. Ezra vi. 10.)

Ver. 3. *And to speak unto the priests which were in the house of the Lord, and to the prophets.*] It was the office of the priests to resolve any doubts that might arise, and the people were commanded to consult them, and to follow their determination, (Deut. xvii. 9—11. Mal. ii. 7.) And since the prophets Haggai and Zechariah were at this time residing at Jerusalem, it was proper to inquire of them, who might probably give them an immediate answer from God himself.

Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?] The fast of the fifth month was kept, because in the fifth month, answering to our month of July, the city and temple were burnt by the Chaldeans: (2 Kings xxv. 8.) in memory of which grievous judgment, the Jews at Babylon had kept a solemn fast, from that time until now; refraining from all worldly business and pleasure, and employing themselves in the religious exercise of prayer and humiliation. (See xii. 12—14.) The question they now proposed was, Whether it were proper for them still to continue this fast, when the ecclesiastical and civil state was in a great measure restored, and the judgment for which they mourned was removed.

Ver. 5. *Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests.*] What I am going to say equally concerns both priests and people.

When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month.] The Jews observed four solemn fasts, in relation to the calamities that attended the captivity: two of them are mentioned in this chapter, and two in the next, ver. 19. Besides the fast in the fifth month, taken notice of ver. 3. they kept another in the seventh month, answering chiefly to our September, in memory of the murder of Gedaliah, which happened in that month; (2 Kings xxv. 25.) whereupon all the remainder of the Jews were dispersed into several lands, and the desolation of Judea completed, (Jer. xli. 17, 18.)

Even those seventy years.] Those *many years* mentioned ver. 3. which, if we reckon from the destruction of Jerusalem, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, to the fourth year of Darius Hystaspes, are just seventy years; as hath been observed in the note upon i. 12.

Did ye fast at all to me, even to me?] Did you fast upon religious motives, and for your better improvement in the duties of repentance and amendment, the only true end of fasting? (Compare Rom. xiv. 6.)

Ver. 6. *And when ye did eat—did ye not eat for yourselves,* &c.] Ye sought your own pleasure and convenience, not my glory. The sense of these two sentences is much the same with that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. viii. 8. *Meat commends us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse: i. e.* eating, or abstaining from meat, is in its own nature indifferent, nor is it acceptable to God, any farther than it is subservient to advance the true ends of religion.

The prophet first reproves the hypocrisy of their fasts, before he gives them a direct answer to the question proposed to him; which he does, viii. 19.

Ver. 7. *Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited,* &c.] Or, *Are not these the words?* as the margin reads. The prophet puts them in mind of those exhortations the prophets before the captivity gave them, that they may lay them to heart, and not be guilty of the same sins, for fear of incurring the same penalties.

When men inhabited the south and the plain.] The *south* was that tract of land called *the wilderness of Judea,* Matt. iii. 1. part of which, or near to it, was the hill-country, mentioned Josh. xxi. 11. Luke i. 39. The LXX. here render it Ὀρεινή, *the hill-country.* The *plain* is that open country which is called *the plains of Jericho,* 2 Kings xxv. 5. and *the plain of the valley of Jericho,* Deut. xxxiv. 3. and reached as far as the Salt Sea, or the lake of Asphaltites, called *the sea of the plain,* Deut. iii. 17. (Compare Jer. xvii. 26.)

Ver. 9. *Execute true judgment, and shew mercy,* &c.] I often put your fathers in mind, that judgment and mercy were more acceptable to me than fasting, or any external performances; (see Isa. lviii. 6, 7. Jer. vii. 22—24.) and I repeat the same admonition to you of the present age.

Ver. 10. *And let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.*] Do not employ your thoughts in devising mischief against others, in order to put it in execution when opportunity serves. (Compare Psal. xxxvi. 4. Micah ii. 1.)

Ver. 11. *But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder.*] But your fathers refused to hearken to the admonitions of the former prophets, (ver. 12.) and are often reproved by them for their refractory temper. The metaphor is taken from oxen, that refuse to put their necks under the yoke. (See Nehem. ix. 29. Jer. vii. 24. and the note there.)

Ver. 12. *Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone.*] So that no arguments could make any impression upon them. (Compare Ezek. xi. 9.) The same thing is expressed by men's hearts *being hardened.*

Therefore came there great wrath from the Lord of hosts.] See ver. 14.

Ver. 13. *So they cried, and I would not hear.*] I would not hearken to the prayers they made to me in their distress. (See Jer. xi. 11. xiv. 12. Micah iii. 4.)

Ver. 14. *But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not.*] My anger dispersed the ten tribes like a tempest, into the distant countries of Assyria, Media, &c. from whence they never returned; and the two remaining tribes into Babylon, where they lived like exiles. God's vengeance is often compared to a *whirlwind;* see the note upon Jer. xxiii. 19.

Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned.] There was an entire riddance made of the inhabitants of Judea, in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, (see Jer. lii. 30.) so that the *highways were desolate,* as was threatened, Lev. xxvi. 22. (compare 2 Chron. xv. 5.) and the *land enjoyed her sabbaths,* as it is expressed 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. from that time, till their return from their captivity under Cyrus.

For they laid the pleasant land desolate.] The holy writers often call the land of promise by the name of the *pleasant land.* (See the note upon Dan. viii. 9.)

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CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

God promises the continuance of his favour to those that are returned from captivity; so that upon the removal of his judgments, they need no longer continue the fasts they had observed during the captivity: and withal promises in due time a general restoration of his people, and the enlargement of his church by the coming in of the gentiles.

Ver. 2. *I WAS jealous for Zion with great jealousy.*] Or, *I have been zealous for Zion with great zeal.* (See the note upon i. 14.)

And I was [or, have been] *zealous for Zion with great fury.*] I expressed my concern for her welfare, by the severe punishments I brought upon the Babylonians, their oppressors. (Compare Ezek. xxxvi. 5, 6.)

Ver. 3. *I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.*] See ii. 10.

And Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, &c.] Jerusalem shall be again the seat of truth and justice, her magistrates being restored to execute their authority there: and the temple upon Mount Moriah shall be again dedicated to God's worship, and honoured with his presence. (Compare Isa. i. 26. Jer. xxxi. 23.)

Ver. 4. *There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem.*] Whereas before the captivity the inhabitants were cut off in the midst of their years, by the sword, the famine, and the pestilence. (See Jer. xiv. 12. xv. 2. Ezek. v. 12.)

Ver. 5. *And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing,* &c.] As in the time of perfect peace and security.

Ver. 6. *If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes?*] Because, *The things which are impossible with men are possible with God,* Luke xviii. 27. Concerning the *remnant,* see the note upon Micah iv. 7.

Ver. 7. *I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country.*] The words of the original may be literally translated thus, *From the rising to the going down of the sun;* which signifies, from all parts of the world. (Compare Psal. l. i. cxiii. 3. Mal. i. 11.) This denotes the general restoration of the Jewish nation from their several dispersions, (compare ver. 13. 20. 23.) an event foretold by most of the prophets of the Old Testament. (See the note upon Isa. xi. 11.) *The west country* here mentioned hath a particular relation to their present dispersion, great numbers of them being in these latter ages settled in the *western parts* of the world. (See the note upon Isa. xxiv. 14. and upon Hos. xi. 10.)

Ver. 8. *And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.*] They shall be restored to their own country, and inhabit their capital city of Jerusalem, as in old time. (See the note upon Ezek. xxviii. 25, 26.)

And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.] They shall constantly serve and worship me, and I will bless and protect them. (See xiii. 9.)

In truth and in righteousness.] If we refer these words to God, the word *righteousness* is equivalent to mercy, as it is often used; and, joined with *truth,* implies God's faithfulness in performing his gracious promises: or the word may be understood of the people, that as God was faithful to them, so they will live in obedience to him.

Ver. 9. *Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets.*] Take courage to go on with the building of the temple, from these comfortable promises which are recited in this chapter, and which ye have formerly heard from the mouth of the prophets, Haggai (ii. 4.) and Zechariah, (iv. 9.)

Which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, &c.] Or, *Who spake in the day,* &c. Which makes the sense plainer. The prophet speaks of carrying on the building, as if it were laying a new foundation. (See Hag. ii. 18.)

Ver. 10. *For before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast.*] Or rather, *There was no reward for man, nor any reward for beast:* so the word *sekar* often signifies: (see Isa. xl. 10. lxii. 11.) *i. e.* the fruits of the earth would not pay the labour of those that manured it. (See Hag. i. 9—11. ii. 16, 17.)

For I set all men, every one against his neighbour.] The people of the land that dwelt amongst the Jews were continually molesting them. (See Ezra iv. 3, &c.)

Ver. 11. *But now I will not be to the residue of this people as in former days.*] Now you carry on the building of the temple. (See ver. 6. 9, 10.)

Ver. 12. *The ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew.*] Compare 1 Kings xvii. 1. I will take away the curse I formerly sent upon the fruits of the earth. (See Hag. i. 10.)

Ver. 13. *As ye were a curse among the heathen.*] A standing monument of the Divine vengeance; so that the heathen used this as a common form of imprecation, *God do so to me as he did to the Jews.* (See Isa. lxv. 15. Jer. xxix. 22.)

O house of Judah, and house of Israel.] This may be understood of the Jews belonging to the ten tribes, of whom several joined themselves to the tribe of Judah before the captivity, and were carried away with them to Babylon, and returned with them from thence. (Compare i. 19. ix. 13. x. 6. with 2 Chron. xi. 16. xxxiv. 33. Ezra vi. 17.) But the mentioning both Judah and Israel, which had been so long separated, shews that both the curse and the blessing here spoken of, in its ultimate sense, belongs to the whole body of the Jews, who, as they are a public instance of God's judgments now, so shall they be hereafter of his blessings; *viz.* at the general restoration and conversion of that nation: to which several promises in this chapter relate. (See ver. 7, 8. 20. 23. and the note upon Isa. xi. 13.)

So will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing.] See Isa. xix. 24, 25. and the note there.

Ver. 14, 15. *As I thought* [or, resolved] *to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, and repented not,* &c.] As I resolved to punish your fathers for their sins, and put my decrees in execution; (compare Jonah iii. 10.) so now I have determined to be favourable to you, and protect you from all your enemies. (Compare Jer. xxxi. 28.)

Ver. 16, 17. *These are the things that ye shall do,* &c.] These promises are conditional, and the performance of them will depend upon your observing the rules of justice and righteousness which I commanded your fathers by the

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prophets, as the *weightier matters of the law*, and now again enjoin them to you. (See vii. 9, 10.)

Ver. 16. *And execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates.*] Let those who have the public administration of justice, make it their chief intent to uphold truth and integrity, and maintain the public peace, by giving every man his due. The judges used to execute their office at the gates of the city. (See Deut. xxi. 19.)

Ver. 17. *And love no false oath.*] See v. 3, 4.

Ver. 19. *The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts.*] Besides the two *fasts* mentioned vii. 5. the Jews observed two others, that of the *fourth month*, answering to our June, wherein Jerusalem was taken, (Jer. lii. 6, 7.) and that of the *tenth month*, answering our December, when the Babylonian army began the siege of it, (ibid. ver. 4.) The prophet tells them, in answer to the question proposed, (vii. 3.) that they may now disuse these fasts, and lay aside the mournful circumstances with which they were solemnized; the judgments which occasioned them being removed.

Therefore love the truth and peace.] God values an upright conversation before the exactest care of outward performances. (See ver. 16. and the note upon vii. 9.) These instructions prepared men's minds for receiving the gospel, whose laws chiefly recommend purity of heart and life. (See Jer. xxxi. 33.)

Ver. 20, 21. *It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities—saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord,* &c.] A prophecy of the gentiles coming into the church, the expressions alluding to the Jews going up in companies to Jerusalem at their solemn feasts. (Compare Isa. ii. 2, 3. Micah iv. 1, 2.)

I will go also.] So every single person shall express his willingness to go along with them.

Ver. 22. *Yea, many people—shall come to seek the Lord of hosts at Jerusalem.*] Compare xiv. 16. Isa. lxvi. 23.

Ver. 23. *Ten men—out of the languages of all nations, shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you.*] Christians are sometimes called by the name of Jews, as being those to whom the promises made to the fathers of the Jewish nation do chiefly belong. (See Rom. ii. 28, 29. Rev. ii. 9.) In this sense the word is here to be understood. The text imports the heathen applying themselves to the Christians, especially to the pastors and ministers of the church, for instruction, in order to qualify themselves for admittance into the church. *Ten men*, is a figurative expression, putting a certain number for an uncertain; (see Ecclus. xxv. 9.) so the number *seven* is used, Isa. iv. 1. Micah v. 5. *To take hold* of another, is a gesture of entreating his friendly assistance. (See Isa. iii. 6. iv. 1.)

For we have heard that God is with you.] There are manifest tokens of the Divine grace and presence with you. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 25.)

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter begins a new prophecy: foretelling the conquests of Alexander the Great over Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine; and God's providence over his temple during this turbulent state of affairs. From thence the prophet takes occasion to describe, as in a parenthesis, the humble and peaceable coming of the Messias; and then, returning to his former subject, declares the conquests of the Jews, particularly the Maccabees, over the princes of the Grecian monarchy.

Ver. 1. *THE burden of the word of the Lord in* [or, against] *the land of Hadrach.*] *The burden of the word of the Lord*, is a burdensome prophecy, threatening ruin and destruction. (See Jer. xxiii. 33. Nahum i. 1.) Hadrach is not elsewhere mentioned as the name of a country: the context shews it must mean some part of Syria, of which Damascus was the capital city. The words may most probably be understood of Alexander the Great's conquering Syria; Damascus being at the same time betrayed to him, and all Darius's treasure, which was laid up there, delivered into his hands: as Dr. Prideaux relates the story, out of Arian and Curtius; par. i. book vii. under the third year of Darius Codomannus.

And Damascus shall be the rest thereof.] The words may signify, that Damascus was the chief stay and support of Syria, whose strength they relied upon for their security: or that the judgment here threatened should particularly afflict Damascus: in which sense the verb *nuach* is used, Isa. xxx. 32. where the text may be literally translated, *The staff or stroke which the Lord shall cause to rest upon him.* (See likewise xxv. 10. of the same prophecy.)

When the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be towards the Lord.] The words may be translated, *When the eyes of man, even of all the tribes of Israel,* &c. When the Jews saw the conqueror approach, it was proper for them to look up to God, and to implore his protection; which Jaddua the high-priest did, when Alexander besieged Tyre; and was directed by a vision to meet the conqueror in his pontifical robes, who received him very graciously; as the story is told with very remarkable circumstances by Josephus, Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 8. Some translate the sentence, *For the eyes of the Lord are upon man, as well as upon all the tribes of Israel; i. e.* God will punish the heathen nations for their sins, as well as his own people.

Ver. 2. *And Hamath also shall border thereby.*] The sense would be plainer thus, *And against Hamath also, which borders thereby;* importing, that Hamath shall not escape the conqueror's forces. There were two Hamaths: here is probably meant that Hamath which was the northern border of Judea, and is spoken of in the text as a bordering city. (See the note upon Amos vi. 2. 14.)

Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise.] Or, Against Tyre and Zidon, &c. They both shall be involved in the same calamity, although the Zidonians value themselves as the first inventors of letters and sciences, and are famous for their skill in navigation.

Ver. 3. *And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold.*] After the demolishing of Old Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, foretold by Isaiah, xxiii. and Ezekiel, xxvi.—xxviii. New Tyre was built in an island at the distance of half a mile from the shore; so its situation was very strong, and it was fortified with a wall round it a hundred and fifty feet high. (See Dr. Prideaux, in the forecited place.)

And heaped up silver as the dust, &c.] By her merchandise she had gained immense riches. (Ezek. xxviii. 4, 5.)

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Ver. 4. *Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.*] The Lord will dispossess her inhabitants, and the Carthaginians shall not be able to assist her with their naval forces; but the conquerors shall subdue her fortifications, though she be surrounded with the sea; and lay her stately buildings in ashes. (See Dr. Prideaux, under the fourth year of Darius.)

Ver. 5. *Ashkelon shall see it, and fear,* &c.] The cities of the Philistines, Ashkelon, Gaza, and Ekron, shall be very much terrified at the news of Tyre's being destroyed, from whence they hope for succours against the enemy.

For the king shall perish from Gaza.] That city was taken by Alexander after a two months' siege: ten thousand of the inhabitants slain, and the governor Betis dragged round the city till he was dead. *King* is a general word for any governor, in Hebrew, as hath been before observed. Strabo, speaking of Gaza, (lib. xvi.) saith, "It was formerly a city of note, but was destroyed by Alexander the Great, and remained desert or uninhabited." And so it is called, Acts viii. 26. and is to be distinguished from Gaza the sea-port, otherwise called Majuma; the old Gaza being a mile from the sea. (See St. Jerome de Locis Hebr.)

Ver. 6. *And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod.*] By a *bastard,* the LXX. and most interpreters understand foreigners, such as were not the native inhabitants of the place; and they understood it either of Alexander's conquests in those parts of Palestine where the natives were destroyed, or expelled out of their habitations, and strangers placed in their room; or else of the exploits of Judas Maccabeus against the Philistines, (1 Macc. v. 68.) and of Jonathan, who set fire to Azotus, and burnt and destroyed eight thousand men there, (ibid. x. 84, 85.) To this sense the Chaldee paraphrase understands the text, and renders it, *The family of Israel shall dwell in Ashdod, who before were in it as strangers.* A collection or succession of persons is sometimes expressed in the singular number. (See the note upon xi. 16.)

Ver. 7. *And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth.*] He shall be brought down so low that he shall not be in a condition to oppose his neighbours, as he did formerly; but they shall be delivered from his cruelty, just as the prey is taken out of the mouth of a wild beast, when he is just about to devour it.

But he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God.] Many of the Philistines became proselytes to the Jewish religion, after Alexander Janneus had subdued their principal cities, and made them part of his own dominions. (See Josephus, Antiq. lib. xiii. cap. 23.)

And he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.] They shall be equally capable of places of honour and trust with the Jews themselves, who shall look upon the Philistines as their fellow-citizens, just as the Israelites treated the Jebusites, the ancient inhabitants of Jerusalem. (See Judg. i. 21.)

Ver. 8. *And I will encamp about my house, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth.*] Compare vii. 14. During these military commotions the angels, who are God's host, shall be a guard to the temple at Jerusalem, (see ii. 5.) and I will turn the heart of Alexander that he shall shew favours towards the Jews, when he intended to humble them, and shall offer sacrifice to me in my temple. See this remarkable passage related at large out of Josephus by Dr. Prideaux, Script. Connex. under the fourth year of Darius Codomannus.

And no oppressor shall pass through them any more.] Or, *Any longer;* so the word should be rendered, Isa. li. 22. Nahum i. 12. (See Noldius, p. 682.) None of those that now threaten to invade or oppress them, shall prosper in their attempts against them. (See more in the note upon x. 4.)

For now I have seen it with mine eyes.] I am not regardless of them, but look upon their condition with an eye of pity and compassion. (Compare xii. 4. Exod. ii. 25. 2 Sam. xvi. 12.)

Ver. 9. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem.*] From the promise contained in the foregoing verse, of God's protecting his church and temple, the prophet, in a sudden transport, takes occasion to break forth into a joyful representation of the coming of the Messias.

Behold, thy King cometh unto thee.] He that is so often described in the prophets as the *King of Israel,* (see Psal. ii. 7. Jer. xxiii. 5.) was known by that name among the Jews in our Saviour's time, (see John i. 49.) and called elsewhere by the name of *David their king,* (Jer. xxx. 9. Hos. iii. 5.) He will certainly come in God's appointed time. (Compare Isa. lxii. 11.)

He is just, and having salvation.] Or, *He is righteous, and the Saviour:* He is that *righteous Branch,* and *the Lord our righteousness, who shall execute judgment and justice in the earth;* as he is described by Jeremiah, xxiii. 5. and *the righteousness* and *salvation, i. e.* the righteous one and Saviour, promised Isa. lxii. 1. The word *noshang, having salvation,* though it be a participle passive, is rendered a *Saviour* in all the ancient versions; several instances of the same kind may be seen in Pool's Synopsis.

Lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.] Or, *Even upon a colt,* &c. the copulative particle being sometimes used by way of explanation: (see the note upon Isa. li. 19. and Noldius's Concordance, p. 281.) for it appears by the evangelists, that our *Lord rode upon a young ass,* or *a colt, whereon never man sat;* (John xii. 14. Luke xix. 30.) wherein he shewed his lowliness, not affecting the pomp of the world, but coming with the same primitive simplicity as the patriarchs and judges used of old. (See Gen. xxii. 3. Judg. v. 10. x. 4.) When horses grew common among the Jews by their traffic with Egypt, (see 2 Kings x. 28. Isa. xxxi. 1, 2.) then riding upon asses was thought below the dignity of great persons. A learned prelate I have often had occasion to mention, in his Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, p. 105. hath fully proved, that the ancient Jews explained this prophecy of the Messias: and it is plain from the Gospels, that the Jews in Christ's time understood it so. For when our Lord applied this prophecy to himself, by entering into Jerusalem upon an ass, it so affected the multitude, that they *spread their garments and palm-branches in the way,* as at the reception of some great prince; (Matt. xxi. 8, 9.) nay, *his disciples* took occasion from this sight to *rejoice and to praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works they had seen,* concluding that now the *kingdom of David,* in the person of the Messias, would *immediately appear,* Mark xi. 10. Luke xix. 37, 38.

Ver. 10. *And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim,*

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and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen.] Peace is mentioned as the distinguishing character of Christ's church or kingdom: (see the note upon Isa. ii. 4.) here it is joined with freedom from annoyance both from foreign and domestic enemies, as it is elsewhere, (see Hos. ii. 18. Micah v. 5. 10. Hag. ii. 22.) These prophecies, as they foretell the outward peacefulness of Christ's church or kingdom, relate to the flourishing state of it, in the latter times of the world. (See the notes upon those texts.) Ephraim, or the *ten tribes*, is mentioned as distinct from Jerusalem, or the tribe of Judah. (Compare ver. 13. and x. 6, 7. and see the note upon viii. 13.)

And his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the earth.] The words are taken from Psal. lxxii. 8. where David describes the extent of Solomon's kingdom, that it should extend from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, and from the river Euphrates to the border of Egypt. (Compare Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. ix. 24. 1 Kings iv. 21.) This was a figurative description of Christ's kingdom, as may be proved from several expressions in that Psalm; which should be enlarged towards the four quarters of the world.

Ver. 11. *As for thee also.*] The prophet speaking in the name of God, directs his discourse either to the church of the faithful, which sense best agrees with the present Hebrew copies; where the pronoun and the affixes are in the feminine gender; or, if we suppose an enallage of the gender, it may be understood of Christ. Both the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin read, *Thou by the blood of thy covenant hast sent forth thy prisoners.*

By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.] The words import the deliverance of mankind from the bondage of sin and Satan, by virtue of the covenant sealed with the blood of Christ. (Compare Heb. xiii. 20.) The condition of men enslaved by sin and ignorance, is often compared to that of prisoners confined in chains and darkness, (see Isa. xlii. 7. lxi. 1.) By the *pit* is meant the lowest part of the prison, called the dungeon: (compare Isa. li. 14.) and so the Hebrew word *bôr* is translated Jer. xxxvii. 16. xxxviii. 6. Lam. iii. 53. 55. and *having no water*, is a description of such a dungeon as that into which Jeremiah was thrown.

Ver. 12. *Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.*] Ye that are under any bondage or oppression do not despair, (see Isa. xlix. 9.) but rely upon God's promises for deliverance; apply yourselves to him who is a strong tower of defence in time of trouble.

Even to-day do I declare, that I will render double unto thee.] I now declare, as I have formerly done by Isaiah, lxi. 7. that I will make you abundant amends for all the evils ye have suffered. The words allude to God's blessing Job after his affliction, when he *gave him double to what he had before*, (Job xlii. 10.)

Ver. 13. *When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim.*] When I have made Judah my bow, and Ephraim my arrow; used them as my instruments of war. In the Hebrew phrase the bow is said to *be filled with the arrow*, when the arrow is fitted to it: see 2 Kings ix. 24. where the Hebrew reads, *Jehu filled his hand with a bow*, *i. e.* by a usual hypallage, filled a bow with his hand: where the English expresses the sense, *He drew a bow with his full strength.* Judah and Ephraim, are equivalent to Judah and Israel. (See the note upon viii. 13.) The men of Ephraim were expert archers, (see Psal. lxxviii. 9.) to which the expression here may probably allude.

And raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece.] Enabled the Jews under the conduct of the Maccabees, to destroy the forces of the Syrian kings, Antiochus Epiphanes and others, who were the successors of Alexander, the founder of the Grecian monarchy. (See Dan. viii. 22. 1 Macc. i. 10.)

And made thee as the sword of a mighty man.] Given success to your arms, that none should be able to withstand thee.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord shall be seen over them.*] He shall give conspicuous tokens of his presence with them, and his presiding over them, and directing them in all their enterprises.

And his arrow shall go forth as the lightning.] Their force shall be irresistible: the lightning is often called God's *arrow*. (See Psal. xviii. 14. lxxvii. 18. cxliv. 6.)

And the Lord God shall blow the trumpet.] He shall give the signal of war, and shall encourage his soldiers to the battle.

And shall go with whirlwinds of the south.] Shall discomfit his enemies, as a whirlwind tears in pieces every thing that stands in its way. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 1.)

Ver. 15. *And the Lord of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling-stones.*] The hand of God shall visibly appear in protecting the Maccabees, and enabling them to conquer their enemies with as unequal a force as that of David was in respect of Goliath, when he subdued him with a *sling-stone*. (1 Sam. xvii. 50.)

And they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar.] They shall feast and rejoice for their victories; they shall offer sacrifices of thanksgiving to God, sprinkle the blood upon the horns of the altar, (see Lev. iv. 25.) and fill the bowls with the rest of it, to be poured out at the foot of it. (See xiv. 20. Deut. xii. 27.) Or, their courage shall be increased as when men's spirits are raised with wine, (see Psal. lxviii. 65.) and they shall be filled with the blood of their enemies, as the bowls and corners of the altar are with the blood of the sacrifices.

Ver. 16. *For they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.*] God shall make it known to the world how precious they are in his sight; (compare Isa. lxii. 3. Mal. iii. 17.) and his favour towards them shall be an encouragement to others to become proselytes to the true religion.

Ver. 17. *For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.*] Some begin a new chapter here, and suppose the prophet to return to what he had promised, viii. 12. The words magnify God's goodness and favour towards his people, in bestowing all sorts of plenty upon them: so that a fruitful harvest shall rejoice the hearts of the young men that bring it in, and a plentiful vintage shall make the maids cheerful that gather the grapes. (Compare Isa. xvi. 10. Jer. xlviii. 33.) *New wine* is put here for the grapes which make it: (compare Jer. xl. 12.) as *bread* signifies bread-corn, Isa. xxviii. 28. xxx. 23. But the words may be understood to denote that plenty which some of the prophets speak of as a concomitant of the reign of the Messias. (Joel iii. 18. Amos ix. 14.)

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CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet deters the Jews from seeking to idols, by putting them in mind of the calamities idolatry brought upon their forefathers. Afterward he foretells a general restoration of the Jewish nation.

Ver. 1. *ASK of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain.*] The fulfilling of the promise of fruitful seasons, (ix. 17.) depends upon the people's asking them from God; who will hear their petitions, and give them both the *former* rain, and also the *latter*, in its season. This usually fell in the *first month*, (Joel ii. 23.) and was very useful for plumping the corn, and therefore very much desired. (See Job xxix. 23. Prov. xvi. 15.)

So the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.] Or *lightnings*, as the margin reads, and as the word is rendered, Job xxviii. 25. Great rains usually accompany thunder and lightning. (See Jer. x. 13.)

Ver. 2. *For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie*, &c.] Whenever you or your fathers consulted idols or diviners, when they wanted rain, (see Jer. xiv. 22.) or in any other time of distress; neither the priests who delivered answers from the idols, nor the diviners who pretended to direct men by the help of dreams or visions, have been any way beneficial to them. The word translated *idol* is *teraphim* in the original: concerning the sense of it, see the note upon Hos. iii. 4. The idols are said here to *speak vanity; i. e.* by the answers the priests gave in their name: for elsewhere they are called *dumb idols*, (Habak. ii. 18.) *which have mouths and speak not*, (Psal. cxv. 5.)

Therefore they went away as a flock, &c.] They went into captivity, and came into great distress; as sheep are driven away and scattered, that have no shepherd to guide or protect them. (Compare Jer. l. 17. Ezek. xxxiv. 5.)

Ver. 3. *Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats.*] I was justly displeased with the Jewish rulers, both ecclesiastical and civil, (see the notes upon Isa. lvi. 2. Jer. xxiii. 1. Ezek. xxxiv. 2.) as I had severely threatened them by my prophets, before the captivity, which came upon the whole nation as a judgment for their sins, especially upon those wicked Jews who were their instruments in oppressing the people. (See Ezek. xxxiv. 17.)

An eminent divine understands these three verses of the Jews that remained in Babylon, who either consulted the idols of the gentiles, or else such false prophets among the Jews there, as were addicted to divination, and such-like idolatrous practices. (Compare Jer. xxix. 8. 15. 24.) These all prophesied drought, famine, and such-like calamities to those Jews that should return into Judea; and therefore are called *vain comforters:* such as Job complained of, xvi. 2. By this means some of the people were detained at Babylon without any form of government among themselves, and were as a flock without a shepherd. *Shepherds* and *goats*, mentioned ver. 3. he explains of the great men of the Jews who stayed behind at Babylon: these he distinguishes from those that returned home, who are called God's *flock*, in the following words.

For [or rather, but] *the Lord of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah*, &c.] But now God hath given his people manifest tokens of his favour and protection, (see ix. 16.) in prospering their arms under the conduct of Judas Maccabeus, and making them victorious over their enemies. The chief use which the Jews made of horses was in war. (See Prov. xxi. 31. Isa. xxxi. 1, 2.)

Ver. 4. *Out of him came forth* [or, shall come forth] *the corner, out of him the nail*, &c.] It is owing to God's favour that they have a captain, or ruler, to support their commonwealth; such was in an eminent manner Judas Maccabeus; that they have a settled state and government, whereon private men may rely for the security of their lives and properties: the word *pinnah*, translated *corner*, signifies likewise a prince or a leader; and so it is taken, Numb. xxiv. 17. Judg. xx. 2. 1 Sam. xiv. 38. Isa. xix. 13. The word rendered *nail* signifies any person on whom others have a dependance, (see Isa. xxii. 23. 25.) as also the public settlement of a state, (Ezra ix. 8.)

Out of him every oppressor together.] As the Greek word *tyrant* was at first equivalent in signification to a *king*, but afterward degenerated into a worse denomination: so the Hebrew *nogesh* usually signifies an *oppressor*, but is sometimes taken in a general sense for a prince or governor: so it probably signifies, Isa. lx. 17. where our English renders it, *Make thine exactors righteousness:* but the Chaldee paraphrase expresseth it by *shultanim, princes:* the LXX. translate it Ἐπισκόπους, *overseers;* which made some of the fathers apply that text to the bishops of the Christian church. This sense of the word agrees best with the scope of this place, and the Chaldee understands it so here. Thus the word may be understood, ix. 8. so as to signify the commander or general of an army.

Ver. 5. *And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets: because the Lord is with them.*] God shall inspire them with courage to subdue their enemies, and trample upon their carcasses. (Compare Psal. xviii. 42. Isa. xli. 25.) This may be understood either of the Maccabees, or of the victories which the Jews should obtain over their enemies in the latter times, (see xii. 6.) to which the following part of the chapter seems to relate.

And the riders on horses shall be confounded.] Compare xii. 4. We may expound this of the discomfiture of Antiochus's armies by the Maccabees, whose strength lay chiefly in their horse, (see Dan. xi. 40.) as that text is understood by several commentators.

Ver. 6. *And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph*, &c.] This promise is probably to be understood of the general restoration of the Jewish nation upon their conversion; a subject often treated of by the prophets in the Old Testament, where Judah and Israel are spoken of as equal sharers in this blessing. (Compare Ezek. xxxvii. 16, &c. and see the note upon Isa. xi. 11.)

And will hear them.] See xiii. 9.

Ver. 7. *And they of Ephraim shall be as a mighty man.*] Ephraim is equivalent here to the ten tribes, as the *house of Joseph* is, ver. 6. (See the note upon Hos. v. 3.)

And their heart shall rejoice as through wine.] Which raises men's spirits and courage. (See ix. 15.)

Yea, their children shall see it, and be glad, &c.] Their

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successes shall end in a lasting peace, for which their posterity shall have occasion to return thanks to God. (See ver. 9.)

Ver. 8. *I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them.*] I will summon them from distant countries by a certain signal, as a shepherd calls his flock together with his whistle, (compare Isa. v. 26. vii. 18.) which shall assemble them together, in order to bring them back into their own country, (ver. 10.) *for I will redeem them* out of the hand of their enemies. The prophets often speak of a thing future, as if it were already accomplished. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 9.)

And they shall increase as they have increased.] In the most flourishing times, such as were the reigns of David and Solomon.

Ver. 9. *And I will sow them among the people.*] I will multiply them among the nations, where they are dispersed. (Compare Hos. ii. 23.)

And they shall remember me from afar.] *From among all the nations where they are scattered,* as the prophets elsewhere express it. (See Deut. xxx. 1. 4. Jer. xxx. 10, 11. Ezek. xi. 16. xxviii. 25. xxxiv. 13.) As men are said to forget God when they forget their duty to him, so remembering him denotes their returning to their obedience.

And they shall live with their children, and turn again.] They shall return to their own country, and enjoy it, they and their posterity. (See Isa. lxv. 23. Ezek. xxviii. 25. Amos ix. 14.)

Ver. 10. *And I will bring them again also out of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria.*] Egypt and Assyria were two potent kingdoms which bordered upon Judea, so that by turns they were either allies to the Jews, or their conquerors; and the Jews either went thither for refuge, or were carried thither captives; (see Hos. ix. 3.) whereupon the prophets, when they foretell the general restoration of their nation, often express it by their returning from Egypt and Assyria. (See Isa. xi. 15, 16. xix. 23—25. xxviii. 13. Hos. xi. 11.) We may likewise observe, that God's bringing his people again from Egypt, was a proverbial expression, to signify any deliverance, as great or greater than that. (See Psal. lxviii. 22. Micah vii. 15.) So here the words of the following verse allude to the Israelites passing through the Red Sea.

I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon.] Two countries remarkable for their fruitfulness. (See Jer. xxii. 6. Micah vii. 14.)

And place shall not be found for them.] They shall multiply so fast, that there shall not be room enough in Judea to receive them and their families. (Compare Isa. xlix. 20.)

Ver. 11. *And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves of the sea, and all the deeps of the rivers shall be dried up.*] The sense might be more properly expressed thus, *And he* (Israel) *shall pass through the straits of the sea;* so the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin understand it, meaning a branch of the Red Sea; *and* (God) *shall smite the waves of the sea,* &c. The expressions allude to the miraculous passage of the Israelites over an arm of the Red Sea, when God dried up the waters of that sea, or river, before them. (See Exod. xiv. 21. Josh. ii. 10.) And this imports, that God would do as great things for them as he did formerly for their fathers: to this sense the Chaldee expounds the words. (See the note upon the foregoing verse, and compare Isa. xi. 15.) If we would distinguish betwixt the *sea* and the *rivers,* we may understand the *river* of Jordan, whose waters were dried up to make a passage for the Israelites into the land of promise. (See Josh. iv. 23.)

And the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.] By Assyria and Egypt are meant in general the enemies of God and of his truth, who shall all be subdued, and broken in pieces by the kingdom of Christ, when he shall come in glory to set up his kingdom on the earth. (See Dan. ii. 33, 34. Isa. lx. 12.) The Assyrian is taken in this sense, Isa. xiv. 25. Micah v. 5. and both Egypt and Assyria may probably be so understood, Isa. xix. 23. (See the notes upon those texts.)

Ver. 12. *I will strengthen them in the Lord.*] God shall be their strength and protection. (See ver. 5.)

And they shall walk up and down in his name.] Or, *Walk in his name; i. e.* their lives and actions shall be under the conduct of his laws, and he shall give them success answerable to their upright intentions.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet, representing the person of the Messias, declares the ungrateful requitals the Jews had made him, *when he undertook the office of a shepherd, in guiding and governing them;* how they rejected him, and valued him and his labours at the mean price of *thirty pieces of silver.* Hereupon he threatens to destroy their city and temple, and to give them up into the hands of such governors, as should have no regard either for their spiritual or temporal welfare.

Ver. 1. *OPEN thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars.*] By Lebanon most interpreters understand the temple, whose stately buildings resemble the tall cedars of that forest. Thus the word is commonly understood, Habak. ii. 17. There is a remarkable story mentioned in the Jewish writers to this purpose: "Some time before the destruction of the temple, the doors of it opened of their own accord; a circumstance attested by Josephus, (Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 12.) Then R. Johanan, a disciple of R. Hillel, directing his speech to the temple, said, *I know thy destruction is at hand, according to the prophecy of Zechariah; open thy doors, O Lebanon,*" &c.

The words may likewise denote the destruction of Jerusalem, elsewhere called by the name of a *forest;* her lofty buildings resembling the stately ranks of trees in a forest. (Compare Jer. xxi. 14. xxii. 7. 23. Ezek. xx. 46.)

Ver. 2. *Howl, fir-tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled.*] By the several sorts of trees are meant the several orders and degrees of men, who shall be sharers in the common destruction. (See Isa. ii. 13. x. 33, 34. and the notes there.)

Howl, ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is cut down.] Or, *The defenced forest,* as it is in the margin, according to a different reading of the Hebrew text, which gives a proper representation of Jerusalem, with the fortifications about it. If we follow the reading of the English text, the *forest of the vintage* may probably mean Carmel; (see the note upon Isa. xxxvii. 24.) which being placed in

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the north-west parts of Judea, and joined here with Bashan that lay south-east, may denote that the calamity shall be general. Bashan was famous for its stately oaks. (See Isa. ii. 13.)

Ver. 3. *There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds.*] By *shepherds* are meant the chief rulers of the Jews. (See the note upon x. 3.)

A voice of the roaring of young lions.] So he calls the princes and governors of the Jews, because they devoured the people by their oppressions. (See Zeph. iii. 3.) So Achilles calls Agamemnon Δημόβορος Βασιλεὺς, *a blood-sucking king.* (Iliad. i.)

For the pride of Jordan is spoiled.] The lion may be called the *pride* of the forest, as being the stateliest beast that rules there; as beasts that prey upon others are called the *children of pride,* Job xli. 34. Lions are styled here the *pride of Jordan,* because they lay in the thickets about the banks of Jordan. The words may be rendered, *the swelling of Jordan,* as they are translated, Jer. xlix. 19. At the time of the swelling, or overflowing of Jordan, the lions were raised out of their coverts, and infested the country. (See the note upon that text.)

Ver. 4. *Thus saith the Lord my God, Feed the flock of the slaughter.*] A learned prelate, in his Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, (chap. iii. 1.) observes, that the actions of the prophets are sometimes typical; *i. e.* they represent in themselves the persons and circumstances of others. (See the note upon iii. 8.) So here Zechariah was commanded by God to act the part of Christ, the *good Shepherd,* and to *feed the flock of the slaughter,* that flock which their shepherds destroyed, instead of feeding them.

Ver. 5. *Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say,* &c.] Whose rulers deal with their flock as so many butchers; and think they have a right to slay or sell them, and thank God that they have a good market: or believe that they may lawfully *make merchandise* of their souls for their own lucre and advantage. (Compare 2 Pet. ii. 3. Rev. xviii. 13.)

Ver. 6. *For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land,* &c.] Nor shall their condition at all grow better, saith God, for I will shew no more pity for the main body of the people than their rulers do. *The inhabitants of the land* are to be distinguished from *the poor of the flock* in the following verse. As to the former, God declares by his prophet, that he will leave some of them to perish by their mutual and intestine divisions, (see ver. 9.) as many of the Jews did when the Roman army invaded Judea. Others of them he would deliver into the hands of Vespasian, whose predecessor the Jews had owned for their *king,* at the same time when they disclaimed their Messias, and disowned his right to reign over them, (John xix. 15.) and his army shall *smite* the land with utter destruction. (Compare Mal. iv. 6.)

Ver. 7. *And* [or, but] *I will feed the flock of the slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock.*] Or, *Even,* or *especially, the poor of the flock.* Zechariah, representing the person of Christ the *true Shepherd,* saith, he entered upon his office, and undertook the care of the *slaughtered flock,* chiefly out of a regard to the meek and humble among them; for to such are the benefits of the gospel peculiarly promised. (See Isa. xi. 4. lxi. 1. Zeph. iii. 12. and the notes upon those texts.)

And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands.] A staff or crook is the proper ensign of a shepherd: the shepherds of old time had two rods or staves; one turned round at top, that it might not hurt the sheep; this was for counting them, and separating the sound from the diseased: (see Lev. xxvii. 32.) the other had an iron hook at the end of it, to pull in the stray sheep, and hold them fast while the shepherd corrected them: the Psalmist mentions both these, Psal. xxiii. 4. *Thy rod and thy staff comfort me.*

The first staff he called *Beauty,* or *delight,* as the word *Naom* may be rendered, *i. e.* his favour, gentleness, or kindness, towards his people: so the word signifies, Psal. xc. 17. and this was remarkably verified in our Saviour Christ, whose *gracious words* and beneficial works were conspicuous through the whole course of his life. The other staff he called *Bands,* by which is meant that *bond of the new covenant,* (as the words of Ezekiel may be understood, xx. 37.) whereby he intended to unite both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah under himself as their head and king; (see Ezek. xxxvii. 22.) and then afterward to unite the Jews and gentiles into one *church,* by *breaking down the partition-wall* that was *between them.* (See John x. 16. Ephes. ii. 14.)

Ver. 8. *Three shepherds also I cut off in one month.*] We may probably explain these *three shepherds* of the *chief priests, scribes,* and *elders* of the Jews. Christ exposed these as *blind guides,* and thereby lessened their authority among the people; which contributed very much to the spreading of the gospel: (see John xii. 19.) *one month* seems a proverbial expression for a short time. (See Hos. v. 7.)

And my soul loathed them, and they also abhorred me.] Or, *My soul was straitened towards them,* as the Hebrew may be literally translated; *i. e.* I was straitened in my affections to them: so the Greek word στενοχωρεῖσθαι, *to be straitened,* is used, 2 Cor. vi. 12. which exactly answers the Hebrew *katsar.* I was less tender towards them, than towards the *poor of the flock,* because they shewed themselves averse to my person and doctrine. The Hebrew word *bachala, abhorred,* is never met with but here: Maimonides supposes that it alludes to *Chebel,* or *Chobelim, Bands,* ver. 7. the two words differing only by a transposition of letters. (More Nevoch. lib. ii. cap. 43.) Such allusions are frequent in Scripture. (See the notes upon Isa. xxiv. 17. Jer. i. 11, 12.)

Ver. 9. *Then said I, I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die,* &c.] I found in a little time that my labour did not meet with a suitable return, a great part of my sheep proving untractable: so I resolved to be their shepherd no longer, but leave them to be consumed by the common calamities of death, famine, &c. or to be cut off by their enemies, the Romans, just as the lesser cattle are pushed and gored by the greater; (see Ezek. xxxiv. 21.) and those that escape those calamities shall destroy one another by their civil discords. (See ver. 6. and compare Isa. ix. 21. xlix. 20.) The word translated *cut off,* signifies likewise being consumed, or ready to perish. (See ver. 16.)

Ver. 10. *So I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break the covenant which I had made with all my people.*] Thus the covenant which I had made with the whole nation of the Jews was broken, and I excluded them from having any benefit in the second covenant, that

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of the gospel: they were to be *my people* no longer. (See Dan. ix. 26. Hos. i. 9. and the note upon xiii. 9. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 11. *And it was broken in that day: so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the Lord.*] Or, *And in that day it was broken: the poor of the flock*, &c. The few believing Jews that attended upon my preaching, (ver. 7.) were convinced that this was God's doing, and the fulfilling those judgments which he had threatened by his prophets.

Ver. 12. *And I said unto them,*] Or, *I had said unto them; i. e.* before I broke my staff, called Beauty, or delight, ver. 10.

If ye think good, give me my price [or, my hire]; *and if not, forbear.*] Christ still persists to act the character of a shepherd, and, in an humble manner, demands of the Jews what price they put upon his labour. He was resolved to use no constraint, but leave it to themselves to continue or discharge him. In the same style our Lord himself speaks, (John xii. 47.) *If any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not.*

So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.] To shew how little they cared for me or my service, they valued it but at *thirty shekels* of silver, the price of the meanest slave. (See Exod. xxi. 32.)

Ver. 13. *And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them!*] God commanded the prophet in a vision, as personating Christ, to cast the money in a contemptuous manner to the potter, as a reward only suitable to his labour, and a price only fit for such wares as he sold, which were of the meanest value. (See Lam. iv. 2.)

And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to [or, for] *the potter in the house of the Lord.*] I cast them back into the treasury in the temple, where afterward they were laid out for the use of the potter. This whole transaction performed by Zechariah in a vision, was designed to be an exact representation of the several circumstances that attended the betraying the Messiah by Judas, the price the chief priests put upon him (to whom as the governors of the temple the money was returned), and the use to which the money was applied. (See Matt. xxvii. 6. 10.) This whole *prophetic scene* is represented in the single person of Zechariah, just as Ezekiel sustains the *type* or *figure* both of the Chaldean army that should besiege Jerusalem, and of the Jews themselves that were besieged. (Ezek. iv. 1. 12.)

This is one of those prophecies, whose literal sense is fulfilled in our blessed Saviour, and cannot be applied to any other person, but in a very remote or improper sense. The like instances may be seen in Psal. xxii. 16. 18. lxix. 21. Hos. xi. 1. The Jews themselves have expounded this prophecy of the Messiah. Christoph. Helvicus, in his Elenchus Judæorum, quotes Bereshith Rabbi on Gen. xlix. as bringing in the Messiah speaking the very words of the twelfth verse here, in his own person. And Dr. Alix, against the Unitarians, p. 336. cites Rabbi Menahem, applying the *selling the just for silver*, mentioned here and Amos ii. 6. of the *selling the Schechinah*, by which they understood the Messias, whom they often speak of as being the true God. (See the same author, p. 286.)

Ver. 14. *Then I cut asunder my other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.*] As they refused to be united under me their head, so in breaking my other staff, I foreshewed the destruction of Jerusalem, the bond and cement of all their tribes, being the seat and centre both of their civil power and of the Divine worship. (See Psal. cxxxii. 3—5.) The consequence of that was the entire dissolution of the nation, and the dispersion and confusion of all their tribes, whose families could no longer be distinguished after the loss of their genealogies.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord said unto me, Take thee yet* [or, once more] *the instruments of a foolish shepherd.*] As Zechariah in the foregoing vision had acted the part of the true Shepherd, so here he is commanded to take upon him the character and furniture of a *foolish* or unprofitable shepherd. (See ver. 17.) *Folly* in Scripture is equivalent to *wickedness;* so it may mean not only unskilful, but likewise ill-designing governors, who should only intend their own advantage, and have no regard for the good of the flock, or people, committed to their charge. The instruments of such a shepherd must be suitable to his own indiscretion; *viz.* a scrip with holes, and a stick or crook made to push and *hurt* the flock, not to protect or defend them.

Ver. 16. *For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land.*] A *shepherd* in the singular number denotes a succession of such governors as are described in the following words: so the succession of priests is represented under the single person of Levi, Mal. ii. 5, 6. Since the Jews had rejected the *true Shepherd*, God threatens to send, or permit, such shepherds to rule over them, as should be notorious for their negligence and avarice, their cruelty and oppression. This may be understood either of the *blind guides*, who conducted their consciences with avarice and tyranny, or of the *false Christs* and *false prophets*, who often misled them to their ruin [or it may be meant of the miseries which they suffered under Hadrian, and other Roman emperors, as St. Jerome interprets it]; or else it may be expounded of the latter times of the Roman empire, during its administration under the *ten horns*, (Rev. xvii. 12.) by whom they have been at divers times plundered, persecuted, and destroyed, without mercy; as may be seen particularly in Basnage's History of the Jews, book vii.

Who shall not visit that which is cut off.] The LXX. render it, *that which is missing;* and it may signify, *that which is ready to perish.* (See ver. 9.)

Nor seek the young one.] Or, *That which is scattered,* or wandering. So all the ancient interpreters render it, reading *noar* in the Hebrew, where the word is now pointed *naar.*

Nor feed that which standeth still.] Which continues in the flock sound and well, in opposition to those that wander, or are diseased. The words may be translated, *Nor number that which standeth still.* It is the business of a careful shepherd to number his flock, and see that none be wanting.

But he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear [or, break] *their claws in pieces.*] *i. e.* He shall enrich himself by oppressing those that are of substance, and deprive them of all ability of defending themselves. (Compare Ezek. xxxiv. 3.)

Ver. 17. *Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock.*] Who taketh no care of the flock, and minds nothing but making his own profit out of them. Such a shepherd is no

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better than an *idol, that is profitable for nothing,* (Isa. xliv. 10.) and hath only the outward form and appearance of a shepherd. The sentence may be rendered, *Woe to the shepherd of no value;* so the word *elil* is translated, Job xiii. 4.

The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye; &c.] As he has abused his power and his understanding, signified by his *arm* and his *right eye,* God shall in his just judgment deprive him of the use of both those faculties. A *sword* is put for any instrument of the Divine vengeance: so it is used, xiii. 7. Jer. l. 35—37. Amos ix. 10. and in other places.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

The former part of this chapter and several passages in the fourteenth, relate to an invasion made upon the inhabitants of Judea and Jerusalem, in the *latter times* of the world, probably after their *return to,* and settlement in, their own land, which is often spoken of by the prophets. It is probably the same attempt that is more largely described in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel. Mr. Mede and several other learned men are inclined to understand that prophecy of the Turks and their confederates. See the Argument to those chapters, and particularly xxxviii. 8. 12. where the expressions seem to point out the time when that and the parallel prophecies are to be fulfilled.

Ver. 1. *THE burden of the word of the Lord for Israel.*] Or, *Towards Israel.* The Hebrew word *massa* is often translated a *burden; i. e.* a burdensome prophecy: (see ix. 1.) but it likewise signifies a prophecy in general, as it does particularly in this place, also Lam. ii. 14. and Mal. i. 1. and is sometimes interpreted *vision,* in the Chaldee paraphrase.

Who stretcheth forth the heavens, &c.] These are mentioned as undeniable instances of God's power, and are made use of as arguments to encourage men to rely on his word for fulfilling such promises, which seem to human understanding most unlikely to be brought to pass. (Compare Isa. xlii. 5. xliv. 24. xlv. 18. xlviii. 13.)

And formeth the spirit of man within him.] He that creates the soul, and unites it to the body. (See Numb. xvi. 22. Eccles. xii. 7. Isa. lvii. 16. Heb. xii. 9.)

Ver. 2. *Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about.*] The nations that besiege Jerusalem shall be in the same condition with those that are overcome with poisonous or intoxicating liquors, and thereby bereaved of their strength and understanding. (See ver. 4. and compare Isa. li. 17. 22.)

When [or, even although] *they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.*] Even although they be so numerous as to invade Judah and besiege Jerusalem at the same time. By comparing this place with xiv. 14. we may conjecture, that some of the Jews shall return before the rest, and possess themselves of Jerusalem; they shall no sooner be seated there, but all the Mahometan nations shall confederate against them; then the other Jews shall *fly* home *like doves to their windows,* or nests, (Isa. lx. 8.) where they shall all be attacked by multitudes of Turkish forces and their confederates.

Ver. 3. *And in that day.*] The same expression is repeated, ver. 4. 6. 9. 11. and xiii. 1, 2. 4. xiv. 6. 8. 20. The phrase signifies, in the prophets, an extraordinary season, remarkable for some signal events of Providence. (See the note upon Isa. iv. 2.) This prophecy may probably be understood of the invasions which the enemies of God and his truth shall attempt against the Jews after their conversion. (Compare xiv. 1—3. 13, 14. Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. Micah v. 8, &c.)

Will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people.] St. Jerome upon the place thinks that a *burdensome stone* is an expression taken from an exercise kept up in Judea to his time, *where young men used to make trial of their strength by lifting great stones as high as they could.* In such an exercise, where men undertook to lift a stone too heavy for their strength, they were in danger of its falling upon them, and bruising or crushing them to pieces. To the same sense Christ saith, *On whomsoever this stone shall fall, it will grind him to powder,* (Matt. xxi. 44.) The same danger shall they incur, who enter into acts of hostility with the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

All they that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces.] All that undertake to contend with it, shall have their flesh torn and bruised like men that let a heavy stone fall upon them.

Ver. 4. *In that day I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness,* &c.] The Turks are famous for their cavalry, wherein the strength of their armies consists; so, in order to their discomfiture, God will send a distraction among the horses and their riders, who shall be put into such a confusion as to fall foul one upon another, (see xiv. 13.) and not be able to distinguish between their friends and their foes; they shall be as if they were struck with blindness, just as the Syrian army was when they surrounded the door of Elisha, (2 Kings vi. 18.)

And I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah.] I will have an especial concern for their preservation. (Compare ix. 18.)

Ver. 5. *The governors of Judah shall say in their hearts, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength,* &c.] The marginal reading is to be preferred, *There is strength to me and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the Lord of hosts our God.* God doth visibly interpose for our deliverance, and thereby encourage us to rely on his protection.

Ver. 6. *In that day will I make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood,* &c.] They shall devour all their enemies that annoy them. (See ver. 9. Obad. ver. 18. and the note upon that place.)

And they shall devour all the people round about them, to the right hand and to the left.] *i. e.* Southward and northward. (See the note upon Ezek. xvi. 46. so Isa. ix. 20.) The *right hand* and the *left,* is explained in the Targum by the *south* and the *north.*

And Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place.] See xiv. 10.

Ver. 7. *The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first.*] This shall be the order whereby this victory shall be accomplished; the Lord shall first give success to the body of the Jewish nation that encamp in the open country, that the valour of the house of David, and of the people that defend Jerusalem from within, may not eclipse the courage of the people without the walls, and puff up one party

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against the other. The inhabitants of Jerusalem used to value themselves above their brethren, because their city was the place of God's residence, and the seat of the royal family; to take away all occasion of such an emulation, God will first appear in behalf of those Jews that live in the open country.

Ver. 8. *In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David.*] He shall inspire those within the city with unusual courage, so that the feeblest among them shall do as great exploits as David did of old.

And the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.] Or, *At the head of them.* The Messias, who is the principal branch of the house of David, shall lead them on, as he formerly went before the Israelites in the wilderness, and conducted them to the land of Canaan, by the name of the *angel of God's presence.* (See Exod. xxiii. 20, &c. Isa. lxiii. 9. and the note there.)

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass, that I will seek to destroy all the nations,* &c.] See ver. 3. 6.

Ver. 10. *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications,* &c.] I will bestow a plentiful share of grace upon the descendants of David's family, and the rest of the Jews, whereby they shall be brought to a deep humiliation for their own sins, and a true compunction of heart for the great sin of their forefathers in crucifying me their Lord and Saviour. The conversion of the Jews is compared by St. Paul to *life from the dead,* Rom. xi. 15. and therefore must be effected by an extraordinary and uncommon degree of grace, which shall then be given them (see Isa. liv. 13. Ezek. xxxix. 29. Joel ii. 28. and the notes upon those places): such an efficacious call as may bring them to a due sense of their own and their fathers' sins, and a hearty lamentation for them. (See Jer. xxxi. 9. l. 4. Ezek. xvi. 61. 63. xx. 43. xxxvi. 31. and the notes there.)

And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn over him as one that mourneth for his only son.] The words point out the outward means whereby their conversion shall be wrought; *viz.* that the Lord, *i. e.* the Messias, *shall come:* (xiv. 5.) *i. e.* Christ shall appear in the heavens, *sitting on a bright cloud,* as his coming is described, Rev. xiv. 14. (Compare i. 7. Dan. vii. 13.) This is probably meant by *the sign of the Son of man in heaven,* mentioned Matt. xxiv. 30. compared with Mark xiii. 26. This sight shall strike them with horror and astonishment for their sin in rejecting *me* their God, whom their fathers put to an ignominious death, and themselves have by their blasphemies crucified afresh. Then they shall beg pardon for their own and their fathers' sins, with the deepest signs of mourning and humiliation, expressed by a proverbial speech, as equal to the mourning of a father for an only son. (Compare Jer. vi. 26. Amos viii. 10.)

The Jews themselves have applied this text to the Messias, as may be seen in Grotius's notes upon the place, and Bishop Pearson's Exposition of the fourth article of the Creed. David did before describe his sufferings under the figure of *piercing his hands and his feet,* Psal. xxii. 16. and Isaiah foretold he should be wounded for our *transgressions,* liii. 5. This text is at large explained and vindicated in the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield's Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, p. 107.

Ver. 11. *In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.*] Josiah was slain at, or near Megiddo; (2 Kings xxiii. 29.) it may be the field where the battle was fought might be called Hadadrimmon. St. Jerome saith, it was a place near Jezreel, called in his time Maximianopolis. The valley or plain of Jezreel was a large plain, (see Josh. xvii. 16.) called the *plain of Esdraelon,* Judith i. 8. it comprehended the valley of Megiddo in it. There the lamentation for Josiah began, which was continued from thence to Jerusalem, whither his body was brought to be buried, where *all Judah mourned for him,* and appointed an anniversary commemoration and lamentation for him. (2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25.) So the mourning for Josiah became a proverb for a public and solemn lamentation. Such a national humiliation shall the Jews observe for their crucifying the Messias.

Ver. 12. *And the land shall mourn, every family apart.*] The whole land shall mourn in a most solemn manner; and every family shall sequester themselves from business and conversation for that purpose. (Compare vii. 3.)

The house of David apart, and their wives apart.] Those of the royal family who have rejected Christ shall lead the way. Even husbands and wives shall abstain from each other's company, as is usual in times of solemn humiliation: (see Joel ii. 16.) or, as a very learned person suggests, in solemn processions it was usual for the several orders of men to go distinctly, and likewise for the women to go in ranks by themselves; this was in all likelihood used in funeral mournings, where each tribe or order of men and women used a distinct form of lamentation. For example, the tribe of Judah lamented, *Ah, my brother!* the rest of the tribes answered, *Ah, Lord!* (see Jer. xxii. 18.) This probably was done in the mourning for Josiah, (see 1 Esdras i. 32.) and observed in the times after the return from captivity, (see 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. compared with xxxvi. 22.) to which ceremony the expressions of the text allude.

The family of the house of Nathan.] David had a son named Nathan, (2 Sam. v. 14. Luke iii. 31.) This branch of the royal family seems here meant.

Ver. 13. *The family of Shimei apart.*] Some suppose that this family was noted for breeding up persons eminent in the knowledge of the law; such was Sameas, a noted rabbi, who lived in our Saviour's time, as St. Jerome informs us in his commentary on Isa. viii. The LXX. read the *house of Simeon;* which tribe was intermixed with that of Judah. (Josh. xix. 9.)

Ver. 14. *All the families that remain apart.*] The prophet having mentioned the tribes and families of chiefest note in his time, comprises the rest under this general expression.

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

A general promise of pardon proclaimed to the Jews upon their conversion, and particularly of their being cleansed from idolatry, and the false pretences to prophecy, upon their belief in Christ; whose death is foretold, and the saving of a third part of that people, after a severe trial.

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Ver. 1. *IN that day shall a fountain be opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.*] The *house of David,* with the other *inhabitants of Jerusalem,* upon their solemn humiliation, described xii. 13, 14. and *believing in him whom they had crucified and rejected,* shall obtain a full and free pardon of all their sins, being admitted into the church of Christ by baptism. (See Acts ii. 38, 39. xiii. 38, 39.) The word *fountain* properly expresses the *Christian baptism,* which was often administered in fountains and rivers; and likewise alludes to the Jewish *washings,* which were usually performed in running waters, and were prescribed for the expiation of legal pollutions, expressed here by the word *niddah,* which properly signifies *separation* from the company of others; a censure inflicted by the law upon unclean persons. Kimchi understands it of the captivity or destruction of the Jews, inflicted upon them for their sins, which sequestered them from their own land, and made them unfit to attend upon God's worship; as unclean persons were excluded from the precincts of the temple. (Compare Ezek. xxxvi. 17.)

Ver. 2. *I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembered.*] The Jews were forbidden to mention the names of the heathen idols, if they could avoid it: (see Exod. xxiii. 13. Josh. xxiii. 7. Psal. xvi. 4.) so when idolatry should be utterly extirpated, the names of idols should be buried in oblivion. In the popish countries many of the Jews comply with the idolatry there practised, as some of their own writers confess. (See the note upon Isa. lxv. 7.) Manasseh ben Israel (de Termino Vitæ, lib. iii. 4.) expounds that threatening, (Deut. xxviii. 64.) that *they shall serve other gods, which neither they nor their fathers have known, wood and stone,* as if it should be fulfilled in their captivity under the Romans, which they suppose is not yet expired. Here it is foretold, that this sort of idolatry shall be abolished upon their conversion: or else we may understand it of the putting down that idolatry now practised in Judea, both by the Greek and Latin Christians, before the Jews come to be settled in their own country. (Compare this text with Micah v. 12—14.)

And also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.] By the *prophets* are here meant the *false prophets,* as the LXX. translate it, who understand the word *nabi* in that sense, in several places of Jeremiah. (Compare Micah iii. 11. Zeph. iii. 4.) The *unclean spirit* is the same with a *lying spirit,* or a false pretence to prophecy and inspiration. (Compare 1 Kings xxii. 22. Rev. xvi. 13.) The Jews were always very much addicted to sorcery, charms, and other sorts of divination, as is observed in the note upon Mal. iii. 5. and it is probable that several pretenders to prophecy will arise among them, near the time of their future restoration, to discourage their return home.

Ver. 3. *When any shall yet prophesy, then his father and mother—shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord: and—shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.*] These false pretenders to prophecy, who discouraged their brethren's conversion and return, were confuted by experience; things falling out quite otherwise than they had foretold. (See ver. 4.) This shall raise a just zeal against such impostors, so that even their parents shall be forward to put in execution against them the penalties inflicted by the law upon false prophets and seducers. (Deut. xiii. 6. 8, 9. xviii. 20.) They shall treat such a one in the same manner, as their fathers did the true Prophet, the Messias, shall *pierce or thrust him through;* for the same verb is used in the Hebrew here, and xii. 10.

Ver. 4. *The prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied.*] The event proving quite otherwise than they had prophesied.

Neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive.] The prophets used to wear hairy or rough garments; (see Isa. xx. 2.) this they did, partly in imitation of Elijah, that was so clad, (2 Kings i. 8.) and partly because it was a despicable or mournful habit, and suitable to their office, which was to denounce God's judgments against pride and luxury. [John Baptist wore such a garment, as was suitable to the office of a preacher of repentance.] The words import, that these prophets shall disown their former pretences, and no longer wear such a garment, as a badge of their profession.

Ver. 5. *But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a husbandman,* &c.] To save themselves from punishment, (ver. 3.) each of them shall profess husbandry, and say that his employment from a child had been to look after *cattle* or *till the ground,* as the verb *hiknani* may be translated.

Ver. 6. *And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thy hands?* &c.] When such a severe inquisition is made against false prophets, every one shall be ready to observe what marks or characters are printed upon the hands of such a pretender, and to ask him, How they came there? And he shall answer in his own justification, This is not the mark or character of any idol, but only a token that I am a servant belonging to such a family. It was an ancient custom for masters to set a mark upon their slaves or goods; and there was sometimes a particular character imprinted upon the worshippers of certain idols: so we read in the third book of Maccabees, that the worshippers of Bacchus had an *ivy-leaf* imprinted upon their *bodies.* Such impressions were often made upon the hands, to which that expression alludes, (Rev. xiii. 16.) of *receiving the mark of the beast upon the right hand.* Several interpreters understand this verse of the *wounds* of Christ; but I conceive the following words more properly belong to that subject.

Ver. 7. *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow.*] Here begins a new prophecy, importing that the Messias, the great Shepherd, as he is described in this prophecy, (xi. 4, &c. and in Isa. xl. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 23.) though with respect to his Divine nature he be *equal with God* the Father, (Phil. ii. 6.) yet shall be delivered up to death, by God's *determinate counsel* and appointment: (see Acts ii. 23. iv. 28.) A *sword* is put for any instrument of the Divine justice, as hath been observed upon xi. 17.

Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.] This our Lord applies to his disciples being *scattered every man to his own,* upon his being apprehended and put to death. (Matt. xxvi. 31. John xvi. 32.)

And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.] This sentence may be translated in two contrary senses. The Hebrew phrase rendered here *turn mine hand,* may signify either to punish, or to spare; in the former sense it is taken, Psal. lxxxi. 14. in the latter, Ezek. xx. 22. where our translators render it, *I withdrew my hand.* In like manner the word *tsair* signifies *great* as well as *little,* as hath been

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observed upon Micah v. 2. *viz.* it is translated to this sense in some copies of the LXX. and so Dr. Pocock understands it here. (Not. in portam Mosis, cap. 2.) If we follow our English translation, the sense may be, I will shew mercy to my *little flock*, dispirited by the death of their Master, and will quickly shew him to them alive again, to their joy and comfort. If we translate the words, *I will turn my hand upon the great ones*, they denounce a severe judgment against the Jewish rulers, for their sin in crucifying Christ; agreeably to the import of the following words.

Ver. 8. *In all the land two parts therein shall be cut off*, &c.] Those severe judgments which our Saviour foretold should come upon them, (Matt. xxiv.) shall consume *two* parts in *three* of the nation, but a *third* part shall escape the general destruction, and be left to be dispersed over the world to preserve a posterity to future generations.

Ver. 9. *And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined*, &c.] I will make them pass through the *furnace of affliction:* (Isa. xlviii. 10.) the wicked among them shall be consumed as dross, and they that repent and believe shall be saved. (See Ezek. xx. 38. and the note there.)

They shall call upon my name, and I will hear them.] When I have *poured upon them the spirit of grace and supplication*, (xii. 10.) they shall humbly implore pardon for their sins, and I will graciously hear and answer their prayers. (Compare x. 6. Isa. lxv. 24. Hos. ii. 21. Joel ii. 32.)

I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.] For their disobedience *I broke my covenant with them*, (xi. 10.) and they were no longer my people; but upon their repentance and conversion, *they shall be as though I had not cast them off*, (x. 6.) and I will renew my covenant-relation with them. (Compare viii. 8. Lev. xxvi. 12. Jer. xxx. 22. Ezek. xi. 20. xxxvi. 28. xxxvii. 27.)

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

The beginning of the chapter is a continuation of the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans; then follows the Jews' final victory over their enemies in the latter times. The prophecy concludes with a description of the *glorious state of Jerusalem*, which should follow.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, the day of the Lord cometh*, &c.] A day remarkable for the execution of his judgments upon Jerusalem, and her inhabitants: (compare Joel ii. 31.) when their riches shall become a prey to the conquerors.

Ver. 2. *And I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle.*] The Romans being lords of the known world, had the strength of all nations united in their forces; as Nebuchadnezzar is said to *fight against Jerusalem with all the kingdoms of the earth of his dominion*, Jer. xxxv. 1.

And the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished.] The Roman army shall exercise those acts of lust and violence which are too frequent among conquerors. (See Isa. xiii. 13. Amos vii. 17.)

And half of the city shall go into captivity.] It is said, xiii. 8. that *a third part of the land shall be left therein*, which is very well consistent with *half the city's going into captivity.*

And the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.] God shall preserve the other half of the citizens from being cut off by the enemy. There were *forty thousand of the inhabitants suffered to go whither they would*, saith Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 15.

Ver. 3. *Then* [or, afterward] *shall the Lord go forth to fight against those nations*, &c.] In aftertimes God shall discomfit the posterity of these nations, *viz.* the Latin idolaters, who probably will be joined in alliance with the Mahometans, (see xii. 2. 8.) and will go forth against them in as visible a manner, as he appeared in behalf of Israel, when he overthrew the Egyptians in the Red Sea, or when the ark of God's presence led their armies in the land of Canaan, (Josh. vi. 6.) It is no unusual thing for the holy writers to speak of two events together which happen at a great distance from each other: so we read, 1 Cor. xv. 23. *Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*

Ver. 4. *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east.*] The glory of the Lord, *i. e.* the Schechinah, or symbol of God's presence, when it departed from the city and temple, settled itself upon the Mount of Olives: (Ezek. xi. 23.) so, when God shall return to Jerusalem, and make it the seat of his presence again, it shall return by the same way it departed. (See Ezek. xliii. 2.) We may add, that when our Lord ascended from the Mount of Olives, the angels told his disciples *he should come again in like manner; i. e.* in a visible and glorious appearance at the same place, Acts i. 11, 12.

And the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof towards the east and towards the west, and there shall be a very great valley.] By an earthquake, such as was in the time of king Uzziah, (see Amos i. 1.) the middle of Mount Olivet shall cleave asunder, and sink into a deep valley, so as to leave the two points or tops of the hill, north and south, still standing. Mount Olivet had three tops, or eminences, one on the north point, another on the south, and the third in the middle, from whence Christ ascended, and where Christians in aftertimes erected a cross in memory of his ascension there. (See Maundrell's Travels, p. 103.)

Ver. 5. *And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains*, &c.] When ye see the Mount of Olives cleave asunder, ye shall flee towards the valley for fear. The margin reads, *The valley of my mountains*, which may be understood of Zion and Moriah. But the Chaldee and LXX. reading the text with a small alteration of the points, render the sense thus; *The valley of the* [or, my] *mountains shall be filled up; for the valley of the mountains shall join*, or touch, *even to Azal; it shall even be filled up, as it was filled by the earthquake in the days of Uzziah.* Josephus writes, (Antiq. lib. ix. cap. 11.) "That upon the earthquake, the mountain before Jerusalem, *i. e.* Mount Olivet, cleft on the west side, and then removed for about half a mile towards the east part of the hill, and there stopped." Azal is probably a name by which part of the hill was called.

And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints [or, holy ones] *with thee.*] Or, *with him*, as the Chaldee and LXX. read. The words are a description of Christ's coming to judgment, attended with *all the holy angels*, as the writers of the New Testament express it, Matt. xvi. 27.

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xxv. 31. Mark viii. 38. The word *kedoshim*, translated *saints*, elsewhere signifies *angels*: (see Deut. xxxiii. 2.) so the word *saint* is used in the New Testament, 1 Thess. iii. 13. and St. Jude, ver. 14. quoting the prophecy of Enoch, saith, *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints*, or holy ones; a place exactly parallel with that of the text. The name Jehovah, Lord, is often applied to the Messias by the prophets. (See the note upon Isa. vii. 14. Hosea i. 7. and compare xii. 8. 10. of this prophecy.) The time here specified may probably be the season when the Jews shall *look upon*, or *behold, him whom they have pierced*, xii. 10.

Ver. 6. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear and dark.*] It shall not be clear in some places, and dark in other parts of the world: *i. e.* there shall not be that succession of day and night as there is now.

Ver. 7. *But it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night; but* [or, and] *it shall come to pass, that at evening-time it shall be light.*] At the consummation of all things, a time predetermined by God, but known to no creature, (Matt. xxiv. 36.) there shall not be any vicissitude of day and night, but one uninterrupted day, without any evening or twilight. (Compare Isa. lx. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 23. xxii. 5.)

These two verses may be expounded with respect to the Jews, that their condition shall be for some time not altogether prosperous nor yet quite desperate. The great crisis of their affairs shall be in a day which God alone knows; unlike to our days; dark at the beginning and clear in the end, when the light is not expected.

Ver. 8. *And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out of Jerusalem.*] The supplies of grace are often represented in Scripture by rivers and streams of water, which both cleanse and make fruitful the ground through which they pass. (See Ezek. xlvii. 1. Joel iii. 18.) Here they are described as coming out of Jerusalem: in Ezekiel and Joel they are said to come out of the temple; both descriptions intimating, that the church is the spring from whence all the means of grace are communicated to believers.

Half of them towards the former sea, and half of them towards the hinder sea.] The same Hebrew phrase is translated, the *east sea* and the *utmost sea*, Joel ii. 20. The first of these denotes the sea or lake of Sodom, being towards the east country, (Ezek. xlvii. 8.) the latter signifies the Mediterranean, or western sea. (See Deut. xi. 24.) The expression imports, that the whole land shall have a plentiful share of these blessings, which are here described under the metaphor of *living waters*.

In summer and in winter shall it be.] They shall be the same in all seasons of the year; neither failing in summer, nor overflowing in winter.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.*] Upon the conversion of the Jews, and the coming in of the fulness of the gentiles, the name of God shall not be given to any idol, idolatry being utterly abolished, (xiii. 2.) and God shall be glorified *with one mind and one mouth* all the world over. (Compare Micah v. 12. 14. Zeph. iii. 9. Rev. xi. 15.) The *stone* which represents Christ's kingdom, shall then *become a mountain, and fill the whole earth*, Dan. ii. 35.

Ver. 10. *All the land shall be turned as a plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem.*] The mountains about Jerusalem (see Psal. cxxv. 2.) shall be levelled, perhaps by the earthquake beforementioned, from Geba northward to Rimmon southward of Jerusalem. The expressions may signify, that all impediments shall be removed that oppose the advancement of Christ's kingdom. (Compare iv. 7. and Isa. xl. 4.)

And it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place.] The mountains that obstructed the prospect of Jerusalem being removed, the city shall be seen by passengers afar off, like *the city set on a hill*, to which the church is compared, Matt. v. 14. and it shall be inhabited as formerly. (See xii. 6.)

From Benjamin's gate, unto the place of the first gate, [even] *unto the corner gate.*] *Benjamin's gate* was on the north side of the city, the tribe of Benjamin lying northward in respect of Jerusalem. The prophet foretells that the city shall be inhabited from Benjamin's gate northward, to the *first* or *old gate* southward, mentioned Nehem. iii. 6. xii. 39. and still farther on to the *corner gate*, situate on the south-west part of the city. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Description of Judea, chap. 26.)

And from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's wine-press.] The *tower of Hananeel* was on the south part of Jerusalem, as the same writer observes, and the *king's wine-press* on the north part. (Compare this verse with Jer. xxxi. 38, 39.)

Ver. 11. *And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction.*] The city shall never be utterly destroyed, as it was by the Chaldeans and Romans. (Compare Jer. xxxi. 40.) The latter part of the sentence may be translated, *There shall be no more curse.* In the new state of things here foretold, the curse which sin brought into the world shall be removed. The same words are repeated by St. John, Rev. xxii. 3. and seem to be taken from this place.

But Jerusalem shall safely be inhabited.] A promise often repeated in the prophets. (See Jer. xxiii. 6. and the note there.)

Ver. 12. *And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem,* &c.] Those that die not in the battle, nor fall by the hand of their brethren, (see ver. 13.) shall be destroyed by famine or consumption.

Ver. 13. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them,* &c.] Or, *A great discomfiture*, as the word is translated, 1 Sam. xiv. 20. The LXX. render it an *ecstacy*: such a terror or confusion shall seize them, as shall take away the use of their reason; (see xii. 4.) or there shall be misunderstandings among them, so that they shall fall foul one upon another, as the army of the Philistines and Moabites did, 1 Sam. xiv. 20. 2 Chron. xx. 23. (Compare Ezek. xxxviii. 21.) The prophet goes back to give an account how God would discomfit those that come against Jerusalem, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 14. *And Judah also shall fight at* [or, rather for] *Jerusalem.*] The Lord *shall save the tents of Judah first*, (xii. 7.) and then they shall join their forces against the common enemy, when he comes against Jerusalem. (See xii. 2.)

And the wealth of the heathen round about shall be gathered together, &c.] As they came with an intent to make

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a prey of Jerusalem, so the wealth which they brought with them shall become a spoil to the Jews. (Compare Ezek. xxxviii. 12. xxxix. 10.)

Ver. 15. *And so shall be the plague of the house,* &c.] This is to be joined to the twelfth verse, the thirteenth and fourteenth being read in a parenthesis. Both man and beast in that army shall be consumed in one common destruction.

Ver. 16. *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem.*] Those that were not in the army that marched against Jerusalem. The words may be translated, *Every one that is left from among all the nations,* &c. and then they may be understood of the Jews that remained behind, and did not go to Judea to fight for Jerusalem. The Jewish commentators follow this sense.

Shall even go up year by year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and keep the feast of tabernacles.] *i. e.* They shall join in the solemn acts of Christian worship. The prophets often describe the state of the gospel by the usages of their own times. (Compare ver. 20, 21. of this chapter, and viii. 21, 22. see likewise Isa. lx. 7. 9. lxvi. 23. with the notes upon those places.) The *feast of tabernacles,* being observed in remembrance of God's conducting and preserving the Jews in the wilderness for forty years, was observed with extraordinary expressions of rejoicing. (Compare Hos. xii. 9.) The Jews have a tradition, that the defeat of Gog and Magog, which seems to be the same discomfiture which is here described, shall fall out upon the feast of tabernacles; or, as others say, that the *seven months' cleansing of the land,* (Ezek. xxxix. 12.) shall be finished at that time.

Ver. 17. *Even upon them shall be no rain.*] For want of which they shall suffer a famine.

Ver. 18. *And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain, there shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen,* &c.] Though the fruitfulness of Egypt, especially the upper part of it, (see Herodotus, lib. iii. cap. 10.) depends not upon rain; (compare Deut. xi. 10, 11.) yet if the Jews that dwell there, or the rest of the inhabitants, do not join in the solemn acts of Christian worship, (see ver. 16.) they shall suffer the same plague of famine with which others are threatened, *i. e.* the *Nile shall not overflow,* as the Targum explains it; from whence a *famine* will ensue. The words may be translated more exactly to the Hebrew thus; *If the family of Egypt go not up, shall there not be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up?* The particle *velo* is often taken interrogatively, as Noldius observes, p. 342. The word *family* is equivalent to kingdom. (See the note upon Jer. i. 15.)

[*That have no rain.*] The upper parts of Egypt, beyond Thebes, have no rain: beside the testimony of Herodotus, referred to in the last note, Seneca affirms the same: (Nat. Quæst. lib. iv. cap. 2.) "In ea parte quæ in Æthiopiam vergit, aut nulli imbres sunt, aut rari." Our learned countryman, Mr. Graves, in his Pyramidographia, sect. 2. tells us, "That while he lived at Alexandria, a great deal of rain fell there in the months of December and January; but in the upper part of Egypt, about Syene, and the cataracts of Nile, the inhabitants affirmed that they seldom had any rain."]

Ver. 20. *In that day shall there be upon the bells* [or, bridles] *of the horses,* HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD.] A very learned person supposes, that this and the following verse imply in them the promise of a universal peace, a blessing often spoken of in the prophets, as concomitant of the flourishing state of Christ's kingdom. Taking this to be the general import of the place, the first part of the verse implies, that the *bridles,* or trappings, of the horses, as the Chaldee explains the word *metsilloth, i. e.* the necessary furniture of war, shall no more be applied to its proper use, but shall be looked upon as sacred, and laid up in the armoury of God's house for a memorial of the good success he had given his people against their enemies. (See 2 Chron. xxiii. 9.)

And the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.] In pursuance of this interpretation, by the word *siroth, pots,* we are to understand helmets, called so because of their shape, being made like a pot. These, saith the text, shall be like the bowls, or vials, before the altar; no more to be profaned in war or bloodshed. In the Hebrew, words made up of letters of the same organ, have often an affinity of sense. So *sarah,* a word near akin to *siroth,* signifies *a coat of mail;* and the words *sheriah* and *sherion* are used in the same sense.

Ver. 21. *Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts.*] Even every private helmet in Judah and in Jerusalem, shall be as useless to the purposes they were formerly employed in, as the most sacred things in the temple.

And all they that sacrifice shall come and take them, and seethe therein.] The helmets shall arise to such a number, that if every one that sacrificeth were to seethe separately, they would suffice for pots for every one's use. If this interpretation be not accepted, we may suppose the words set forth the abundant measure of grace and holiness which shall then be bestowed upon all believers, they being all made *priests unto God;* (see Isa. lxi. 6. Rev. v. 10. xx. 6.) set apart to attend upon God's service, as the priests were under the law, whose office it was to *seethe,* or boil, the sacrifices. (See 2 Chron. xxxv. 13.)

And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.] If we understand the former words of a universal peace, the sense of these will be, that no stranger, or unbelieving enemy, shall give any annoyance to the servants or worship of God. (See Joel iii. 17.) The Christian church is often called the *house* or *temple of God* in the New Testament. (See Eph. ii. 20, &c. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 6. 1 Pet. iv. 19.) If we follow the common interpretation, the words import, that no hypocrite or unclean person shall have any share in the society of the faithful. (See Rev. xxi. 27. xxii. 15.) The Chaldee and Vulgar Latin translate the words, *There shall be no more any merchant in the house of the Lord of hosts.* There shall be such plenty of all provisions at home, that there will be no need of being supplied by any traffickers from abroad. Taking the words in this sense, they are equivalent to those descriptions of plenty foretold in the days of the Messias, Joel iii. 18. Amos ix. 13.

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MALACHI.

PREFACE.

THE Prophet Malachi was, in all likelihood, contemporary with Nehemiah. His prophecy supposes the temple to be built, and the worship of God settled there; but blames the priests and Levites for not attending upon the public worship, (i. 10.) and the people for offering the *lame* and the *blind*, (ibid. ver. 7, 8.) and *robbing God of his tithes and offerings*, (iii. 10.) which agrees very well with the abuses we read of, Nehem. x. 33. 39. xiii. 10—12. as his reproving them for *marrying strange wives*, (ii. 11.) exactly answers Nehem. x. 30. xiii. 23, &c.

Bishop Lloyd dates this prophecy something later than Nehemiah's time, about three hundred and ninety-seven years before Christ; at which time, according to his computation, the first seven of Daniel's *weeks*, or forty-nine years, were expired: which time, as his lordship explains the words, was allotted for *sealing up the vision and prophecy;* (Dan. ix. 24.) *i. e.* for completing the canon of the Old Testament. The words of Malachi, iv. 4, 5. import, that after him the Jews were not to expect a succession of prophets: whereupon he exhorts them carefully to observe the law of Moses, and to look for no other prophet till Elias, the forerunner of the Messias, should come.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

God reproves the Jews for their ingratitude, and blames both priest and people for their irreverent and careless performance of the public worship.

Ver. 1. *THE burden of the Lord to Israel by Malachi.*] The word *burden* is sometimes equivalent to prophecy, and in this sense it is taken here, and is so interpreted in the Syriac version. (See the note upon Zech. xii. 1.) *Israel* stands here for Judah, as it does ver. 5. ii. 11. Micah i. 14. iii. 1. 8, 9. that being the only remainder of the Jewish nation which enjoyed any of the blessings promised to their fathers.

Ver. 2. *I have loved you, saith the Lord.*] I have chosen you for my peculiar people, out of pure love and kindness, without any antecedent merits on your side. (See Deut. vii. 8. x. 15.)

Ibid. and Ver. 3. *Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste.*] I have all along shewed a particular kindness to Jacob and his family, above that of Esau, though they were both the sons of Isaac: and have lately given a signal proof of it in that I have restored you to your country again, after your captivity; whereas I have scattered the Edomites, and dispossessed them of Mount Seir, their ancient inheritance, (Deut. ii. 5.) by the Nabatheans, to which they shall never be restored again. (Compare Jer. xlix. 18. Ezek. xxxv. 7. 9.) *Hating* is sometimes used comparatively for a less degree of love. (See Gen. xxix. 31. Luke xiv. 26.) St. Paul alleges this text, Rom. ix. 13. to prove, that God might justly reject the Jews for their rejecting the gospel, notwithstanding his promises made to Abraham's seed; since he had from the beginning freely bestowed particular favours upon one branch of his posterity, from which others were excluded.

For the dragons in the wilderness.] The word *tannin*, or *tannoth*, signifies any large creature of the creeping kind, whether by land or sea. (See the note upon Micah i. 8.) Here it is taken for a great serpent, such as are commonly found in deserts and desolate places. (Compare Psal. xliv. 19. Isa. xiii. 22. Jer. ix. 11. li. 37.)

Ver. 4. *We are impoverished,* [or destroyed, compare Jer. v. 17.] *but we will return and build the desolate places.*] They hoped to be restored to their own country again, as the Jews had been.

They shall build, but I will throw down.] Or, *If they shall build, yet I will throw down.* (See Noldius, Concord. p. 90.) They shall never succeed in their attempts to recover their own country, and shall be finally subdued by Hyrcanus, and the name of the Edomite utterly extinguished. (See Dr. Prideaux, ad an. A. C. 129.)

And they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.] They shall be spoken of as a remarkable example of God's severe judgments upon a sinful people. The word *border* is equivalent to *country* here, and in the following verse: so it is used, Jer. xxxi. 17. Ezek. xi. 10. Amos vi. 2.

Ver. 5. *And your eyes shall see it, and ye shall say, The Lord will be magnified from the border of Israel.*] Though you ungratefully forget God's former mercies, he will give you fresh instances of his favour towards you, so that ye shall be forced to acknowledge that he continues to make his name and power illustrious in your preservation.

Ver. 6. *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master,* &c.] Those degrees of respect that are due to human authority, are in a more eminent manner to be paid to the supreme Lord of all: so the priests who are dedicated to my service in a peculiar manner, behave themselves very undutifully, in that disrespect which they shew to my name and worship. (See the following verse.)

And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?] Or, *Yet ye say:* they impudently persist in justifying themselves. (Compare ii. 14. 17. iii. 7, 8. 13.)

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Ver. 7. *Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar—the table of the Lord.*] The words *altar* and *table* denote the same thing. (Compare Ezek. xli. 22.) What was consumed upon the altar was God's portion, and is called the *bread of God,* Lev. xxi. 6. and the *food of the Lord,* iii. 11. 16. as our translation renders it, but it is in the Hebrew, *the bread of the Lord.* So by *polluted bread* is meant maimed and blemished sacrifices, as it is particularly expressed, ver. 8.

In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible.] By your actions you declare how little value you have for the worship of God, since you care not in how slight and contemptuous a manner it is performed.

Ver. 8. *And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil?*] The beasts to be offered in sacrifice were required to be perfect and without blemish, (Lev. xxii. 21, 22.)

Offer it now to thy governor; will he be pleased with thee?] It argues a great contempt of Almighty God, when men are less careful in maintaining the decencies of his worship, than they are in giving proper respects to their superiors.

Ver. 9. *And now, I pray you, beseech God, that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons?*] This irreverent performance of God's worship is a national sin, for which we may expect some public judgment. It is the priests' office to intercede with God, to be merciful to his people: (see Joel ii. 17.) and you are more especially obliged to do this, because this wickedness has been occasioned by your neglect, although it is much to be feared he will not regard your prayers or intercession.

Ver. 10. *Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought?* &c.] You do not attend upon my service in the temple, out of any zeal or affection for it, but purely with a regard to your own profit and advantage, which makes both your persons and your offerings unacceptable unto me: and under the gospel I will put an end both to your priesthood and the sacrifices which you offer. (See the following verse.) The words *for nought,* at the end of the first sentence, are not in the Hebrew, but are supplied by our interpreters. The LXX. render the sentence to this sense, *It is through you* (or, through your fault) *that the doors will be shut; i. e.* you would be content to have the doors of the temple quite shut up, and God's worship wholly intermitted.

Ver. 11. *And in every place incense shall be offered to my name, and a pure offering.*] The prophet describes the Christian sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, by the outward rites of the Jewish worship. (See the note on Zech. xiv. 16.) Incense was looked upon as a figure or emblem of prayer by the Jews themselves. (See Psal. cxli. 2. Luke i. 10.) This spiritual service, the prophet saith, shall be offered up *in every place,* whereas the Jewish worship was confined to the temple. The words of Christ are a commentary on this text, John iv. 21. 23. *The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father: but the true worshippers shall worship him in spirit and in truth.* Where *spirit* is opposed to the *carnal* ordinances of the Jewish service, such as meats and drinks and bloody sacrifices; and *truth* is used by way of distinction from the same external rituals, which were only *shadows of things to come.* The Hebrew word *mincha, offering,* is commonly translated by our interpreters *meat-offering,* but should rather be rendered *bread-offering;* it being that offering of fine flour which always accompanied the other sacrifices. (See Lev. ii. 1. ix. 17.) It seems to signify the *daily sacrifice,* by a synecdoche, in the thirteenth verse of this chapter, and ii. 12, 13. as it does in 1 Kings xviii. 29. 36. Mr. Mede thinks the word is used here to denote the sacrament of the Lord's supper, which may be properly called a commemorative sacrifice. (See his discourse of the Christian Sacrifice.)

Ver. 12. *But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the Lord is polluted,* &c.] But ye have profaned mine altar, and in your careless performance of my service there, you do as good as say, there is no difference between what is offered upon it, and other common meats: thus you render my sacrifices contemptible in the sight of the people. The word *nib, fruit,* is applied to sacrifice, see Isa. lvii. 19. where the *fruit of the lips* is explained of the *sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,* Heb. xiii. 15. The *oclo, his meat,* may be understood either of that part of the sacrifice which was immediately offered upon the altar, and is called the *food of the Lord,* (see the note upon ver. 7.) or else of the remainder of the sacrifice which God allotted to the priest, and to those that made the offering, but was still esteemed a hallowed thing, as having been consecrated to God. (See Numb. xviii. 9, 10. Lev. xix. 8.)

Ver. 13. *Ye have said, What a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it.*] Ye have complained of the constant attendance upon my altar, as a wearisome employment, as if ye were overburdened with the care of purifying yourselves, and the nice inspection of the sacrifices brought thither; so you have by your outward gestures expressed your contempt of my service.

And you have brought that which was torn, &c.] See ver. 8.

They have brought an offering.] See the note upon ver. 11.

Should I accept this of your hands?] God hath declared in Lev. xxii. 20. that he will not accept a sacrifice any way blemished or imperfect.

Ver. 14. *But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.*] The former reproofs related only to the priests; here the prophet reproves the people, that would offer to deceive Almighty God by putting him off with the worst they had. Dr. Pocock thinks the words are to be understood of such offerings as of their own accord they vowed to God, which were to be males: (Lev. xxii. 19.) and if they would not perform their vows, in such a manner as God directed, it were better they did not vow at all. (See Deut. xxiii. 21.)

It was in this respect that Abel's sacrifice was preferred before Cain's, that he offered of the best of his substance. Thus much is implied in the words of St. Paul, Heb. xi. 4. where the apostle saith, *Abel offered* πλείονα θυσίαν, *a sacrifice better* in its kind than Cain.

For I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is [or, shall be] *dreadful among the heathen.*] As God is the *great King over all the earth,* and will be acknowledged as such among the gentiles under the gospel; (ver. 11.) so men's religious services ought to be performed with a reverence suitable to the greatness of his majesty.

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CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The beginning of the chapter is a continuation of God's reproof to the priests for their unfaithfulness in their office. From the tenth verse he proceeds to reprove the people for *marrying strange women*, and even divorcing their former wives, to shew their fondness of such unlawful marriages.

Ver. 1, 2. *THIS commandment is for you—to give glory to my name.*] Which you have despised, by your irreverent performance of my service, (i. 6, &c.)

I will send a curse upon you, and curse your blessings.] Turn your blessings into curses, or rather remove your blessings, and send curses and calamities in their stead.

Ver. 3. *Behold, I will corrupt your seed.*] The seed wherewith you sow your ground, so that there shall not be wherewith to furnish the meat-offerings requisite for the daily sacrifice. (See iii. 11. Joel i. 13.)

And spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts.] Ye shall become as contemptible, as if one had covered your faces with dung and filth.

And one shall take you away with it.] You shall be esteemed as so many nuisances, only fit to be removed out of sight, as dung is. (Compare 1 Kings xiv. 10.)

Ver. 4. *And you shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you.*] By the punishments which will follow upon your neglecting to observe the commandment here enjoined you, ver. 1, 2.

That my covenant might be with Levi.] That the covenant that I made with the tribe of Levi, that they should *be mine*, (Numb. iii. 45. viii. 15. xvi. 9.) may continue firm to your posterity. Some render it, *Because my covenant was with Levi;* for the breach of which you are accountable. So the particle *le* sometimes signifies. (See Noldius, p. 457.)

Ver. 5. *My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave it him.*] The prophet speaks of the succession of the ancient priests, such as Aaron, Eleazar, Phinehas, and their successors, as of one single person under the name of Levi, (compare Zech. xi. 16.) and saith, I gave him my covenant of happiness and security, or, I promised him a secure enjoyment of his office of the priesthood. The words allude to Numb. xxv. 12, 13. where God speaks to Phinehas, "I give him my covenant of peace: and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood." Where *peace* signifies the same with *security*, as it often does; *i. e.* a secure possession of the priesthood, without any disturbance or interruption, expressed by an *everlasting priesthood* in the following words. In which sense the phrase is used, Ezek. xxxiv. 25. xxxvii. 26.

For the fear wherewith he feared me, &c.] As a reward of his fear and reverence towards me, of which the holy writings give us two remarkable instances; the zeal of the Levites against the worshippers of the *golden calf*, (Exod. xxxii. 26. 29.) and that zealous act of Phinehas, mentioned Numb. xxv. (Compare Deut. xxxiii. 8, 9.)

Ver. 6. *He walked with me in peace and equity*, &c.] He directed all his actions by the rule of my laws, (compare Gen. v. 22. vi. 9.) and he discharged his duty with fidelity, and without any disturbance or offence, and was a means of *converting sinners from the error of their ways.*

Ver. 7. *For the priest's lips should preserve knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth.*] As it is the priests' duty to understand the meaning of the law, so the people ought to resort to them for instruction in any difficulty that arises concerning the sense of it. (See Lev. x. 11. Deut. xxii. 9, 10.) For this reason the Levites had forty-eight cities allotted to them among the several tribes, that the people might more easily consult them upon every occasion. (See Numb. xxxv. 7.)

He is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.] God has appointed the priests his ordinary messengers, to declare his will unto the people, as the prophets are his extraordinary ambassadors. The word *messenger* in the usual sense of it is equivalent to *prophet:* (see Isa. xlii. 19. xliv. 26. Hag. i. 13.) it signifies the same with *an interpreter* of the Divine will, Job xxxiii. 23.

Ver. 8. *Ye have caused many to stumble at the law.*] You have either perverted the sense of the law, or encouraged others to break it by your ill example. (See ver. 12. and compare Rom. xiv. 21.)

Ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi.] By your evil practices you have broke that covenant whereby I placed you in a near attendance to myself. (See ver. 4. and compare Nehem. xiii. 29.)

Ver. 9. *But have been partial in the law.*] Or, *Accepted persons in the law*, as the Hebrew literally signifies; *i. e.* have wrested the sense of the law, in favour of particular persons, to excuse or alleviate their breaches of it.

Ver. 10. *Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?*] Here a new section begins, wherein the prophet severely reproves the people's sin of *marrying strange wives*, which grew much in practice in Ezra and Nehemiah's time, who express a great detestation of it. (Ezra ix. 1. Nehem. xiii. 23.) The prophet here begins his expostulation with putting them in mind, that they owned one God and Father, in opposition to the idols of the heathen, and therefore should deal with one another as brethren, being nearly allied by spiritual as well as fleshly relation.

Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?] By these marriages with strangers, we deal falsely and injuriously with our brethren and countrymen, by the ill treatment of their daughters or sisters whom we took to marriage: (see ver. 14.) and we violate that covenant God made with our fathers, whereby he separated us from the rest of the world; and in order to preserve that distinction, forbid us to intermarry with idolaters. (Deut. vii. 3.)

Ver. 11. *For Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loved.*] This sin implies the profanation of God's holy people, which he set apart for his own worship and service; a profanation of the temple, when the priests who officiated there were guilty of the same crime; (see ver. 12.) and, lastly, profanation of that covenant God made with the Jews: (ver. 10.) God hath expressed a tender regard for these three sorts of *holiness*, and threatened severe punishment to those that break the laws made to preserve them.

And hath married the daughter of a strange god.] God calls himself the Father of his own people, and owns them under the relation of sons and daughters, (see ver. 10. Jer.

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xxxi. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 18.) and by consequence idolaters bear the same relation to the gods whom they worship.

Ver. 12. *The master and scholar out of the tabernacle of Jacob.*] He that persuades or instructs others that these marriages are lawful, and he that follows such advice: the expression seems to comprehend both the priest and the people. The words may relate to one of the priests of Joiada's family, who had contracted such a marriage, and by his example given encouragement to that wicked practice. (Nehem. xiii. 28, 29.) The Hebrew reads, *He that wakes, and he that answers:* it seems to be a proverbial speech, denoting a master and scholar, as our interpreters render it: an instructor is described as one that *wakeneth the ear* of his disciple. (Isa. l. 4.)

And him that offereth an offering to the Lord of hosts.] This is a particular threatening to the priests, who were guilty of this crime: such a one was Joiada's son. (Nehem. xiii. 28, 29.)

Ver. 13. *And this have ye done again.*] The words should be translated, *This second thing have ye done:* the prophet proceeds to reprove them for another crime added to the former; *viz.* to shew how much greater affection they had for strangers, they divorced themselves from their Jewish wives. (See the following verse.)

Covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying.] This injurious treatment of your wives has made them fill the courts of the temple, even as far as the altar itself, with their lamentations, and importuning heaven for relief against your oppressions: so that God will no more accept the sacrifices there offered by those that shew so little regard for common justice and humanity.

Ver. 14. *And yet ye say, Wherefore?*] Ye impudently persist in justifying yourselves. (See i. 6.)

Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously.] The wife whom you now divorce, was one whom you made choice of when you were in the prime of your age, and you promised to live with her in true love and affection: but now you cast her off without any regard to that solemn contract and covenant between you, of which you called God to be a witness. (Compare Prov. ii. 17.)

Ver. 15. *And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed.*] Among various interpretations of the words, this seems most probable, That the prophet puts the Jews in mind of the first institution of marriage in Paradise, (as Christ did afterward upon a like occasion, Matt. xix. 5.) and tells them, God made but one man at first, and made the woman out of him, when he could have created more women, if he had pleased; to instruct men that this was the true pattern of marriage, ordained for true love and undivided affection, and best serving the chief end of matrimony, *viz.* the religious education of children: whereas in polygamy the children are brought up with more or less care, in proportion to the affection men bear to their wives.

Therefore take heed to your spirit.] Do not give way to an inordinate and irregular passion.

Ver. 16. *For the Lord God of Israel saith, that he hateth putting away.*] He allowed the Jews the liberty of divorce only for the *hardness of their hearts,* (Matt. xix. 8.) not that it was a thing pleasing to him. Some render the words, *If he hate* (her), *let him put her away: i. e.* rather than use her ill. But the former sense is more agreeable to the scope of the place.

For one covereth violence with his garment.] Or, *And when one puts violence upon his garment,* or, *covers his garment with violence,* as Dr. Pocock translates it; who hath given the clearest sense of this phrase, and shewed out of several eastern writers, that they usually call a wife by the name of a *garment;* the expression of Moses, Deut. xxii. 30. agreeing with this way of speaking. According to this interpretation, the sense of the text will be, that God hates divorcing a former wife to take in one of a strange nation; and he hates that any should bring into his family an illegitimate wife over and above one that he had legally married before.

Ver. 17. *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words.*] You have tired his patience by your blasphemous speeches, charging his providence with injustice. (Compare Isa. xliii. 24. Amos ii. 13.) The words begin a new discourse, and more properly belong to the next chapter, where an answer is given to the objection proposed, ver. 2, 3. 5. 18.

Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him?] See i. 6.

When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of God, &c.] A repetition of the old objection against providence, taken from the prosperity of the wicked, which implied, as they thought, either that their works were pleasing to God, or else that he disregarded human affairs, and would never call men to account for their actions.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

This and the next chapter, which are not divided in some translations, contain a prophecy of the coming of the Messias, and his forerunner John Baptist, under the name of Elias; and the terrible judgments which shall come upon the Jews for their rejecting the gospel.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me.*] To silence the cavils of unbelievers, mentioned in the last verse of the foregoing chapter, the prophet here foretells the coming of the Messias, who should set all things right; and of his harbinger, who should prepare men for his reception. Whoever compares this verse with Isa. xl. 2, &c. may easily discern that they both speak of the same event. The *messenger,* whose office it is to *prepare the way before the Lord,* who is said here to be *coming suddenly* after this his forerunner, is described in Isaiah as *preparing the way of the Lord,* who is spoken of as *coming,* and *his glory* just ready *to be revealed.* (Ver. 5. 9.) This proves that this prophecy is justly applied by all the evangelists to John Baptist, who is described under the person of Elias, in the following chapter, whom all the Jews, both ancient and modern, expected should come as a forerunner of the Messias. (See the note there.) The *messenger,* or prophet, (see the note upon ii. 7.) here foretold to be the Lord's harbinger, was to be as much inferior to the Lord himself, as servants are to a great person, of whose arrival they give notice. This John Baptist often confessed, (Matt. iii. 11. John i. 26. iii. 28.) and so much appears by the following words.

And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight

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in.] The person whose coming is so solemnly proclaimed, is first described by the name of the Lord; *Adon* in the Hebrew, the same whom David called *his* Lord, (Psal. cx. 1.) and who is Lord of the temple, where he will make his appearance. He is farther described as the *messenger*, or *angel of the covenant:* the same who is called the *angel of God's presence*, Isa. lxiii. 9. the *angel* that delivered the law upon Mount Sinai, as St. Stephen speaks, expressing the sense of the Jews of his time, (Acts vii. 38.) and is appointed to be the Mediator of the *new covenant*, which the prophets foretold should take place under the Messias, (Isa. xlii. 6. lv. 3. Jer. xxxi. 31.) Another character given of him is, that he is the person *ye delight in*, whose coming is so much desired, the time of it being the subject of your search and inquiry, and the expectation of it your comfort and delight. This great person, saith the prophet, shall *come to his temple*, which ye have despised and profaned, (i. 7, &c.) and make the *glory of the latter house greater than that of the former*, Hag. ii. 9. (see the note there.) He shall choose this place to publish his doctrine, and do several of his miracles. (See Matt. xxi. 12. 14. Luke xix. 47. xxi. 38. John xviii. 10, 11. 15, 16.)

Ver. 2. *But who may abide the day of his coming? who shall stand when he appeareth?*] The coming of Christ here, and in several other places, comprehends all the effects and consequents of his coming; and denotes not only a time of mercy to those that embrace the gospel, but likewise a time of judgment upon the disobedient. In the same manner, John Baptist describes the coming of Christ, (Matt. iii. 7. 12.) *Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? His fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* To the same purpose are the words of St. Paul, (Rom. i. 18.) *The wrath of God is revealed* by the gospel *against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.*

The day of God's judgment, whether general or particular, is here described to be so terrible, that if he should be *extreme to mark what is done amiss*, not only the wicked, but even the righteous themselves, could not stand or abide so severe a trial. The words do probably point out the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans, upon their crucifying the Messias, and rejecting his gospel; when those words of Christ were fulfilled, (Luke xix. 27.) *Those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.*

For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap.] The Divine judgments are often called a *fiery trial*, such as separates the pure metal from the dross, purifies the former, and consumes the latter. (See Isa. i. 25. iv. 2. Zech. xiii. 9.) The word *borith* is translated *soap* here, and Jer. ii. 22. St. Jerome informs us, it was an herb the fullers used to take spots out of clothes.

Ver. 3. *He shall sit as a refiner—and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness.*] He shall perform the office of a refiner and purifier; and whereas the miscarriages of the sons of Levi have been very great (particularly those which are taken notice of, and reproved, in the foregoing chapters), the Messias, when he comes, will reform these abuses, and purify the worship of God from such corruptions. The sense of the verse, as applied to the Christian church is, that all Christians being made *a holy priesthood*, shall *offer up* with pure hearts and minds *spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God*, (1 Pet. ii. 5.) And as all that profess the *religion* of Christ are commanded to *be holy in all manner of conversation*, (ibid. i. 15.) so a blameless behaviour is more strictly required in the Christian priesthood.

Ver. 4. *Then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant to the Lord.*] The prophet describes the Christian worship by an expression taken from the Jewish service, being what they were acquainted with. (See i. 11.)

As in the days of old, and as in former years.] As in the days of David and Solomon, before idolatry prevailed, and withdrew a great part of the people from God's worship. The reign of David and Solomon, was a proverbial speech for happy days. (See 2 Chron. xxx. 26.)

Ver. 5. *And I will come near to judgment.*] In answer to their demand, *Where is the God of judgment?* (ii. 17.) God tells them, he will hasten the time of judgment, and it shall come speedily upon those sins that are epidemical among them; and if they repent not upon the preaching of the gospel, he will proceed to the utter excision of the nation.

And I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, &c.] God will be both the *witness* and the *judge*, he will convict them of their guilt, as having been present when they committed these sins, though they were acted never so secretly: and then he will condemn them, and punish them accordingly. (See iv. 1.) The sins here mentioned, seem to have been commonly practised in Malachi's time. Diviners, dreamers, and such as consulted oracles at the idols' temples, are reproved, Zech. x. 2. as are the false pretenders to prophecy, Nehem. vi. 12—14. False swearing and oppression are complained of, Zech. v. 4. Nehem. v. 3, &c. Their marrying strange women, and putting away their former wives to make room for them, was no better than adultery, (see Mal. ii. 11. 14. compared with Nehem. xiii. 23. 29.) and a breach of that solemn oath with which they had bound themselves, Nehem. x. 29, 30. The same sins were as frequently committed from the time of our Saviour's appearance till the destruction of Jerusalem. No nation was more given to charms, divinations, and fortune-telling, than the Jews about that time, as Dr. Lightfoot shews out of their own authors, upon Matt. xxiv. 24. Adulteries were then so common, that the Sanhedrin ordained, that the trial of an adulteress, prescribed Numb. v. should be no longer put in practice, as the same author observes out of the Talmud, vol. ii. of his Works, p. 1080. 1111. Josephus informs us, that magicians swarmed in Judea under the government of Felix, and afterward: (Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 2. 6, 7. 11.) such was Theudas, the Egyptian sorcerer, the impostor under Festus, and others, foretold by the name of *false Christs* and *false prophets.* (Matt. xxiv. 24.)

Ver. 6. *For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*] Or, *Because I am the Lord, I change not*, &c. Because I am *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*, as my name Jehovah imports, and am true to my former promises, (see Exod. vi. 3, 4. 6.) therefore you still continue a people, and are not consumed, as your iniquities deserve. And I will still preserve a remnant of you, to make good to them the promises I made to your fathers. (See Rom. xi. 29.)

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Ver. 7. *Return to me and I will return to you.*] I am ready to be reconciled to you upon your repentance. (See Zech. i. 3.)

But ye said, Wherein shall we return?] You persist in your own justification; and your words, or at least your actions, shew that you have no remorse for your former sins, nor any purpose of forsaking them. (Compare i. 6.)

Ver. 8. *Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me.*] One might reasonably think such a presumption could not enter into any man's thoughts, as to rob God of those things which are dedicated to his service; when he considers that he hath received all things from him, and therefore ought in gratitude to set apart some share of his substance for the maintaining his worship, and the public exercises of religion. Yet ye have been guilty of this sin, which heathens have dreaded to commit, as being apprehensive of the Divine vengeance which commonly follows it. (See the note upon Dan. v. 5.)

But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.] Because they pleaded ignorance of this sin charged upon them, God instructs them wherein their guilt lay: *viz.* in detaining their tithes, the first-fruits of their ground and cattle, and other offerings, expressly set apart for God's use in the law of Moses, and which they had lately entered into a solemn engagement to observe. (See Nehem. x. 32, &c.)

Ver. 9. *Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*] The scarcity you complain of, ver. 11. is a just judgment upon you, for detaining the tithes and offerings appropriated to God's service.

Ver. 10. *Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house.*] Make good your solemn engagement, (Nehem. x. 29, &c.) of bringing in all the tithes of your increase into the storehouses appointed for that purpose, (see Nehem. xii. 44. xiii. 5. 12.) that there may be a sufficient provision for the meat-offerings, sacrifices, and other religious services to be performed in my temple, (see Nehem. x. 33.) and for the maintenance of the priests and Levites, who attend there, that they may not be tempted to forsake my service. (See Nehem. xiii. 10.)

And prove me now herewith—if I will not open the windows of heaven, &c.] You complain of dearth and scarcity (see the following verse), but I would have you try the experiment, and see whether your plenty will not be in proportion to the free will, wherewith you bring in your tithes and offerings. (See 2 Chron. xxxi. 10.) To *open the windows of heaven,* expresses God's showering down plenty; (see 2 Kings vii. 2.) as the *shutting up heaven* denotes scarcity, (Deut. xi. 17. Hag. i. 10.)

That there shall not be room enough to receive it.] Or, *Till there be enough;* or, *Till* you shall say there is enough, as Noldius translates the phrase, in his Concordance, p. 673.

Ver. 11. *And I will rebuke the devourer for your sake, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground,* &c.] Whereas you complain of great dearth, (see Nehem. v. 3.) which I sent as a punishment of your sacrilege (ver. 9. of this chapter), I will promise upon your amendment no more to destroy the fruits of the earth by locusts, and such-like devouring insects: (compare Amos iv. 9.) neither shall your fruit-trees be blasted with blighting winds, and cast their fruit before the time.

Ver. 12. *For ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.*] Your country shall be again known by the name of the *pleasant land,* as it was formerly called. (See the note upon Dan. viii. 9.)

Ver. 13. *Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord.*] Impudent, or blasphemous; void of all reverence and duty.

Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?] They impudently denied the charge, (see ver. 8.) therefore the prophet renews it against them in the following words.

Ver. 14. *Ye have said, It is vain to serve God,* &c.] The prosperity of the wicked made them conclude, that it was to no purpose to govern their lives by the laws of God, or to humble themselves for their offences against him. (See Psal. lxxiii. 13.)

Ver. 15. *And now we call the proud happy.*] This makes us, say they, think and call those men happiest, who live in open defiance to God and his laws. (Compare iv. 1. Psal. x. 4.)

Yea, they that work wickedness are set up.] The Hebrew reads, *are built:* which word sometimes signifies the advancing men and their families to riches and honour. (See Prov. xiv. 1. xxiv. 3.)

Yea, they that tempt God, are even delivered.] They that are resolved to try God's patience by their provocations, (see Psal. xcv. 9.) are delivered out of those dangers and calamities wherein better men are involved.

Ver. 16. *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.*] Or, *Spake to one another:* the word *often* is not in the Hebrew. By their pious discourses they confirmed each other in goodness, and armed themselves against the impressions such wicked suggestions might make upon their minds.

And the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, &c.] God took especial notice of what these pious persons did and said: it was as safely laid up in his memory, as if it had been entered into a register, in order to be produced at the day of judgment, to their praise and honour. (Compare Psal. lvi. 8. Isa. lxv. 6. Dan. vii. 10. Rev. xx. 12.)

Ver. 17. *And they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels.*] It shall appear how dear they are to me, when the time comes that I separate the precious from the vile, *the vessels of honour from those of dishonour.* (2 Tim. ii. 20.) But the words may more properly be translated thus, *They shall be to me a peculiar treasure, in the day that I shall make* or appoint for that purpose. (Compare iv. 3.) At which time I will set a mark of distinction upon those my favourites. The word *Segullah,* in its primary sense, denotes that privilege and pre-eminence which the Jews had above all other nations, of being God's *peculiar people:* so it is used, Exod. xix. 5. Deut. vii. 6. Psal. cxxxv. 4. expressed in the Greek by λαὸς περίουσι, from whence it is applied to Christians by St. Peter, 1 Epist. ii. 9. and St. Paul, Titus ii. 14. all the privileges of the Jewish church being, in an eminent manner, transferred upon the Christians.

And I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.] I will preserve them from those calamities which shall fall upon the unbelievers, (iv. 1.) with the same tenderness which a father shews to a dutiful son.

Ver. 18. *Then shall ye return and discern between the*

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righteous and the wicked.] Or, *Then shall ye again discern*, &c. the verb *shub, to return*, being often used adverbially. (See the note upon Isa. vi. 13. and Dan. ix. 25.) This will give you a new proof that I put a difference between the good and the bad, and thereby fully answer the objections you have made against Providence. (Ver. 14. and ii. 17.)

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet foretells the general destruction of the Jewish nation, for rejecting the Messias: he comforts the well-disposed among them, and exhorts them to prepare themselves for his coming, by a strict observance of the law of Moses in the mean time; since no prophet was hereafter to be expected till that great one, who is to be Christ's forerunner.

Ver. 1. *FOR, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven.*] *That great and terrible day of the Lord*, as it is called, Joel ii. 31. (Compare here ver. 5.) God is described as a *consuming fire* when he comes to execute his judgments, Deut. iv. 24. And this was remarkably verified, when, upon the taking the city and temple of Jerusalem by the Roman army under Titus the emperor, they were both destroyed by such flames as no industry could quench. (See Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 10.)

And all the proud.] Those spoken of, iii. 15.

It shall leave them neither root nor branch.] A proverbial expression for utter destruction; as if a tree were plucked up by the roots, and thereupon the branches withered. (Compare Amos ii. 9.)

Ver. 2. *But unto you that fear my name.*] See iii. 16.

Shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.] The Messias is elsewhere called the *East*, or *sunrising:* (see Isa. lx. 1, 2.) and the Hebrew word *Tsemach*, translated *Branch* in our English, is rendered the *East* by the Chaldee and LXX. (See the note upon Zech. iii. 8.) So the church is described, Rev. xii. 1. as *clothed with the sun; i. e.* adorned with graces communicated to her by Christ. He is called here the *Sun of righteousness, with healing in his wings;* to signify, that his light consists in clearing up men's understanding, and chasing away the darkness of their minds; whose rays and kindly warmth will heal all the diseases of their souls.

And ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.] You shall be warned of God to go forth of Jerusalem, before it be molested by the Roman army; (see Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. cap. 5.) by which means you shall be rescued from the common destruction that shall come upon the unbelievers, and shall continue thriving and vigorous (compare Psal. xcii. 14.) when the rest of your nation shall be consumed with divers kinds of death.

Ver. 3. *And ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet.*] The righteous shall triumph in the destruction of the ungodly, as conquerors trample upon the carcasses of those that are slain in battle. (Compare 2 Sam. xxii. 43. Micah vii. 10. Zech. x. 5.) The wicked are compared to *ashes*, because the judgment that consumeth them is resembled to *fire*, ver. 1.

In the day that I shall do this.] Or, *In the day that I shall appoint* for executing my vengeance: the same phrase is used, iii. 17. Psal. cxviii. 24.

Ver. 4. *Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb*, &c.] You are not to expect any succession of prophets for the time to come, till the forerunner of the Messias appears: so your chief care must be to attend upon the instructions Moses has given to all Israel in his law, the most solemn part of which was delivered to him in an audible manner upon Mount Horeb, (Exod. xix. 9. Deut. iv. 10.) This your lawgiver plainly speaks of the Messias, and instructs you to expect his coming, and to obey his commands, (Deut. xviii. 15.) It was the sense of ancient Jews that the gift of prophecy was sealed up with Malachi: the son of Sirach, having before mentioned Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, speaks of the twelve minor prophets, as completing that part of the Old Testament canon, Ecclus. xlix. 10. and the latter Jews agree with him in this sentiment, as appears by the authorities cited in the Right Reverend the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield's Defence of Christianity, p. 83.

Law, statutes, and judgments, are words promiscuously used; as appears from several places of the hundred and nineteenth Psalm.

Ver. 5. *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet.*] The same person who is called the *messenger* or forerunner of the Messias, iii. 1. It was the unanimous sense of the Jews that *Elias should first come and restore all things*, (Mark ix. 12. John i. 21.) This they understood of the coming of Elias in person, as appears from Ecclus. xlviii. 10. where the author, speaking of the true Elias, saith, *Who wast ordained* (or, written of) *for reproofs in aftertimes*, or, for appointed times [εἰς καιροὺς], *to pacify the wrath of the Lord, before it break out into fury, and to turn the heart of the father to the son* (alluding to this text), *and to restore the tribes of Jacob;* answering to the words of St. Mark. The LXX. following the received tradition among the Jews, add here the Tishbite, by way of explication. [It is in this sense that John Baptist denies himself to be Elias, John i. 21.] The Jews to this day earnestly pray for the *coming of Elias*, upon the supposition, that the Messias must immediately follow his appearing. This form of prayer they received from their ancestors, as it is recorded in their liturgies: (see the Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, ibid. p. 67.) which shews that the ancient Jews understood the words of Malachi here, and iii. 1. of the coming of the Messias.

Our Saviour hath interpreted this Elias to be John Baptist, Matt. xi. 14. xvii. 12, 13. who is called by the name of Elias, because *he came in the spirit and power of Elias;* (Luke i. 17.) he resembled him in his office of reproving the Jews, and exhorting them to repentance; just as the Messias is called by the name of David in the prophets, because all the promises made to David were to be fulfilled in him. (See the note upon Hos. iii. 5.)

Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.] Compare ver. 1. iii. 3. Joel ii. 31. and the notes upon those texts. The words import the utter destruction of the Jewish nation (see the following verse), but they may properly be applied to the general dissolution of all things; a way of speaking usual among the prophets. (See the note upon Isa. xiii. 10.)

Ver. 6. *And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the*

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children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.] It will be his office to put an end to those religious differences (such was that of the pharisees and the Sadducees) which divided the nearest relations from each other, and to make them all join in the duties of repentance and reformation, and thereby prepare themselves for the reception of the Messias. (See Matt. iii. 7.) This was the design of his mission, though his preaching did not always meet with success, no more than the true Elias had in the time of Ahab.

This seems the most probable explication of the words, taking them in that sense wherein our translation and the LXX. understand them, which is followed by St. Luke, i. 17. But a more easy sense may be given of them, if we translate the Hebrew preposition *al,* not *to,* but *with;* in which sense it is often used. (See Noldius, p. 695.) Then the sentence will run thus, *He shall turn the heart of the fathers with the children, and the heart of the children with their fathers: i. e.* his preaching shall produce a general reformation in the minds and manners of all sorts of persons. (See Matt. iii. 5. xxi. 32.) Dr. Hammond and Lud. de Dieu are of opinion, that the preposition ἐπὶ in St. Luke, may be understood in the same sense.

Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.] The words might be better translated, *Lest I come and smite the land* (of Judea) *with utter destruction.* So the word *cherem* is translated by our interpreters, Numb. xxi. 2. Deut. vii. 2. xiii. 15. Josh. vi. 21. Zech. xiv. 11. The utter destruction of the Jewish nation and country is here threatened, upon their rejecting the preaching of John Baptist, and refusing to hearken to his testimony concerning the Messias, that should come after him.

END OF MR. LOWTH'S COMMENTARY.

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A

CRITICAL COMMENTARY

UPON THE

APOCRYPHAL BOOKS;

NAMELY,

THE BOOK OF WISDOM,
ECCLESIASTICUS,
TOBIT,
JUDITH,
BARUCH, THE PROPHET,
THE HISTORY OF SUSANNA,
AND THE HISTORY
OF BEL AND THE DRAGON;

ALSO,

A DISSERTATION UPON THE BOOKS OF THE MACCABEES AND OF ESDRAS:

BEING

A CONTINUATION OF BISHOP PATRICK AND MR. LOWTH.

By RICHARD ARNALD, B. D.

RECTOR OF THURCASTON IN LEICESTERSHIRE.

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A

CRITICAL COMMENTARY

UPON

THE BOOK

OF

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

Δός μοι τὴν τῶν σῶν θρόνων πάρεδρον Σοφίαν.

Non debuit repudiari sententia Libri Sapientiæ, qui meruit in Ecclesia Christi de gradu Lectorum tam longa annositate recitari, et ab omnibus Christianis, ab Episcopis, usque ad extremos Laicos Fideles, Pœnitentes, Catechumenos, cum veneratione Divinæ Auctoritatis audiri. *August.* lib. i. *De Prædest. Sanct.* cap. 14.

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A

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE BOOK OF WISDOM.

TO THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

THOMAS,

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE, LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK;

PRIMATE OF ENGLAND, AND METROPOLITAN;

AND ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY-COUNCIL.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE

TO accept the following sheets, which are formed upon the plan of Bishop Patrick and Mr. Lowth, as an Appendix to, and continuation of, their useful design. I am far from thinking that I am engaged in a work equal to the nature of their subject, nor can I flatter myself with any hopes that this performance, with its many defects, will meet with the like favourable acceptance.

I was encouraged to pursue this design, from the many excellent things which are spoken of the Book of Wisdom by the fathers, and most early writers; and as our church has given a sort of sanction to its usefulness by allowing it, in conformity to ancient custom, to be read in her public service, I hope this consideration will justify the present attempt, and apologize in some measure for my presumption in offering to your Grace an Apocryphal Book, and placing it under the protection of your great name; especially as I consider the uncanonical books upon the footing only of such primitive ecclesiastical writings, as many prelates, of the first eminence in the republic of letters, have not thought it beneath them to employ their learned labours about.

Was I permitted to observe the common practice in addresses of this kind, and to speak in the language of modern complaisance, the world might expect that I should dwell upon all those great qualities in which your Grace excels; but I shall only beg leave to observe, that your rising merit early drew the eyes of a very discerning and learned prelate* upon you, and when, through age and infirmities, he was at length hindered from labouring in the word and doctrine, like David stricken in years, he transferred his charge upon no less able a successor, and the same great accomplishments reviving in your Grace, made the loss less sensible and regretted; and equally endeared you to the same learned society, and to that illustrious name in particular, which now fills the highest station in the law with the most consummate abilities. And, as if a double portion of the spirit of that Elijah rested upon you, in you we admire the same justness of sentiments, clearness of expression, beauty of language, and well-conducted zeal: in you we trace his affectionate manner, sweet elocution, just action, and those other moving graces of the preacher, which command the passions, and charm the attention, so that *being dead he yet speaketh.*

Nor are you, my Lord, less distinguished by an affable and obliging temper, which shines forth, and is displayed, in that easiness of access, and condescending goodness, which endear you to the love and esteem of all, and must render you particularly amiable to that province, over which, by the designation of Providence, you preside with so general an applause.

As these great qualities at length conducted you so deservedly to the episcopate, so your speedy advancement, as it were from glory to glory, to the present high station which you fill, is an instance of your superior merit, and consummate modesty: both of which illustriously stand confessed, as you neither asked nor solicited this eminence; it rather sought you out, and seemed to court you, so that I might justly draw the parallel between you and some celebrated names of antiquity, whose ambition was retirement, and their preferment a sort of violence. What the historian says of that great general, Epaminondas, is truly applicable to your Grace, "That he never made any interest for preferment, but was courted to accept it, and often forced into it; and he always discharged his trust in such a manner, as to do greater honour to his station than he received from it."*

* Bishop Fleetwood.

* Recusanti omnia imperia ingesta sunt, honoresque ita gessit, ut ornamentum non accipere, sed dare ipsi dignitati videretur. Justin. lib. vi. cap. 8.

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I could enlarge, with equal pleasure and truth, upon so copious and inviting an occasion, but to say more would, I fear, give offence to your Grace, and to say less, would have been the highest injustice in me; nor should an eloquence less than your own attempt to display your character.

That your Grace may long preside over the church, under the happy conduct and blessing of that Wisdom, in whose right hand is length of days, is the sincere prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient and dutiful servant,

RICHARD ARNALD.

THE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THERE have been so many excellent commentaries published upon the Holy Scriptures, and every one of the sacred books have been illustrated by the labours of so many learned and judicious persons, that it may be presumed nothing has escaped their inquiry, or seems necessary now to be added to their discoveries: but the Apocryphal Books, though they are placed next to the canonical ones in the same common volume, and have some of them been esteemed, even by many protestant writers, as second only to them for the usefulness of the matter and variety of instructions contained in them,* have hitherto received, though they confessedly stand in great need of light and illustration, very little help and advantage of this nature. The following Commentary, therefore, upon the BOOK OF WISDOM, which the ancients had in so great esteem, and our church has thought not unworthy to be read in her public service, will, I flatter myself, be the more favourably received, and appear the more necessary, as there is no comment upon this, or, indeed, any of the Apocryphal writings extant, that I know of, in *our* language; and such as have wrote upon it in *other* languages, being generally popish expositors, have perverted many passages to countenance their favourite opinions, which I have occasionally taken notice of in the course of this work, to prevent any mischief from such an abuse.

That there are some exceptionable places in the book itself, I do not deny, and what book merely human is entirely without them? nor, because I have undertaken the illustration of it, shall I be so disingenuous as to patronize, or even palliate, its errors, much less cry it up as all perfection; and, therefore, as I shall neither with the Romanists pretend that it is canonical, and to be put upon the same level with the inspired writings, against which opinion there are insurmountable difficulties, both internal and external, so neither can I persuade myself, with too many protestants, to decry it as useless and of no authority, for no other reason, probably, but because the church of Rome has paid too great a deference to this, and other writings confessedly Apocryphal, which I cannot think are all of them of equal value, but that the *didactical* books, as they are called, *viz.* Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, claim abundantly the preference, as in fact they are universally well spoken of and esteemed, and I believe have as many admirers as they have readers, and may therefore, I hope, without any imputation or reflection, be as laudably commented upon as any of the primitive ecclesiastical writings.

The Book of Wisdom in particular, to which the following sheets only relate, especially that part of it which refers to God's dealing with the Egyptians, is an epitome of the history of Exodus; it abounds with useful sentiments and instructive morals; we see in it repeated proofs of God's patience and long-suffering towards sinners, of his mercy and loving-kindness to his faithful servants, especially in their distress, and many lively instances of his justice and severity upon obstinate and irreclaimable transgressors: such are the following memorable events recorded in it—"The establishment of the kingdom of death upon the earth through the sin of our first parents; the destruction of the old world by the deluge for its wickedness, after the repeated menaces of at least an age; the miraculous manner in which Noah's family were alone preserved from perishing by the waters; the fire which came down from heaven upon the unrighteous cities, and the whole kingdom of Egypt, punished at different times by ten terrible plagues. In what manner wisdom conducted the patriarchs, and other holy souls, the friends and favourites of God in their several ages, inciting them to the most laudable actions, and, as a reward of their labours, reaching forth to them a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand; how by it Moses obtained a good report, became the servant of God, and commissioned by him to dispense his mercies and judgments; the sea opening a passage for the Israelites, and closing again to overwhelm Pharaoh and his army; the former sustained miraculously with manna for forty years, and drinking of the brook which flowed from the hard rock, and the Egyptians perishing through the calamity of their river stained with foul blood; the former covered with a cloud from the scorching of the midday sun, and conducted by night with a light of fire, and the latter perishing by a continued darkness, whose horror was increased by the glare of spectres and apparitions; an army of hornets marching before the people of God, to drive the Canaanites from their possessions, and the Egyptians destroyed by as dreadful a persecution of locusts; the clouds, at several times, converted into a shower of hailstones to overthrow the wicked, and, at other times, the elements suspending their known qualities in favour of God's chosen." Such important facts recorded in this book, manifesting God's displeasure against sin, and his acceptance and reward of obedience, shew the great usefulness of it, and that it was not without reason approved of by the church, and appointed to be read in it, for instruction and edification. And hence we may presume Dr. Raynolds, who wrote so learnedly against the authority of the Apocryphal Books, was induced to speak so favourably of this

* See Sparrow's Rationale, p. 41. Rainol. Cens. Libr. Apocr. Præl. 7. 74. Wheatley on the Common Prayer, p. 140. Chemnil. de Script. Canon. par. i. Falkener's Libert. Eccles. p. 160. Cosin's Schol. Hist. p. 8.

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and Ecclesiasticus, calling them, "Valde bonos et utiles, et omnibus tractationibus præferendos (which is the language also of St. Austin, de Prædest. Sanct. lib. i.) proximumque illis locum deberi post scripturam sacram." (Præl. 7. 74.)

The original text of this book is in Greek, nor are there reasons sufficient to induce us to conclude, that it was ever extant in Hebrew: but though the author wrote Greek well, and was acquainted with approved writings, both of philosophers and poets, in that language, yet, in all the editions which I have carefully consulted and compared, there seem to be many faulty and suspicious passages. Junius has the like observation upon all the Apocryphal Books: "Permulti ubique inveniuntur loci varii, distorti, depravati. Depravati autem? imò profligati, æque in contextu Græco atque in translationibus, quos quidem locos partim ex canonicorum scriptorum auctoritate, partim ex ipsorum auctorum secum, aut aliorum cum ipsis comparatione, partimque ex judicio necesse fuit emendare." (Præf. ad Lib. Apoc.) From him therefore I promised myself no little assistance; but neither Junius, nor the many commentators I have occasionally consulted, give that light which one might have expected in the most difficult passages. And though they could not but perceive, and often do acknowledge, the Greek text to be corrupt, yet they content themselves with giving a general guess at the author's meaning, without strictly and minutely examining the original, whether it would warrant and justify such a sense, or might be, by some happy conjecture, altered to afford a better. There is, indeed, thus much to be said in the behalf of *some* of them, that being catholic commentators, the very text itself was sacred to them; but why the few protestant expositors, whom we find among the sacred critics, should be generally so sparing of their learned labours, as to attempt scarce a single emendation, when the badness of the original text in so many places called for their assistance, can be resolved into no truer cause than what is mentioned before, *viz.* that the Apocryphal Books having been too much extolled by the Romanists, and even made a part of the canon, and many of their erroneous tenets pretended to be warranted from thence, *these* have been as remarkably regardless of them, and through an over cautious delicacy have gone into the other extreme; which probably may be the reason, joined to the scarcity of useful notes and observations upon the Apocryphal Books, that the learned Poole has taken no notice of these in his Synopsis. But as this way of reasoning against the general usefulness of a thing, from a particular abuse of it, is allowed on all hands to be illogical and inconclusive, there is the less occasion to enlarge on this head.

As there are many passages which to me seem faulty in the original, and have hitherto passed unaltered, and even unattempted, I have endeavoured to restore these by the most easy and natural helps; sometimes by a different point only, sometimes by the change of a few letters; mistakes, which might arise probably at first from the carelessness of transcribers, or the likeness and affinity of sound: but have been cautious of indulging too much liberty and wantonness this way, and when any criticism is attempted, and an emendation of the original text offered, which I was induced to, either by the sense of the context, or the badness of the present construction, or the authority of the ancient versions, which I have constantly consulted, I have always supported such an alteration with reasons at least probable, and have not obtruded any favourite criticism dogmatically, but submitted it, with great deference, to superior judgment, being ready to retract any mistake, and to acknowledge my obligation for any friendly information. Nor have I boldly attempted any transposition, however inclined or induced to it, by the confusion and perplexity of some passages in their present state, such as chap. i. 16. xii. 27. not having authority from manuscripts, or the ancient versions: for though a conjecture of a transposition may be sometimes admitted in books which are confessedly wrote in prose, yet, as some learned men have been of opinion (see Grabe's Prolegom. tom. *ult.* cap. 1, 2. Calmet's Diction. in voce *Wisdom*), that this book, and that of Ecclesiasticus, were originally wrote in metre, and there may, perhaps, seem some countenance for it from the many poetical terms here used, and from their being wrote stichewise in the Alexandrian manuscript, in the same manner as the book of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles are, to which some of the old Latin translations, and Dr. Grabe, in his late edition, probably for the same reason, have joined them; I was, on this account, less disposed to indulge any conjectural transposition, as, in metrical books, mistakes of that nature could not so easily happen; though nothing certain can be built upon this, even though we should suppose, with some others, that this book was originally wrote in Hebrew. Thus much I can assert, with great truth and sincerity, that as it was my design to make the work useful in all possible particulars, I have purposely confined myself to explain, as indeed all expositors should, the most difficult passages, nor have I designedly left any one difficulty which respects either the sense, or the reading of the original text itself, unattempted at least. And this I have done by minutely examining the Greek text, collating the several editions and their various readings, consulting the oriental versions, and the several ancient English translations, comparing the author's account with the Scripture history, and collecting what was parallel, or would give an additional light, from Josephus, Philo, Spencer, Selden, &c. and to these helps I have occasionally added some material notes and observations of those celebrated commentators, Messieurs of Port-Royal and Calmet; the former give us the sentiments of the fathers, and their exposition and reflections upon particular important points; and the latter, in the explanatory way, exceeds all the commentators that went before, and almost supersedes the use of any other. Such as would see a short marginal paraphrase upon this book, will probably find satisfaction from a small one in 12mo. published in 1706. And that the following sheets may be useful to every class of readers, I have likewise studied plainness and clearness, and inserted in their proper places many moral reflections, such as arose naturally from the subject, which, as they tend to discourage vice, and shew the fallacy of libertine or epicurean principles, so they serve likewise to enliven the work, and are a sort of relief and entertainment after a dry criticism.

The English translation of the Apocryphal Books, which the church now uses, is that which was made by the command of king James I.; but though seven very considerable persons were employed in the work, yet it is surprising to

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observe in how many places it is faulty and imperfect. In that of the Book of Wisdom, the language is not only bad, but the sense often obscure and intricate; and though some allowance may be made upon account of the faultiness of the original text, which might in particular passages occasion the obscurity of our version, yet often, where the original is pure, clear, and intelligible, the translators have not only fallen short of the force and beauty of it, but have unaccountably mistaken the sense; and where the Greek happens to be equivocal, and will admit of different meanings, have frequently taken the worst, and most foreign to the context. The translation of the first part is much the best executed, but the three last chapters betray great negligence, and seem to come from a hasty, I had almost said an unskilful, hand. In all such faulty instances I have helped our version, and given the true rendering; nor is the number of emendations attempted in the Greek text less considerable: how far I have succeeded in the critical part is submitted to the judgment of the learned, but hope it will meet with more candour, being the first essay. If what I now offer to the public shall be favourably received, I shall be induced to publish, in due time, the like commentary upon the Book of Ecclesiasticus, which is already in some forwardness.

That nothing might be wanting that could give any insight into the book itself, or contribute to the discovery of its author, I have prefixed two Dissertations of Calmet's, which I purposely translated from the French, as they are drawn up with great judgment, and will be found very useful for the better understanding this writer; one upon the book itself, the other containing the opinions and conjectures of learned men about the author. In the former, the style, sentiments, method, and subject-matter of the Book of Wisdom are so judiciously treated of, that it is needless to attempt to add to it; but, as the conclusion contains some bold assertions of the canonicalness and inspiration of the Apocryphal Books, which are not warrantable, and which, unanswered, through the authority of so great a name, might have done harm,—I mean his appeal to those pretended councils, in whose decrees the Romanists take shelter, and this learned commentator so much triumphs in,—I thought it incumbent upon me, however unequal to the challenge, to examine and confute this pretence, which I have done in the clearest manner that the nature of such a controversy will admit of, and by authorities and reasons so full and cogent, that I trust an antidote is provided against any possible poison that can be conveyed. In the latter, he recounts the several supposed authors of this book mentioned by antiquity, and the arguments urged in their behalf, but at length he leaves the point undetermined; so that from him we rather learn who is not, than who is, the real author of it. But the reasons which he produces in favour of Philo the Jew, it must be confessed, are very strong; so strong, that it seems not improbable he would have adjudged this book to him, if the canonicalness of it would not have been endangered thereby. The two principal arguments urged against Philo by him are, his not being inspired, and the difference of style. The former he himself acknowledges is of no force to such as do not own the canonicalness of this book; and the latter he has answered, when he observes, that this may be occasioned by the difference of the subject-matter, according to which, the same writer often varies his style, and seemingly differs from himself; which is particularly true of Philo, for sometimes his pieces are allegorical, sometimes literal, sometimes between both extremes, and yet, from some resemblance in the features, one may easily know that they belong to the same parent:

"Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen; qualis decet esse sororum."

Such a variation of style, therefore, if there were no other arguments against him of more weight, no more concludes against Philo, than a change of dress, according to the exigency of a man's business and occasions, infers a real change of his person.

St. Jerome acquaints us that many of the ancients supposed this book to be wrote by Philo, (Prol. in lib. Sap.) and some very considerable moderns are of the same opinion. Dr. Raynolds contends, that it was wrote by Philo in the time of the emperor Caius, who would have his statue set up and adored in the temple of Jerusalem, (Sueton. in vit. Calig. 22.) and that the Jews sent this very Philo, as their ambassador, to intercede with him not to profane their temple, but the emperor ordered Petronius to see the orders about his statue complied with. This, he says, is perfectly agreeable to the argument and drift of the Book of Wisdom; and from hence he accounts for those precepts in the first and sixth chapters, which contain the duty of princes, that they were inserted with a view to Caius, to admonish him how he ought to act, or to instruct his successors. Hence, likewise, those fine observations upon the reward of virtue, the happy exit of good men, and the torment which awaits the wicked, especially those in power, in the second, third, fourth, and fifth chapters, designed, as he supposes, for the comfort of the distressed Jews, and as a warning and terror to evil and tyrannical princes. Hence, lastly, those severe remarks upon the original, progress, mischief, and downfal of images and idols, and those threatenings against them, their makers, and worshippers, which are to be found at large in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters. (Cens. Lib. Apoc. tom. i. Præl. 22.)

Junius thinks the Book of Wisdom was composed from some fragments of Solomon, and that it is an extract from his writings, which the seventh, eighth, and ninth chapters may seem to favour, and that Philo was the compiler; and so takes the middle way, between those who assign it to Solomon, and those who ascribe it to Philo. Bishop Cosin concurs in giving this book to Philo, (Schol. Hist. sect. 36.) and refers in the margin to the following authorities, as confirming this opinion, S. Basil, Ep. ad Amphiloch. S. Hier. Præf. in lib. Sol. Beleth de Div. Offic. cap. 60. Jo. Sarisbur. Epist. 172. Aquin. in Dionys. de Divin. Nom. cap. 4. Lect. 9. Bonavent. in lib. Sap. Lyran. in eundem. These farther authorities in favour of Philo, joined to Calmet's arguments, though stronger than any hitherto alleged for any other person, must yet be allowed to amount only to a bare probability.

As there is not sufficient light for determining with any certainty the real author of the Book of Wisdom, or the precise time in which he wrote, I shall set down only what is most generally agreed on with relation to this book, *viz.* that it was not wrote by Solomon, though the title carries his name, nor originally in Hebrew; that it was wrote

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by a Hellenist Jew, for the style shews that it was a Greek that composed it, as St. Jerome observes, "Stylus ipse Græcam eloquentiam redolet," (Prol. in lib. Sap.) and from some circumstances in the book itself, it seems most probable to be wrote by a Hellenist Jew of Alexandria in particular. That it was wrote long after Malachi, and the ceasing of propheey, even a considerable time after the LXX. interpreters, and therefore not by one of them. We may, I think, come still nearer its true date, if we place it after the times of the Maccabees, and consequently that it is much later than the Book of Ecclesiasticus: for what Grotius urges from its being placed in all the copies before that of Ecclesiasticus, is of little weight to determine its era, nor is the order of books, as it occurs in our Bibles, any rule for settling the precedence in point of time. For does not the book of Job follow after the Pentateuch, and other books confessedly later? and yet the learned suppose it to be wrote before any of the books of Moses, and probably the oldest book we have now remaining. (See Origen. cont. Cels. lib. i. Euseb. Demonst. Evang. lib. i. cap. 6. Selden, de Jure Nat. &c. cap. 11. Bishop Sherlock. Dissert. ii.) In a word, allowing the uncertainty of the author, and of the exact time when this book was wrote, yet, as it certainly precedes the most primitive ecclesiastical writings in point of time, and cannot, without manifest injury, be supposed inferior to them in point of worth, it ought at least to be put upon the same level with them, and challenge as high a regard.

What a late learned metropolitan says of the authority of the writings of the apostolical fathers, belongs in an equal, if not a higher, degree to the Apocryphal Books, especially the didactical ones: "We cannot doubt but that what was universally approved of, and allowed, not by a *few learned men*, but the *whole church* in those days, what was permitted to be publicly read to the faithful for their comfort and instruction, must by this means have received the highest *human approbation*, and ought to be looked upon by us, though not of *equal authority* with those books, which the same church has delivered to us as *strictly canonical*, yet as standing in the first rank of ecclesiastical writings." (Archbishop Wake's Prelim. Disc. to the Transl. of Apost. Epist. p. 119.)

CALMET'S PREFACE

TO

THE BOOK OF WISDOM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

CUSTOM and the language of the church have always given to the books attributed to Solomon, the title of *Sapiential* books. The fathers often cite them under the general name of *The Wisdom of Solomon*, and in ecclesiastical language, *The Book of Wisdom* comprehends not only all the undoubted works of that prince, but likewise Ecclesiasticus, and that which we are now going to explain, which by a peculiar privilege hath been called, by way of eminence, *The Book of Wisdom;* or, as the Greek expresses it, *The Wisdom of Solomon*. Not that Solomon was the author of this book, scarce any learned men are of that opinion; but it has been looked upon as a summary of his sentiments, and as containing some of his most weighty and important maxims. Some of the ancients quote it also by the Greek name *Panaretos, i. e.* a treasury of all virtue, or a collection of useful instructions to bring us to it. And in this sense we must understand *wisdom* in this author, as synonymous to religion, piety, justice, and the fear of God; a sense widely different from that in which wisdom is understood in the writings of the heathen philosophers, where it has but little concern or connexion with religion, and the practice of real virtue, aiming only to enlighten and improve the understanding, and to give it a sort of fruitless knowledge of general truths of a very imperfect morality founded wholly upon nature.

The principal end proposed by the author of this book is, the instruction of kings, nobles, and judges of the earth; he addresses his discourse to them, accommodates his rules to their circumstances and occasions, and exhorts them to a serious and diligent study of wisdom. And to incline them the more effectually to it, he assumes the name of Solomon, and speaks to them as in his person with an air of authority, but without haughtiness or affectation. He proposes this great prince to them as a pattern, and recounts by what means he arrived to that height of glory, riches, knowledge, and eloquence; he declares, that it is to wisdom alone he is indebted for all these blessings, and that whoever will imitate him, may arrive to the same happiness and perfection. And to engage them the more effectually to the pursuit, he assures them, that the means of attaining wisdom are not difficult, that to gain her is only asking her of God, that she even prevents those that seek her, and hastens to meet those who sincerely desire her.

He discovers to them, at the same time, the obstacles that they may meet with in the study and pursuit of wisdom, which he shews are chargeable on men themselves, rather than on God; that therefore they wrongfully accuse nature, and to no purpose urge their own weakness and infirmities. For death and sin made not their first entry into the world through the will of God, but by the fraud

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of the devil, and through the fault of men themselves. At first man was created pure, innocent, and immortal, and was himself the cause of forfeiting these great blessings and prerogatives. But notwithstanding his fall, wisdom is still possible to be attained by him, and, through the assistance of God, he may acquire it. But to engage God to be his friend, he must avoid, above all things, sin, debauchery, and deceit, for God will be served faithfully, and with an upright heart, nor will wisdom ever enter into or dwell in a deceitful and corrupt soul.

He expressly confutes those who believe the soul to be mortal, and who place their sovereign happiness in the pleasures of sense, and says, they deservedly brought death upon themselves, by siding with the devil, and ranging themselves in his party, who, through envy, brought men into this degenerate and unhappy state. He represents *the righteous man* as reviled, hated, persecuted, condemned unjustly, and at length put to death, and in such terms as suit admirably with the sufferings and passion of Jesus Christ. He threatens the wicked with the judgments of God, and extreme punishment in another life, and represents them in a state of despair at seeing the happiness of the just, which they shall be witnesses of. On the other side, he describes the blessed condition of the saints in a future state, as a condition of joy, peace, and glory, and represents them as kings and judges, who shall shine in heaven, and exercise there a jurisdiction as glorious, as their humiliation was on earth contemptible. He commends virginity, and opposes it to the many disorders of lust and incontinence, and in particular inveighs against the sin of adulterers, whose posterity he shews to be unfortunate, and of short continuance.

He speaks of wisdom in the most magnificent and pompous terms, in such a manner, that he often attributes to her what in strictness belongs only to the Divinity itself, of whom she is a ray and emanation. He gives her the name of the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, Creator, which fills and knows all things, and is almighty; one in essence, but manifold and diversified in her operations. He says, that wisdom is a sort of efflux or vapour, which issues and proceeds from the sovereign virtue of God, an emanation of his splendour, the brightness of the everlasting light, the spotless mirror of the majesty of God, and the express image of his goodness; that being but one, she can do all things, and continuing the same, renovates, or makes all things new. That none are beloved of God who are not filled with wisdom; that she is always about his throne, and was present at, and assisted in, the first creation of man. He prays to the Lord to send her down from heaven, that she may instruct him, and be his guide and assistant.

He shews the advantages which wisdom procures to men by his own happy experience; that Adam, who fell at the beginning, recovered himself by wisdom; that through her Noah had the happiness to please God, and to preserve himself pure and unspotted in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation; that it was wisdom which preserved Abraham from the general corruption of the world, and Lot in the destruction of Sodom. He relates the history of Jacob and Joseph; that of Moses and the Hebrews in Egypt and in the desert; and the principal miracles that God wrought in their favour, and always ascribes to wisdom the glory of them. He draws an elaborate and judicious parallel of the different manner in which God treated the Egyptians and the Hebrews, and compares the just severity of God towards the former, with the many signal instances of favour shewn to the latter. He enlarges upon the original of idolatry, and shews its folly, progress, fatal consequences and effects, and foretells its ruin and downfal. That idolaters are the most senseless of all men, and their blindness absolutely inexcusable, in not discovering and finding out the true God by the help and scale of the creatures. And in general it may be said, that in no other book of Scripture, nobler and more grand conceptions of the Deity are to be met with than in this.

There are some particular sentiments in this book, which have made some doubt of the inspiration of the author, and of the canonicalness of the book itself. We shall examine in a particular Dissertation, what he says about the original of idolatry. There is some difficulty in what he asserts with respect to his own soul, that it, being naturally good, had the happiness to light into a body likewise pure and undefiled, (viii. 20.) We have examined the passage in the course of this work, and shewn that he speaks there only of natural parts, and not of any moral qualities or endowments.

He says, in another place, that Joseph had the sceptre of Egypt, which is not mentioned in the books of Moses, and that the Hebrews, whilst they remained there, under the bondage of Pharaoh, were a just and irreproachable people, which is contrary to what Ezekiel and other prophets say of them, who accuse them of idolatry in that very country. He approves of the Hebrews spoiling the Egyptians of their goods, as being only the just recompence of their labour, which before was so badly requited. He adds likewise many particulars to Moses's account: he seems to believe that Abraham lived at the time of the building the tower of Babel, and that wisdom prevented him from consenting to that bold and presumptuous design, and kept him free from idolatry, which, like an inundation, overspread the earth. He accuses the Canaanites of magic, eating human flesh, worshipping flies and insects, which the Scripture does not charge them with. It is true indeed, that the Philistines adored Beelzebub, the god of flies; but these people were not of the race of Canaan, nor of his extraction.

He says, that the fire which fell with hail and rain upon Egypt, spared those animals which plagued the Egyptians, supposing that the frogs, flies, and locusts were still subsisting at that time, which is contrary to the account of Moses. He speaks of manna, as a food prepared in heaven, as the nourishment of angels, and in which the Hebrews found every thing agreeable to their palate that they could wish for; whereas Moses tells us, that the taste of manna was like that of wafers, or bread prepared with oil; that the Israelites were so surfeited with it, that they disliked the very sight of it. He makes apparitions and spectres to haunt the Egyptians during the three days' darkness in Egypt, supposing them to be visible by the light of some sudden and occasional flashes; and adds some circumstances about the Israelites' passage through the Red Sea which seem fabulous, as what he says of grass and flowers appearing at the bottom of it, to make their journey more easy and delightsome; and, in fine, seems to

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believe, that the quails which fell in the wilderness round about the camp of the Hebrews, was a miraculous production, like that of the flies and frogs which Moses brought upon the land of Egypt.

But to all this we may answer in general, 1. That it is a piece of natural justice due to an author, that is not living nor capable of explaining his own sentiments, to understand his expressions in the most favourable sense, and not to impute a bad meaning to him, as long as one is not forced to it by the plain evidence of his own words: now we have shewn in the comment, that there are none of these passages which have been excepted against, but what may be understood in a good and consistent sense. 2. With respect to the additions which are complained of, it is common, we know, both in sacred and profane history, for one writer to supply what hath been omitted by another.

"This answer will hold (it may be replied) when two authors contemporary, or nearly so, record the same fact; but the case is quite otherwise here, as the author of this book lived many ages after Moses." To this we rejoin, that there are two ways by which the memory of events may be transmitted to posterity, *viz.* by Scripture, or by tradition. If the author could not come to the knowledge of these particulars by the first of these ways, he might learn them by the second.—But if this author was inspired, as we assert, and shall hereafter shew, there is no withstanding the force of his evidence, unless there could be found in his account of things some manifest contradiction to the sacred history, or sentiments contrary to truth and religion, which can never be shewn.

For, with regard to Joseph's having the sceptre of Egypt, it is not to be understood of a kingdom or sovereignty properly so called; it means only that he was the second person in the kingdom, and had a very extensive rule over all that country. And do not Joseph's own brethren say as much? *Joseph is yet alive, and is ruler over all the land of Egypt.* As to the Hebrews, who lived under the cruel bondage of Pharaoh, loaded and overwhelmed with hardships, they were just and irreproachable with respect to that king and his subjects, who had cruelly enslaved them, though not so indeed in regard to God, who permitted their slavery to punish their idolatry.—The spoil of the goods of the Egyptians by the Hebrews is not condemned any where in Scripture, and such as have wrote on that subject, justify the action by many substantial reasons.—What this author says of the Canaanites is but too true. The description which the Scripture gives of their abominations, is much more shocking than any thing said of them in this book. We have already answered in general to the objection drawn from the addition to the sacred account, the rest will be discussed in the Commentary itself. Some have raised an argument from the author himself,—"If he is not the real Solomon, why does he endeavour to pass for that prince? Can the Holy Spirit inspire a writer to personate what he is not?" We answer, that such an artifice in this writer, whoever he be, is neither fraudulent nor false. It is no more than a sort of prosopopœia, an ingenious fiction, whereby a writer, to give more weight and authority to the instructions delivered, assumes the name and person of another more ancient. The woman of Tekoah speaks in such a disguised manner when she pretends before the king to have lost one of her sons, 2 Sam. xiv. 4. By the same artifice, one of the sons of the prophets feigns himself wounded for having let a prisoner escape, 1 Kings xx. 35. Thus Nathan reproved David for his sin with Bath-sheba, under the significant parable of the ewe-lamb. And thus the prophets introduce God, Moses, Abraham, as occasionally talking, to render their discourses, by such a fiction, the more lively and affecting.

The author of this book designed to give the heathens a just idea of the original and end of true wisdom.—The Greeks were passionately fond of philosophy; but they knew not its true origin, ascribing it to their own industry and pains, which the wise man, in this treatise, shews to be the gift of God. They make it to consist in fruitless speculations, or in rules of a morality merely chimerical (as was that of the Stoics, which exceeded the power of human nature), or one purely natural, which went no farther than common honesty, and the doing such actions as were agreeable to right reason. But this writer proposes to them supernatural wisdom, having God for its end, and holiness for its object. He overthrows idolatry by shewing its ridiculous rise, sad consequences, and the horrors and abominations which accompanied it; that therefore men, and above all, philosophers, are inexcusable, in not knowing and acknowledging God, and transferring to creatures that honour which is due to the Creator only. In a word, he destroys the opinions of the Epicureans and Sadducees, who denied the immortality of the soul, a future judgment, the reality of hell, and the punishments and rewards of another life. After this manner he opposes the principal mistakes of the philosophers, and gives here the plan of a true and sound philosophy. Original sin, the fall, repentance, and recovery of the first man, the rewards and punishments in a future state, are as well, or perhaps more clearly, described in this book than in any of the Old Testament, which is of great consequence, to establish the truth of these opinions, and to shew the antiquity of such a belief among the Jews.

The six first chapters of this book are as a preface to the rest of the work; they are a sort of an abridgment of the nine first chapters of the book of Proverbs. In them kings and nobles are exhorted earnestly to the study of wisdom. In the seventh and eighth chapters, the author, assuming the name of Solomon, proposes himself as a pattern, and shews what means he employed to attain true wisdom. One sees there the description of his happy reign, and of his consummate knowledge, agreeably to what is said of it in the first book of Kings. The ninth chapter is a paraphrase on the prayer which Solomon made to God in the beginning of his reign, which is mentioned 1 Kings iii. 6—9. The tenth chapter, to the end of the book, is a continuation of the same prayer, where he enlarges upon the power of wisdom, and its effects, the evils which accompany the wicked and inconsiderate, and the rewards of the truly wise and righteous, which he confirms by various instances and examples. The work seems not to have been finished, or at least the conclusion of it has not reached us, for the author does not finish his prayer, as it is natural to suppose he should, according to his first design.

We shall not enlarge here upon the writer of this book, nor the time in which it was wrote; we shall do that in a particular Dissertation. The original text is in Greek,

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which is yet preserved, and it does not appear that it was ever extant in Hebrew, notwithstanding what some authors have thought to the contrary. We find none of those Hebraisms, which are hardly to be avoided by those who translate from the Hebrew, nor any turns but what are usual in the Greek tongue. The author manifestly had read the heathen writers, and wrote Greek well; he even borrows some expressions which are peculiar to them—as, the giants being drowned in the waters of the deluge, the river of Forgetfulness, or Lethe, the kingdom of Pluto or Hades, ambrosia, &c. there are some passages in which he plainly appears to have imitated Plato, and one clearly perceives that he had studied that philosopher. His style is swelling, abounds with epithets, often obscure, and almost throughout poetical and figurative. The Jewish writers had some knowledge of him, and have quoted him sometimes; Rabbi Moses ben Nachman cites particularly vii. 7. which he gives in Syriac, or such Hebrew as was spoken at Jerusalem in the time of our Saviour.

The author often quotes Scripture, and always according to the Septuagint. Thus v. 10—13. he compares the life of man to a shadow, to a vessel cutting the waves, to a bird which parts the air, and to an arrow shot at a mark, which is taken from Prov. xxx. 19. where the wise man says, according to the LXX. that *there are four things which are hard to be known; the way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a young man in his youth;* but in the Hebrew the last clause is, *and the way of a young man with a virgin.* So that passage in ii. 12. *Let us lie in wait for the righteous, because he is not for our turn,* is taken from Isa. iii. 10. where the Septuagint read, *Let us bind the righteous, because he is disagreeable to us;* but in the Hebrew it is, *Say ye to the righteous that all shall be well with him.* In his account of the plagues of Egypt, he follows the LXX. particularly in what he says of the flies and locusts. And when he speaks of idols in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters, he almost word for word copies what we have in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, and the Psalms on that subject.

The Latin translation which we have of this book is not St. Jerome's; it is the ancient Vulgate, used in the church before the time of that father, and made from the Greek, in the first ages of the church, by an author unknown. The translator does not seem well acquainted with the purity of the Latin tongue, often making use of words that are not used by approved authors in that sense; as *honestas* for riches; *honestus* for a rich man; *respectus* or *visitatio* for the punishment which God inflicts upon the wicked; *supervacuitas* for vanity or vain-glory; *animalia supervacua* for dangerous and noxious animals. The translation keeps very close to the text, and is strictly exact in rendering every single word faithfully, neglecting all ornaments of speech, and the beauties of the Latin idiom. St. Jerome, in his preface to the books of Solomon, says, that he corrected Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, from the ancient version of the LXX. but did not meddle with the translation of this book, or Ecclesiasticus. There are not many various readings in the Greek copies, but a much greater number in the Latin ones. The Complut. edition, that of Antwerp, and of Sixtus V. in 1590, afford a great variety, which are corrected in the Bibles of Clement VIII. and in the Vulgate. We have marked them at the bottom of each page in the Commentary.

The Book of Wisdom was not always received by the church as canonical, as not being admitted into the Jewish canon of Scripture among those books, which were wrote in their language, and passed through their hands to the Christian church without any doubt or exception. But such as were written in Greek, as Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, have been disputed and contested, and the church, always cautious and wary in her decisions, did not decree to admit them for canonical, till after mature judgment and long deliberation; which slowness in her proceedings and determination shews, that she did not admit them hastily, or by chance. The scarcity of books in the beginning of Christianity, the great distance of churches from one another, the difficulty of assembling general councils, made each church keep to its own tradition, to admit, or not to admit books, till the truth was at length discovered.

The principal reasons brought against the canonicalness of this book are, 1. That there is no appearance that Philo the Jew, to whom very many authors ascribe it, was inspired; he lived and died a Jew without any knowledge of Jesus Christ, or receiving his gospel. 2. The doubts of some ancient fathers, who have ranked it in the number of disputed writings: that several particular churches left it out of their canon, and even some late interpreters, as Lyranus and Cajetan, did not admit it as indisputably canonical. 3. The Jews not admitting it into their canon, for it does not appear to have been known among them before the time of Jesus Christ. 4. Internal evidence in the book itself to reject it, as plain imitations of the gospel, and writings of the apostles; the opposition of some passages to the undoubted Scriptures; and the addition of others, which appears to have been made on purpose. All that can be objected on this head, we have mentioned before in the body of this preface; and will examine, in the Dissertation upon the author of this book, the objections with respect to Philo, and those passages in the gospel and writings of the apostles, which resemble some in this book. We have also answered, both in the Commentary and in this preface, the accusation of untruth, which has been urged against this writer. There remains only the difficulty which arises from the Jews not acknowledging it to be canonical, and some of the ancients not receiving it.

The authority of the Jews hath never been of any great weight in the church, particularly of the modern Jews, whose malice and unfair dealing, in every thing relating to our faith and holy religion, is open and notorious. The apostles, whose authority is of infinitely more weight than theirs, have taken quotations and proofs from this book.* And it is begging the question to say, that this writer copied from them. They recommended it to the faithful, who have ever since preserved, read, and cited it as inspired Scripture, so that we cannot now form any reasonable doubt about its canonicalness. To the testimony of those few among the ancients, who have disputed its authority, we oppose a crowd of witnesses in all ages of the church, who have acknowledged and quoted it as Divine

* See this objection discussed in note on ix. 13. and Bishop Cosin's Scholast. Hist. p. 23.

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Scripture. In short, to the scruples of those who, seeing antiquity wavering upon this point, have found some difficulty to persuade themselves to admit this book into the canon, we oppose the third council of Carthage, in 397; that of Sardica, in 347; that of Constantinople, in Trullo, in 692; the eleventh of Toledo, in 675; that of Florence, in 1438; and, lastly, the fourth session of the council of Trent; all which expressly admitted this book into the class of Holy Scripture. And there is scarce any ancient father who has not quoted and commended it. Many of them attribute it to Solomon, others to some prophet, and all to an inspired writer.* We may therefore reasonably urge upon this occasion, the argument of prescription against our adversaries, and let them produce their title against our quiet possession. Let them attack and confute, if they can, so many councils,† and those learned ecclesiastical writers* which are the bulwarks of our cause: they must overthrow all these, before they will be able to reach us.

The prophecies which are to be met with in this book, and which have been acknowledged as such by the fathers, are still farther proofs of its canonicalness. All that is

* Some of the later fathers, as St. Jerome, St. Austin, &c. give indeed very honourable titles to the Book of Wisdom, and the other Apocryphal Books, calling them canonical, sacred, divine; but then they mean not by canonical, as the church of Rome does, *canones fidei, a perfect rule of faith;* but *canones morum et historiæ,* such as are profitable only for instruction, and to inform men in the history of the Jewish church. (See Dupin's Biblioth. Pat. tom. i. p. 1.) Nor, when they call them sacred or divine, do they mean to equal them to Divine Scripture, strictly so called, or to make them of the same sovereign authority with the undoubted canonical books themselves, for the establishing matters of faith, or determining controversies in religion. (See St. Jer. epist. 7. ad Læt. Epist. ad Paul. Præf. in lib. Sol. Aust. de Doctr. Christ. lib. ii. cap. 8. Retract. lib. ii. cap. 10. De Civit. Dei, lib. xv. cap. 23. Cyril. Hieros. in Catech. sect. 4. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 25. Ruffin. in Expos. Symb.)

† As the catholics lay the stress of their cause upon these councils, and this learned commentator triumphs in them as their bulwark, it seems proper, and even necessary, to examine into the authority of these councils, and consider how far they prove the point they are brought for. I shall take them in the order as they stand in this preface. With respect to the third council of Carthage, whereat St. Austin himself, they say, was present, we reply, 1. This council was not ecumenical, but only a provincial one. 2. The forty-seventh canon (according to Binius), which they urge against us, was not originally in the acts of this council, but added in the time of Pope Boniface. For if this council was held under the consulate of Cæsarius and Atticus in the year 397, as the inscription or title of this council in all copies has it, there can be no such canon in it; for Boniface, to whom this canon refers, was not at that time pope of Rome, nor above twenty years after, not till 418. 3. The great and general council of Chalcedon, consisting of six hundred and thirty bishops, confirmed the code of the universal church; in that code were contained the canons of the council of Laodicea, wherein we have the catalogue of the canonical books of Scripture; but the canons of the council of Carthage were not confirmed by it, as not having yet any place in it. And therefore we may safely conclude, that neither Pope Leo the First (whose legate subscribed the council for him), nor any of the bishops there gathered together, acknowledged any other books of canonical Scripture, than what the council of Laodicea (which left out all these books) had declared to be received, and read for such in the church, before their time. 4. The Romanists themselves do not generally allow the authority of this council, to determine what books are canonical: for Wisdom, and the rest of the Apocryphal Books, have been since rejected by many great and considerable persons among them, as Isidore, Nicephorus, Rabanus Maurus, Hugo, Lyran, Cajetan. (See Limborch's Theol. Christ. lib. i. cap. 3. Melch. Canus. Loc. Theol. lib. v. cap. *ult.* Baron. Ann. tom. viii. ad ann. 692.)

The next is that of Sardica, or Sardis, in 347, which was so far from a general council, that it was only a western synod. The canons of this council were never received by the catholic church as general laws, they were never put into the code of the canons of the universal church, which was approved by the great council of Chalcedon, but were first added to the code by Dionysius Exiguus, as those of the council of Carthage likewise were. The east never received these canons, nor would the bishops of Africa own them. The popes only used them, and cited them under the name of the council of Nice, to give them the greater weight and authority. (See Dupin's Eccl. Hist. vol. ii. p. 261.)

As to that at Constantinople in Trullo, this is only cited by them as confirming the council of Carthage; for in other respects, the canons of this council are not so agreeable to the Roman writers, who represent them as falsified and corrupt. They do not relish the thirty-sixth canon, which makes the bishop of Constantinople equal to the bishop of Rome; nor the fifty-fifth, which lays some restraints upon the church of Rome. But it is to be well observed, that the two hundred and twenty-seven bishops here assembled, in the second canon, confirmed also the council of Laodicea (which was thirty-seven years before that of Carthage, which they urge), which reckons the canonical books of Scripture as we do, and excludes the rest, in canon fifty-nine, as not properly belonging to them. When therefore in the same second canon they allow also the council of Carthage, they cannot be supposed immediately to contradict themselves, but that they understood the Laodicean council to be taken in one sense, and the council of Carthage in another; the latter extended, in a large and improper acceptation of Scripture, to the ecclesiastical books, and the former, in a more strict and proper sense, took in only these books that were really authentic and Divine. For in one and the same sense they cannot both be taken, nor otherwise be confirmed and stand together. (See Cosin's Schol. Hist. sect. 104. Episcop. Instit. Theol. lib. vii. cap. 7.)

There is still less to be said in favour of the eleventh council of Toledo, which was subscribed only by the archbishop of Toledo, sixteen bishops, two deacons, two bishops, deputies, and seven abbots. A number too small and contemptible to make a council!

That of Florence in 1438, is of so modern a date, that it can be of no great weight. It was assembled by the authority of the pope, and under his influence and management. In the large tomes and editions of the councils, no such canon, as is pretended, is to be found; it is a decree added by some impostor, probably the epitomizer or abridger of the councils, and is supposed with reason to be a forgery, for nothing was mentioned at this council concerning the canon of Scripture. Nor can it be called a general or ecumenical council, even in respect of the Latin churches only; many of which neither acknowledged Eugenius, or his council, and the council of Bazil then sitting, condemned this of Florence as a schismatical assembly. And the Greeks, as soon as they were returned, and got to Constantinople, would stand to nothing that their own fears and the pope's persuasion had before led them into. (See Cosin's Schol. Hist. sect. 160.)

The last is the famous decree of the council of Trent, wherein forty-three, or some few persons more, were only assembled, and cursed all other persons in the world, that did not receive their new canon of Scripture in such manner and form, as they were then first pleased to appoint it. To establish this ecumenical decree, as they most unwarrantably called it, of the Greek church they had not one; of the English as few; of the Helvetian, German, and northern churches none; of the French scarce two; of the Spanish not many. All the rest were Italians, and they in no great number; among whom some were the pope's pensioners, and sent thither to overbalance the votes of others, many of them titular, and some unlearned. And was it ever heard in the world before, that forty bishops of Italy, assisted, perhaps, with half-a-score others, should make up a general council for all Christendom? (See Cosin's Schol. Hist. sect. 194.) Wherein, as there was not any one greatly remarkable for learning, that voted the canonical authority of the Apocryphal Books, which the eastern and western churches ever held as suspected and uncertain; so some of them (as Father Paul observes, whose testimony upon this occasion must be allowed of great weight, and less exceptionable) were lawyers, eminent, perhaps, in their own profession, but of little skill and understanding in controverted points of religion; and such divines as were among them, were of low parts, and less than ordinary sufficiency: the greater number were courtiers, and bishops of such small places, or dignities only titular, that supposing every one to represent the clergy and people from whence he came, it could not be said that one in a thousand in Christendom was represented in this pretended council. (See Brent's Transl. of the Hist. of the Council of Trent, b. ii. p. 153.) I mentioned just above, that the eastern and western churches looked upon the Apocryphal Books as suspected and uncertain. Those that are curious may see this matter very minutely discussed by a particular detail of the sentiments of the several churches, extracted chiefly from the writings of the bishops, that presided over the respective sees, which Episcopius has happily executed, Instit. Theol. lib. iii. cap. 7. in such a clear manner, and so exact a method, as to time, place, and persons, that we see the judgment of these two great ecclesiastical bodies, as it were, in one view, and without any confusion or perplexity.

* This may be disproved by almost an infinity of testimonies in Bp. Cosin's Scholastical History, wherein by an historical disquisition of the universal tradition of the church of God, unanimously delivered in all ages from the apostles' times (and before) to ours, and by a very particular enumeration of the testimonies of the ancient ecclesiastical writers through the several centuries, it appears, that neither the ancient fathers, bishops, nor ecclesiastical writers, taught or believed otherwise than we now hold. So that it seems strange, that so learned a writer as Calmet, should either be so greatly deceived in a point of such consequence, or one in other respects so fair and candid, should knowingly triumph in false evidence and unsupported authorities: nor is it less strange, that he should not give the incomparable book of this prelate a place in his Bibliotheca Sacra, as the nature of that work required: but we may suppose that he either did not know it, being wrote in English, or did not care to have it known and read, the answers of it being so cogent against the Romanists, and the book itself the strongest bulwark of the protestant cause in this controverted point betwixt us.

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mentioned here of the future downfal of idolatry, and of the terrible judgments which God will inflict upon the wicked, may be considered as a true prophecy. But the place upon which the ancients have fixed with most attention, is, where the author describes the punishments of *the just man*, in terms so resembling the sufferings of Jesus Christ, that Grotius imagines these passages to have been added to the book by some Christian interpolator, after the death of our Saviour; which is not at all probable, as they are so linked and interwoven with the context, that they are not to be separated without manifest violence. The fathers had quite a different opinion of them, and have made use of them against Jews and heathens, and shewn the complete accomplishment of them in the person of Jesus Christ.

The Jews themselves do not absolutely reject this book; I have before observed, that a learned rabbi quotes a passage from it in his preface to the Pentateuch. John Picus of Mirandola asserts, that the Jews read a Book of Wisdom in Hebrew, composed, as they thought, by Solomon, as the marrow and quintessence of the law of Moses. But it is very different from this book. Isidore, Sixtus of Sienna, Christopher a Castro, Gonsalve a Cervantes, Lorin, in their prefaces to this book, maintain that it was wrote at first in Hebrew, and afterward translated into Greek: many affirm, that it was wrote by Solomon, and translated after into Greek by the LXX. But these last opinions go too far. If the Jews were acquainted with and read this book, it must have been translated into their language from the Greek, and we must indeed agree that they never received it as canonical.

CALMET'S DISSERTATION

UPON THE

AUTHOR OF THE BOOK OF WISDOM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IF the dispute which hath been raised about the author of the Book of Wisdom, was only among catholic writers and all parties were agreed upon its canonicalness, and the inspiration of the author, we should have given ourselves no more trouble about this, than some others of the sacred books, whose canonicalness is acknowledged by all the churches, even those which are separated from our communion, though the writers of them are doubtful and unknown. When once it is agreed that the Holy Spirit is the original author of a book, one need not be so solicitous who the person employed as the instrument is. But in the question before us, many of those who dispute about the writer of this work, attempt to destroy its authority, and, by diminishing the credit of its author, would take the liberty to reject it as apocryphal. To oppose this is the design of the present Dissertation, wherein we shall endeavour to shew, that though the author of the Book of Wisdom be not certainly known, the book itself does not cease on that account to be authentic, inspired, canonical.

Many catholic writers suppose the author of this book to be Solomon himself. "He wrote it (say they) in Hebrew, from whence it was translated into Greek by the LXX. interpreters, together with the other works of that prince: the ancient fathers quote it often under his name, and it has generally that title in the Greek copies. The author plainly assumes this character throughout, and the true Solomon stands confessed in as clear a manner, as in any other of his books. Every body agrees that it is not unworthy of his consummate wisdom, and high reputation, and that his sentiments and maxims are comprised in it: that though this piece is not now to be met with in the Hebrew, it cannot be concluded from thence, that it was never wrote in that language: for how many works have we in the versions and translations only, the originals of which are not now to be found? and how many are ascribed to particular authors, as indisputably theirs, which have less marks to ascertain them to belong to such writers, than this has of being the genuine work of Solomon?" This is what they plausibly urge in behalf of this opinion.

But to these reasons it may be replied, that if this work was really Solomon's, and was in Hebrew in the time of the LXX. interpreters, the Jews would not have forgot or neglected it as they have done, nor excluded it their canon. It is entirely unknown in that language to Josephus, Philo, St. Jerome, and Origen; so that in all appearance it never was in that language. Add to this, that the turn of the phrase and expressions are in the manner of the Greeks, and very different from the genius of the Hebrew tongue. The author quotes the Scripture in it according to the LXX. and borrows passages from books, which were not wrote till a long time after Solomon. To pretend that the Jews have suppressed the original, out of hatred to the Christians, who make use of its authority to convince them, that they have accomplished, in the murder of our Saviour, what was foretold of him in this book, is to advance what is incredible, and raising an objection which has been a hundred times confuted, and more diffi-

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cult to maintain, than what they would avoid by this plea. For, could the Jews have suppressed it, if they would? and if they could, what service would that have done them, since they have left it us in Greek, with so many other books, as strong at least as this, to establish the truth of our religion?

The authority of the fathers is decisive, to prove a point of faith, and the authenticalness of any text; but then their testimony must be constant and uniform; but in a matter of criticism, and where their judgments are divided, their opinion does not always determine the case. Now here the ancients do not speak in a uniform manner; some absolutely deny Solomon to be the author, others speak doubtfully, and none affirm it in express words. They cite indeed this work according to the usage of the church, which comprehends under the name of the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon, not only Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, but also this book and that of Ecclesiasticus. The title of the book in the Greek copies is no stronger an argument than the name of *king*, which this author assumes in the body of the work, or the port and appearance of Solomon, with which he would set himself off. The ancients often call their books by the names of persons whom they introduce speaking, as Plato gives to his Dialogues the names of Socrates, Timæus, Protagoras; and Cicero, to his book of Famous Orators, that of Brutus, and to another that of Hortensius. Xenophon too calls the history, in which he gives the model of a complete prince, by the name of Cyrus, who is the principal character drawn in it. But nobody will say, that these pieces were wrote by those whose names they bear, for it is known and confessed on all hands, that it was Plato, Cicero, Xenophon, who wrote them under such fictitious names. St. Jerome says expressly, that the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon carries a false and borrowed title.

The resemblance that is to be found in the thoughts and expressions of this book with those of Solomon, is so far from proving him to be the writer of it, that it furnishes a strong argument to the contrary. This prince would never have copied from himself, nor have repeated here, what he had already said in some other work; nor would he have cited passages from Isaiah and Jeremiah, who lived so long after him. We do not design or endeavour to decry the book, or to diminish its real worth and value; we readily own, that it is not unworthy of the wisdom of Solomon himself, and we have given it an author more great and noble than that prince—it is the Holy Spirit, which inspired this writer, as he did Solomon. I shall not repeat here, what I have said elsewhere, with respect to some terms used in this book, which are borrowed from the heathens, such as ambrosia, the river of Forgetfulness, or Lethe, the kingdom of Pluto or Hades, &c. These fables are apparently of later date than Solomon, as well as the chaplets and crowns of roses, mentioned ii. 8.

St. Austin was once of opinion, that Jesus the son of Sirach was the author of the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus; but he did not long continue under that mistake; he recants as to the book of Wisdom, Retract. lib. ii. cap. 4. and without explicitly saying who is the author, owns that it is more probable that Jesus the son of Sirach did not write it: he says in another place, that it was by no means likely to be wrote by Solomon; but he does not doubt, but that it, and Ecclesiasticus, were both written by inspiration.* And he elsewhere observes, that the primitive writers of the church, nearest the times of the apostles, fetched proofs from this book, as being of Divine authority; that there can be no pretence for not receiving it, and placing it in the rank with the other Scriptures.

St. Jerome informs us, that some ancient writers ascribed the Book of Wisdom to Philo the Jew; which words have afforded much matter of dispute to authors that came after. Some have looked upon it as a dangerous opinion, which tends to destroy the whole authority of the book, by ascribing it to a Jewish writer, and one who was never reckoned inspired. Others have adopted him without any limitation, but the greater part add this restriction, that the Philo, whom St. Jerome mentions, is not that Philo whose writings we have, who is commonly known by the name of Philo the Jew, but some other more ancient. For they pretend that there were several authors of this name: the first, as they say, lived under Ptolemy Philadelphus, and was one of the LXX. interpreters; the second is Philo of Biblos, who is cited by Eusebius and Josephus; the third is Philo the Jew; the fourth is one who lived under the second temple, and wrote a book about the soul.

The first Philo is unknown to antiquity, nor is there any reason to place him in the time of Ptolemy and the Seventy interpreters. In all appearance there never was such an author, since he is not mentioned by any ancient writer. The second was a pagan, a native of Biblos, who translated the history of Phœnicia into Greek. Josephus places him in the same rank with Demetrius and Eupolemus, who, not being of the Jewish religion, could not have acquired a sufficient knowledge of their books to give any true and just idea of their history, and can with less reason be supposed to be the author of sacred and prophetic books. The next then is the famous Philo, the Jew of Alexandria, who lived in the first age of the church, and was deputed by the Jews of that place to the emperor Caius, about the year 40 of the common era. He wrote many books in his youth, but in the latter part of his time was employed in public and national affairs, and was of great service to his countrymen. Eusebius and St. Jerome write, that in a second embassy which he was sent upon to the emperor Claudius, he contracted an acquaintance and friendship with St. Peter. Photius says, that he even embraced Christianity, but quitted it again out of discontent or disgust. Josephus mentions him as a very considerable person. His works are in a style admirable for its beauty and plainness, but his method of expounding Scripture is allegorical. Photius thinks, that it was from him the custom was first introduced into the church of explaining the Scriptures allegorically, and it is certain that some of the fathers have followed his method. As to Philo's being a Christian, that opinion is now exploded by all learned men, as well as his pretended intimacy with St. Peter.

There are four ways to judge whether Philo, to whom many of the ancients have ascribed this book, be really the author of it. 1. A conformity of sentiments and method. 2. A resemblance of style. 3. An agreement with the per-

* See this confuted by St. Austin, De Civit. Dei, lib. xv. cap. 23. lib. xvii. cap. 20. lib. xviii. cap. 38. and many other places, which will serve likewise for an answer to what immediately follows from St. Austin.

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son and character of Philo, and the times wherein he lived. 4. The authority of those writers who have ascribed this book to him. We shall examine these particulars in their order.

The author of the Book of Wisdom represents God as the creator and preserver of all things, of infinite wisdom and justice, and whose providence watches over and extends unto all his works. A God who aims only at the good of his creatures, who created them originally pure and innocent, and does not proceed to punish them till their wickedness is incorrigible, and at its full height; who is the author of true wisdom, and all other blessings, and communicates them freely to such as sincerely ask for them. Philo agrees in all these sentiments; but as this is nothing extraordinary in a Jewish writer, I shall not stop to draw the parallel, which would be of no service here.

The soul of man, according to the Book of Wisdom, is immortal, and linked to a corruptible body, the weight of which draws it to the earth, and presses it downwards; it is capable of eternal happiness, but when it gives itself up to the pursuit of sin and wickedness, it brings upon itself punishments and misery without end; it is inexcusable, when it continues ignorant of its Creator, who is so loudly proclaimed by his works. Philo says much the same, "That the soul of man is clothed with the body as with a garment, but that of a wise man with his virtues;" and in another place, "That while we continue in this world, we are in a state of pilgrimage; but a wise man looks upon himself, when in the body and upon the earth, as in some strange place, considering heaven as his only true country, and his proper native place."

Philo supposes two sorts of souls, some of which descend into and inhabit bodies, and others are at a great distance and very remote; of those that enter into bodies, and continue there, some apply themselves to, and are trained up in, a philosophy wholly sublime, which, after the death of the body, they continue to pursue, to purchase a life eternal and incorruptible: the other sort, overwhelmed with the weight of the flesh, neglect the study of wisdom, and giving themselves up to the caprice of fortune, are attached to things sensible and corporeal, to the pursuit of vanity, glory, riches, &c. which very much resembles what the author of the Book of Wisdom, speaking in the person of Solomon, says, viii. 19. 20. *that he had a good spirit*, or rather, *that, being good, he came into a body undefiled;* wherein he supposes a pre-existence of souls, some good, others wicked, not by nature, or through any fate or necessity, but voluntarily and by inclination, which is certainly the opinion of Philo in many places.

The high encomiums this author gives of wisdom are likewise to be met with in Philo, who says, "That she is a pure gift from the bounty of God, who communicates her to souls well disposed, which love contemplation; that she existed before all ages, and by her the world itself was created; that she is as the mother and God the father of it; that the wise alone are truly worthy to reign, to have command and sovereignty, and only these are truly rich; that wisdom is all Divine, and nothing more easily to be acquired, being always ready to communicate herself; that she never shuts her school, but is willing and disposed to receive those who desire instruction. These she enchants, and as it were inebriates, with sweet and agreeable draughts of her doctrines; she invites them to come and improve themselves by her lessons, and promises them infinite advantages and blessings." According to Philo, kings should distinguish themselves by their wisdom, and their ambition, happiness, and glory, should centre in this; that a prince should be well versed and instructed not only in human and secular affairs, but likewise in spiritual and Divine, and should appear to his subjects as an animated oracle, and a living law; which agrees admirably with the idea which the wise man here gives of a perfect and consummate prince.

The author of this book speaks of *the Word*, or *the Word of the Lord*, as a distinct person from him that generated and sent him. He ascribes to him Divine attributes, particularly omnipotence. It was this *Word* which fed the Israelites in the wilderness, cured the bitings of the serpents, slew the first-born of the Egyptians, and, in fine, created the world. Philo resembles our author more on this head, than in any other particular; and some have pretended, that he had even knowledge of that Divine Word, of which St. John speaks in the beginning of his Gospel; and others have advanced, but against all reason, that this holy evangelist took his doctrine and expressions from him. He says, that the invisible Word which created all things is the express image of God, above all the world, more ancient than it, and superior to all creatures. That this Word was employed to separate and divide the elements, and to range all the parts and matter of the universe into form and order according to his own will. That this Word was begotten of God, was the Creator of the universe, and has a dominion and sovereignty over all the kingdoms of the world. In speaking of Isaac, he says, that this patriarch never departed from his duty to God, but that he attached himself to the Word, that Divine Mediator, which instructs us in those things which are best for us, and came down to, and condescended to, converse with us, to teach us what is most convenient and proper for us in all circumstances: for, continues he, God disdains not to be known to, and intimate with, such as love virtue, and sends his Word to support and succour them.

The punishment and sufferings of the wicked in another life, and the rewards and glory of the righteous, are admirably described in the Book of Wisdom; Philo speaks of them in as plain and distinct a manner. He says, that the elements, the air, fire, and water, all conspire to the punishment of the wicked; God, by his almighty power, employing those very things, which he designed for the benefit and use of man, as his instruments and scourges to punish the ingratitude and wickedness of his creatures. He observes, speaking of Cain, that men imagine temporal death to be the greatest of all misfortunes, not reflecting upon the terrible tribunal of the sovereign Judge which will succeed, with respect to which, in the judgment of God himself, death may be considered only as the commencement of their misery. And what is their misery? It is to live, as continually dying, or rather to be dying always, without ceasing to live: a death always renewing, and in some sense immortal. For there are two sorts of death, the first is that of the body, which is an indifferent thing, it may be either good or bad; but the second is, to die without ceasing, the greatest and most terrible of all calamities and misfortunes.

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He says, in another place, that the wicked are always dead, though they should chance to live even to extreme old age, and that the righteous, on the contrary, though dead and departed this life, through bodily sufferings, are really living, and enjoy a life permanent, and without end; and he instances in Nadab and Abihu, who being dead betimes, enjoy immortality, and a life incorruptible before God.* He elsewhere observes, that long life does not consist in a number of years, but in a course of goodness, expressions exactly agreeing with these of the Book of Wisdom: "Though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest; for honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor is measured by the number of years; but wisdom is gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age. That God took his beloved [Enoch] from the world in the flower of his age, lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul; and that being made perfect in a short time, he fulfilled a long time, or had all the real advantages of old age." Chap. iv. 7—9. 11. 13.

What the writer of the Book of Wisdom says of idolatry and idolaters in the thirteenth chapter, is so like what we find in Philo in the beginning of his treatise, De Monarch. that one perceives plainly that they had both the same sentiments, and did not copy the one from the other. They both shew the folly and mistake of those who deified the stars, instead of exalting their hearts, and paying their devotions to Him, who is the great creator and ruler over them. In his piece upon the Decalogue, there is a passage entirely agreeable to that of Wisdom, xv. 15. where the ridiculousness of those pretended deities is exposed, which *neither have the use of eyes to see, nor noses to draw breath, nor ears to hear, nor fingers of hands to handle; and as for their feet they are slow to go.* There is no end of multiplying instances of the agreement between Philo and the Book of Wisdom; but these that we have produced, may be sufficient to shew the conformity of their sentiments.

Let us now examine the facts mentioned by the author of the Book of Wisdom, which seem to differ from the account of Moses. Philo, speaking of Joseph, says, that he was made viceroy, or, to speak more properly, king, of Egypt. And in the description of the plagues of that country, he says, that in the parts beyond Memphis there is no rain, nor do they know what winter is. But at the command of Moses, nature changed her appearance, and the air assumed new qualities, and thunder, lightnings, hail, and rain, were as dreadfully and sensibly felt *there*, as in other regions. And what was very particular, the water did not extinguish the fire in the lightning, nor the fire melt and dissolve the hail: a reflection, which the author of the Book of Wisdom likewise makes in several parts of that work.

Philo remarks, that, during the darkness in Egypt, which lasted three days, no fire could be kindled there, the thickness of the fog extinguishing it immediately; which is agreeable to our author's account. With respect to manna, the expressions of both are very much alike. According to Philo, it is a nourishment produced without the labour of man, sent purposely from heaven, and, in a figurative sense, is the wisdom of God, his word, or commandment; which is very like what Moses says, on this occasion, *That man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord,* (Deut. viii. 3.) He explains in an allegorical manner the vestments of the high-priest, and, like our author, supposes them to be symbolical of the universe; that the habit in general represents the whole world, and each particular answers to, and expresses, the several principal parts of it. The long robe of an azure colour, is an emblem of the air; the pomegranates at the bottom represent the water; the ornaments, or flowers, denote the earth; and the bells, the harmony which is in the several parts of it, from whence the union of the system proceeds. The Hebrew text speaks only of the pomegranates and bells, but Philo follows the LXX. who seem Exod. xxviii. 33. to mention flowers. All this is agreeable to, and an explanation of, what our author says in fewer words, *That in the long garment was the whole world,* (xviii. 24.)

One thing is very observable, that Philo doth not copy the very words of the Book of Wisdom, as he would have done, if he had designed to quote or use it, as the work of another writer. He follows in general the same method, the same sentiments, the same thoughts, but in different terms; as when one and the same author expresses himself upon particular points in different works. From this very great likeness and conformity of opinions, many of the ancients have concluded Philo to be the author of the Book of Wisdom.

The difference of the style of Philo, and that of the Book of Wisdom, is one of the strongest arguments against his being the real author; but the ancients, who were as good judges as the moderns upon this head, it is manifest, laid no great stress upon the difference of style, since it did not hinder them from ascribing this book notwithstanding to Philo. And in spite of the diversity of style, one may observe in several parts of this book the pompous turns of Philo, his exuberance in epithets, and his rich vein displayed by many lively and pathetic descriptions. But as he wrote it under the borrowed name of Solomon, he might disguise his style a little, and appear more sententious in this book, than in his other works: this probably is the true reason of the difference of style, it proceeds from the matter and subject itself. For let the same person write an oration, lessons of morality, an epistle, or a poem, will not a great variety of style necessarily arise from these different characters, though they are all penned, and proceed from one and the same author?

Though the book we are speaking of affords but few hints whereby to form a judgment of the time and place in which it was wrote; yet, as glimmering as the light is, it

* Calmet here translates Philo literally; the passage referred to is in his treatise, de Profugis. Οἱ μὲν ἱερεῖς Ναδὰβ καὶ Ἀβιοὺδ, ἵνα ζήσωσιν ἀποθνήσκουσι, θνητῆς ζωῆς ἄφθαρτον ἀντικαταλλαττόμενοι ζῆον, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ γενομένου πρὸς τάχιστον μετανιστάμενοι· ἐφ' οἷς τὰ σύμβολα τῆς ἀφθαρσίας ἄδεται, τό, τι ἐπιλύτησαν ἐνώπιον Κυρίου, τουτέστιν ἔζησαν. It is surprising, that Philo should produce these two persons as an instance of rewarded piety, who died by the immediate judgment of God, by an extraordinary visitation from heaven, for offering strange fire before the Lord, (Lev. x. 1.) Had they died instantly, when they had the honour to be called up to God, and to have a sight of him, and to eat and drink in his presence, when he appeared on Mount Sinai, (Exod. xxiv. 9—11.) they might have been thought to have died in God's embraces, as some of the rabbins have asserted of Moses. This mistake seems to arise from his allegorical manner of interpretation. When the text says, *they died before the Lord*, he renders, ἔζησαν, though the phrase has a quite different meaning in that place. (See Patr. in Lev. x.) Philo has the same thought in lib. Quis Rerum Divin. Hæres.

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may be sufficient to give us some idea of both. The author lived in an idolatrous country, and most probably in Egypt, since upon all occasions he inveighs against the ridiculous idolatry of the Egyptians, which consisted in paying adoration to water, fire-serpents, and other beasts the most frightful and mischievous. He lived at a time when the Jews had a great aversion to idolatry; he speaks of its origin, and that one cause of it was the grief of a tender parent for a deceased child, which at length terminated in paying Divine honours to him. This remark is more applicable to Egypt than any other country, upon account of that great respect which the Egyptians are remarkable for paying to their dead; and because it is certain that Isis and Osiris, the first deities of this country, had the sovereignty of Egypt, and the former appointed Divine honours to the body of her deceased husband. He speaks likewise of the Jews being held in subjection, and persecuted under some idolatrous princes; which agrees very well with the times of Philo, when the Jews suffered greatly, both in Judea and in Egypt, from the Roman emperors, their deputies, and even the people themselves.

If he wrote it after the death of Jesus Christ, who could not be unknown to him, it is not improbable that he had him in view, when he describes *the just man*, as reviled, persecuted, and at length put to death; and that seeing the beginning and first essays of Christianity, and the miracles which accompanied the first preaching of the gospel, he foretold the approaching ruin of idolatry. In fine, living under idolatrous and cruel emperors, it is probable he might direct his instructions to them under the person of Solomon, and the more effectually to execute his design, purposely disguised his style to give his work a greater air of antiquity, and to add the more weight to it. And it may be questioned, whether it would have been even safe for him at *that time*, in the very heart of Alexandria, to have addressed a book in Greek to princes, wherein idolatry is condemned in such a bold and open manner; but by concealing himself and writings, under the fictitious name of Solomon, he avoided all danger.

When St. Jerome tells us that some of the ancients ascribed this book to Philo the Jew, he meant, no doubt, Philo of Alexandria, for at that time no other of the name was known. And as the ancients, whom he cites, are the first that acquaint us whom the church attributed this work to, their judgment ought to be of great weight; and so much the more, as, since that time, no one has been assigned in particular as the undoubted author of it. Truths of this nature are generally the more certain, the nearer they approach to the fountain head; now in the time of those ancients whom St. Jerome mentions, this tradition must have been very fresh, and it might have been a received notion in the church, even from the times of the apostles: the great commendations which the ancients give of Philo, shew the high idea they had of his merit. We have before mentioned, that Eusebius, St. Jerome, and others, believed him to have been a Christian; the former asserts that he was perfectly acquainted with all that related to the doctrine and the laws of his ancestors; he extols his eloquence, the loftiness of his thoughts and sentiments, his exact understanding of the Scripture, and his explications of the sacred books. And if St. Jerome, Eusebius, and others, who have drawn up the catalogue of Philo's works, have not inserted the Book of Wisdom in he number, the reason was, either that since their time it has been questioned, or, that being received by the generality of churches as an inspired book, it was not proper to range it among the works of a Jewish author.

This is what may be plausibly urged in favour of Philo, but this alone will not be sufficient to induce us to ascribe this work to him, there will always be an invincible argument to the contrary, *viz.* his religion. Philo died in Judaism many years after the death of Christ; and if he was acquainted with the truths of the gospel, he has not done that justice, or given that honour to it, which he ought. It is not therefore probable that the Holy Spirit should speak by the mouth of such a person, nor that the church should adopt, or receive, as an inspired book, the work of an unconverted Jew. This reason, it must be confessed, is of no force against those who do not look upon the Book of Wisdom as canonical. But there are other reasons which hinder us from ascribing this book to Philo: 1. The difference of style. 2. The silence of the ancients, as Eusebius, St. Jerome himself, Photius, Suidas, and others, who have not placed this book among those of Philo. 3. The passages of this book quoted in the gospels, and the epistles written either before Philo could write this work, or a very little time after. There remains then only in his favour tradition, and that but indifferently supported, and a conformity of sentiments, which is not so peculiar to Philo, but the like may be found in Job, Proverbs, Plato, Ecclesiasticus, and in the books of Maccabees. In these we meet with, likewise, the punishments of the wicked after this life, and the future rewards and happiness of the righteous; one finds wisdom represented there as co-eternal with God, and *the Word*, as Almighty, Omniscient, Creator, Preserver; as instructing, punishing, rewarding. These notions were common at that time among the Jews, and who can be certain that Philo himself did not take these from the books we have just quoted?

Origen has nothing certain about the author of this book, no more than the other fathers which follow him. All then that can be concluded from what we have said is, that Philo was manifestly of the same principles with the author of this book, had the same method, and most of his sentiments; that he wrote in Egypt, and is not very ancient, since it is indisputable that he lived after the version of the Seventy. If we should attempt to reckon up the differences between the Book of Wisdom and Philo, a very considerable number, perhaps, might be produced; the former sets down ten months as the ordinary time for the birth of children, the latter only seven, asserting, that children born after that time, suppose in the eighth month, are not commonly long-lived, or born to be happy. Philo also differs from the author of the Book of Wisdom in what he says of the creation of man, and his likeness and resemblance of God. According to the latter, man was created in the similitude and image of God, immortal and innocent, his body formed out of the earth, and will return to earth again, as his soul will likewise to God after death, from whom it originally proceeded: Philo makes the resemblance between God and man to consist in the soul, which God himself created in the beginning, and filled with inclinations for its welfare and happiness, but adds, at the same time, that he called evil angels to assist at the formation of man, who

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were the authors of those bad dispositions observable in him; which includes that dangerous opinion of two different independent principles, which the Manichees afterward abused in so strange a manner.

Grotius is of opinion, that the Book of Wisdom is the work of a Jew, who wrote it in Hebrew after the time of Esdras, and before the pontificate of the high-priest Simon, and that for this reason it is placed before the book of Ecclesiasticus. It was translated, as he says, into Greek by some Christian author, who understood that language well enough, but took great liberties in his translation, without confining himself to the words of his original, and even added some strokes and sentiments taken from Christianity. Hence, he says, it proceeds, that the universal judgment is taken notice of there, the happiness of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked, in a manner more distinct and clear than we observe generally in the books of the ancient Hebrews.

These are the sentiments of Grotius, but there is scarce any part of this hypothesis but wants proof. It is mere guess-work to pretend that this book was originally wrote in Hebrew, neither Jews, nor ancient Christian writers, have either seen or known it in that language. If it was really wrote in it, would the Jews ever have suffered it to be lost? or are there any footsteps of Hebraisms, and a foreign construction, discoverable in the Greek translation? Those Christian sentiments which Grotius thought to be foisted into it by the translator, are to be found in the books of Maccabees, and in Philo, and some of them even in Plato. The two former, as likewise Ecclesiasticus, speak very clearly of the everlasting happiness of the just, and the eternal punishments appointed for the wicked. Are we therefore permitted to say, that these books likewise have been corrupted by Christians, who have artfully conveyed their maxims and sentiments into them? That admirable description of the just man, chap. ii. afflicted and tortured with a variety of wretchedness, do we not meet with it in the writings of Plato, lib. ii. de Rep.? from whence Cicero and Seneca both manifestly took it. It is well known how the ancient Greeks, and even the Jewish writers, were attached to the doctrine of that philosopher, and why might not this writer think it proper to preserve, and even consecrate, such a fine thought, and put it in its full light and beauty in this Divine work, and hereby set truth at liberty, and give it a freer circulation, which before was, as it were, a prisoner, and confined to the heathen writings? Does not St. Paul himself sometimes borrow the thoughts, and even the words, of profane authors?

Cornelius a Lapide believes, that the Book of Wisdom was wrote in Greek by a Jewish author, after the return from the Babylonish captivity, and about the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. He even suspects that it might be one of the Seventy interpreters that wrote it for the use of that king, the book being calculated, as has been before observed, for the instruction of princes; for Aristeus relates, that Philadelphus proposed to every one of these interpreters some question concerning the good government of his dominions. He adds, that the opinion which ascribes this book to Philo, might easily have obtained by the following equivocal terms: Solomon had two names, Solomon and Jedidiah, the last of which signifies *the friend of God*, and in Greek *Philo* or *Philos* signifies a *friend*; and the rabbins, when they quote Philo, give him the name of Jedidiah; and so people have been led into a mistake to imagine Philo the Jew was meant, when Solomon only was intended under his other name.

But these are conjectures without any certain proof. We will ingenuously acknowledge that this matter is dubious, and that the author of the Book of Wisdom is uncertain and unknown, but it is nevertheless canonical and Divine, since it contains in it all that is necessary to deserve that title; it abounds with useful and solid instructions, and paints Jesus Christ and his sufferings in a heavenly manner; and the truths recorded in it are as comfortable to the good and righteous, as they are dreadful to the wicked and the sinner; and besides, the church has received and acknowledged it, as sacred and canonical.

It is certain that the author lived after the Seventy, since he cites their text even when they depart from the Hebrew. He wrote at a time when allegories were much in vogue, and appears to have read the writings of the philosophers and Greek poets. From these circumstances we are of opinion, that this author cannot be very ancient. He seems to be later than the writer of Ecclesiasticus, whom we have fixed to the times of Ptolemy Epiphanes in Egypt, and Antiochus Epiphanes in Syria; and, if this be so, our author should have lived under the government of the Maccabees.

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THE

BOOK OF WISDOM.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

As the title of this book is Wisdom, the author very properly opens it with the recommendation of righteousness, which is a principal part of it; a virtue necessary to be observed by all, but more particularly by the rulers and judges of the earth, this being the chief end of their appointment, the pursuit of this end their great duty, and the attainment of it their true glory. He then proceeds to shew in general the necessity of right sentiments of God, and the folly of mistrusting, and murmuring against, his providence; that as he is the searcher of all hearts, no disguise or hypocrisy can impose upon him, nor be concealed from him; that wickedness first brought death into the world, which God unwillingly inflicts upon men, who were originally designed for a blessed state of immortality.

Ver. 1. *LOVE righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth.*] We find the like command given to Joshua, when God appointed him to succeed Moses in the government of his people: *The book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success;* (Josh. i. 8.) where the marginal reading, *thou shalt do wisely,* taken from the Hebrew, and confirmed by the LXX. seems far preferable. The same direction is given, Psal. ii. 10, 11. *Be wise now, O ye kings; be instructed, ye that are judges of the earth: serve the Lord with fear,* &c. The philosopher assigns two reasons why magistrates should be particularly careful to give public testimony of their goodness—"because the people will be less jealous of suffering an injury from such whom they believe to be righteous, and will be less disposed to attempt an injury against such of whom they entertain the highest opinion." (Politic. lib. v. cap. 11.) And it is no improbable conjecture, that one reason why rulers are called *gods* in Scripture (Psal. lxxxii. 6.) is, that they ought to imitate the Deity in the perfection of goodness. But besides this common acceptation of *judges of the earth,* which indeed is most natural, there is another sense suggested by Messieurs du Port-Royal, *Les saints expliquent ces paroles comme estant dites a tous les fidelles,* who, according to some of the fathers, will be appointed judges of the earth: and indeed St. Austin thus interprets the very words of this author, οἱ κρίνοντες τὴν γῆν, (see Comment. on Psal. ii.) from the Christian doctrine, probably, 1 Cor. vi. 2. *Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?* τὸν κόσμον κρινοῦσι; hence, ὁ κριτὴς τῆς οἰκουμένης, became the style of a great saint, and is yet used as the standing title of the patriarch of Alexandria, and perhaps of other eastern patriarchs. That this construction might be intended here seems probable, because the author of this book uses the same expression in the same sense, iii. 8. where, speaking professedly of the saints, or the best of men, he says, κρινοῦσιν ἔθνη καὶ κρατήσουσι λαῶν. Upon which words Grotius and other commentators scruple not to refer to Matt. xix. 28. and Apoc. ii. 26. and other places where the judgment of the world by the saints is mentioned. Both these passages in this writer may easily be accounted for, if there was any foundation for Grotius's observation in the introduction to his notes, *viz.* that the translator of this book was a Christian, "qui Christiana quædam commodis locis addidit." If that great man had given any proof of his remark, then indeed these passages might be more justly suspected, and esteemed instances of the truth of his observation.

Think of the Lord with a good heart.] Φρονήσατε περὶ τοῦ Κυρίου ἐν ἀγαθότητι. Our translators, because it follows immediately, καὶ ἐν ἁπλότητι καρδίας ζητήσατε αὐτὸν, have considered ἀγαθότης, as well as ἁπλότης, as relating to the heart. But, according to Grotius, *sentite de Domino in bonitate,* is a Hebraism for *bene sentite* (which is the sense of Calmet and the rest of the commentators of Coverdale's and the Geneva Bibles), *think of God justly and worthily, i. e.* have right sentiments of his goodness, power (which the Arabic version understands in particular), and his other attributes: consider what God is, and what ye yourselves are; what great things he hath done for you, and what unworthy returns ye have made him. This certainly is the better construction (if the Hebraism may be depended upon), and comprehends more than our translation of the place. This instruction is very properly inserted in the entrance of this work, because a right opinion concerning God is the basis and foundation of all virtue and goodness. Thus Origen, βάσιν γὰρ οἶμαι καὶ ἑδραίωμα πασῶν τῶν ἀρετῶν εἶναι τὴν ἁρμόζουσαν Θεῷ δόξαν τε καὶ πίστιν· (Cont. Marcion. p. 2.) *For the better God is understood, with the more rational religion will he be worshipped, and with a homage more agreeable to his nature, free from any mixture of superstition or idolatry.*

And in simplicity of heart, seek him.] *i. e.* With sincerity and singleness of heart, as Coverdale renders, in opposition to double-mindedness, which the Scripture so frequently condemns, and the Hebrew well expresses by *a heart and a heart,* divided as it were betwixt God and the world; and thus St. Bernard seems to understand it. "Seek not any thing (says he) more than God, or so much as God, because he is above every thing; seek not any thing with God, or next unto him, because he alone is sufficient for every thing." (De Div. Serm. 37.) A person of

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such a temper is elegantly called by the son of Siraeh, *A sinner that goeth two ways,* Ecclus. ii. 12.

Ver. 2. *He will be found of them that tempt him not.*] Though it is certain that *tempting God,* is used in Scripture not only for presumption and too much confidence, but also for too little confidence, or diffidence and distrust, which latter is the sense that Grotius and Calmet take it in; yet for what reason it should be so taken here (especially as the following words express this very thing, *viz. that he sheweth himself to those that do not distrust him),* is not easy to conceive: unless we will make a difference in the *degrees of distrust* expressed by πειράζουσιν and ἀπιστοῦσιν, as there seems to be in the degrees of discovery God makes of himself, expressed by εὑρίσκεται and ἐμφανίζεται· or else interpret ἀπιστοῦσιν of incredulity or slowness of belief, which is the proper meaning of the word. But the most natural construction of the whole verse is given by Messieurs du Port-Royal, who interpret *tempting God,* of every instance of hypocrisy and disguise, *On ne cherche point Dieu avec un cœur simple:* this is so agreeable to the ἁπλότης καρδίας beforementioned, as well as to all the following verses, that it claims the preference. And then, as it is another proper effect of the *simplicity of the heart,* to be as free from suspicions and distrust, as it is from craft or pretence, μὴ ἀπιστοῦσι, rendered and understood as in our translation, follows most aptly and naturally.

Ver. 3. *For froward thoughts.*] Σκολιοὶ λογισμοί. Σκολιὸς properly is *tortuosus, flexuosus,* and when applied to *thoughts,* must denote *crafty, captious, intriguing, subtle, prevaricating,* and every thing which is the reverse of ἁπλοῦς. I doubt therefore of the propriety of rendering it by *froward,* which denotes rather perverseness or obstinacy, as our translators render the word, Prov. xvii. 20. from another sense of σκολιὸς, *viz. crooked, hard to be reduced to a right line.* But this sense of wiliness or dissimulation perfectly agrees with the context, for it is said, *to separate from God; i. e.* God is not to be found by a hypocrite; and the reason follows in the fifth verse.

And his power when it is tried, reproveth the unwise.] This is variously apprehended by the commentators. Clarius would have it, *That the approved virtue of good men renders them the fittest to reprove the ungodly.* Badwell says, *Pronomen* ejus *adjunxi ut ad Deum referatur.* So have our translators inserted it; though *his* should have been in italic letters, because not in the original. Castalio, the same in sense: so also Grotius understands it, and expounds it, *That there is sufficient experience of the power of God to confute all those who deny his providence.* But how does this suit with the context? I think Messieurs du Port-Royal preserve the connexion much better, *Et lors que les hommes veulent tenter sa puissance* (tempt him by their hypocrisy, as above, or, as they explain it here in their notes, *en feignant le chercher au meme tems qu'on le deshonore) elle les convainc de folie; i. e.* as they explain it, God punishes their folly by giving them up to their own unruly affections. The sense of the whole third verse seems to be to this effect: Guileful thoughts set us at a distance from God and his truth; he is too great and powerful a being to be treated with art or craft; and when men presume to treat him so, "recalcitrat undique tutus" (as Horace said of Augustus), they are sure to suffer for their folly. This sense is confirmed by the words immediately following.

Ver. 4. *For into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter.*] Εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχήν. Here again is meant the *crafty, designing, evil-plotting soul,* and not merely the *malicious soul,* as our translators have rendered. And thus Badwell understands κακότεχνος, *Anima quæ malum molitur et machinatur.* St. Gregory has a just and apposite observation, "Deus de supernis mysteriis illorum mentes radio suæ visitationis illuminat, quos nulla umbra duplicitatis obscurat." (De Cur. Pastor. p. 3.) The Syriac and Arabic versions understand it, *of a soul polluted with many sins.* And indeed it must be confessed, in favour of this interpretation, that all sin, especially long continued in, indisposes the soul for the reception of Divine wisdom, and renders it an incapable subject of Divine grace; whereas holiness composes our natures into such a regular temper, as is of all others the most fit to receive religious impressions, and to procure us the presence and aid of God's grace. This sense has some countenance from what follows.

Nor dwell in the body that is subject unto sin.] Not barely *subject,* or liable unto sin; that cannot be the meaning, for this all persons who live in the midst of temptations must be in danger of committing; but the sense is, Divine wisdom will not dwell in such who are bound, or subjected, under the dominion of sin: and so the Vulgate renders, *Nec habitabit in corpore subdito peccatis;* and Coverdale's version has it, *Nor dwell in the body that is subdued unto sin,* or rather in bondage, as a debtor, unto sin; for so κατάχρεος, which is a forensic term, properly signifies. What the Jews observe of the spirit of prophecy, that it dwells not with sadness, is true of Divine wisdom, that it dwells not with wickedness, *i. e.* in a soul subject or enslaved to vicious and irregular passions. And so long as men allow themselves in any known sin, suffer any vice wilfully to remain in them unsubdued, so long they deprive themselves of the presence or inhabitation of this heavenly guest.

Ver. 5. *For the holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit.*] The Jews apply the name of *spirit* to several habits of the soul; thus we meet with the spirit of meekness, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, &c. (Isa. ii. 2.) and here the *spirit of discipline.* But I think, with Calmet, it would be better rendered, *The holy spirit of instruction will flee deceit,* that being a more proper word than *discipline,* which our translators use; for the context requires that precise sense, and *discipline* has a general and more lax sense in our language; some manuscripts accordingly read, ἅγιον πνεῦμα σοφίας, which confirms this. Seneca has a very remarkable passage among his Epistles to this purpose: "Sacer inest in nobis spiritus, bonorum malorumque custos et observator; et quemadmodum nos illum tractamus, ita et ille nos." *There is a holy spirit residing in us, who watches and observes both good and bad men, and will treat us after the same manner that we treat him.* Nor is the reason which is assigned for the residence and abode of a demon, or good genius, with Socrates, after a very extraordinary manner, less worthy of notice: "Do not wonder (says Maximus Tyrius) that such a spirit should dwell with Socrates, whose purity of body, goodness of soul, devotion towards God, and integrity to man, rendered him worthy of such a friend." (Dissert. 26.)

And remove from thoughts that are without understand-

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ing, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in.] Probably the true reading here of the original is ἀπὸ λογισμῶν ἀσυνζέτων, and not ἀσυνέτων, as all the printed copies have it. For the context plainly shews, and even the sentence immediately foregoing, that not silly or weak thoughts, but guileful intentions, and deceitful practices, are to be understood. What is here said of the spirit of instruction, with respect to artifice and dissimulation, is no less true of those holy spirits who are the appointed guardians of mankind, with respect to unrighteousness in general; for those who, with much tender concern and affectionate hopes, minister to man's salvation, are forced with regret to leave the care and habitation of the profligate and irreclaimable, and with sorrow cry out to one another, as the angels did in the Jewish temple, when through many profanations it was no longer fit for their charge, μεταβαίνωμεν ἐντεῦθεν, *Let us depart hence.* (Joseph. de Bell. Judaic. lib. vii.) And it is very observable, that when the wickedness of the old world was arrived to its height, God pronounces, οὐ μὴ καταμείνῃ τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐν τοῖς ἀνζρώποις, (Gen. vi. 3.) *My Spirit shall not always continue in such men;* the sense of which passage our version expresses imperfectly by *striving with men.* (See John xiv. 23.)

Ver. 6. *For wisdom is a loving spirit.*] *i. e.* A hearty well-wisher to, and promoter of, the good of mankind, and in particular a lover of their souls. But how is the punishing a blasphemer, an instance of the great love and philanthropy of this spirit? It seems rather a proof of its severity, than kindness and good-nature. The answer and true sense is, that though wisdom be such a kind and merciful spirit, yet her regard to justice is such, that she will not acquit the blasphemer; and so St. Austin (De Mendacio, cap. 16.) explains it. These may be supposed the words, and as it were soliloquy, of a wicked man, comforting himself in the midst of his evil courses against danger, because Divine wisdom is a loving and compassionate spirit. And then the words immediately following will contain the answer to this vain subterfuge and weak pretence, *viz.* that notwithstanding the affectionate tenderness of this spirit, which is confessed on all hands, and displayed every where, yet cannot she act so inconsistently and unsuitably to her holy nature, as to excuse the blasphemer. And thus the Syriac version understands it, *Amicus est quidem hominum spiritus sapientiæ, at non justificat impium.* And Junius, after having stated the objection, answers it in like manner, *Humanus quidem est, fateor; sed tamen non propterea injustus est, qui hominis blasphemi maledicta impune abire sinat.* (See Comment. in loc.)

And will not acquit a blasphemer of his words.] Or, as the literal rendering of the Greek is, *Hold him guiltless with respect to his lips.* Such whose *mouths are full of cursing, deceit, and fraud, and under whose tongue is ungodliness and vanity,* who dare be outrageous against God, or deceitful and injurious to their neighbour, shall be answerable for what is not conformable to truth and sincerity. All falsehood and deceit in general, either open or concealed, and whatsoever proceeds from the heart or the lips that may do hurt, is not only detestable to this Divine Spirit, but will be punished severely by it. This in the book of Proverbs is called a *froward mouth,* which the Vulgar Latin translates sometimes a *mouth with two tongues.*

For God is witness of his reins, and a true beholder of his heart, and a hearer of his tongue.] The sentiment here is like that in king David's fine charge to Solomon: *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts,* (1 Chron. xxviii. 9.) God's judgment alone therefore is infallible as to men's real goodness and inward dispositions; for whereas men judge of their neighbour's heart by his words or actions, which are often deceitful, God, on the contrary, judges of men's words and actions as he sees their heart, and knows their reins. But the observation in this place relates not so much to God's infinite knowledge in general, as to his discovery of guile and deceit in particular.

Ver. 7. *For the Spirit of the Lord filleth the world.*] *i. e.* Is infinite and immense, is not bounded by any place or space, but spreads himself to all places that we can either see or imagine, and infinitely beyond; so that we cannot say, He is here, and not there; Thus far he reaches, and no farther. St. Gregory describes God, "intra omnia non inclusus, extra omnia non exclusus, supra omnia non elatus, infra omnia non depressus:" (lib. ii. Moral.) Or, to speak in the language of the old philosopher, he is a being, *whose centre is every where, and his circumference no where.* But nothing can equal what God says of himself, *Am I a God at hand, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.* (Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. see also Psal. cxxxix. 7.)

And that which containeth all things, hath knowledge of the voice.] Some manuscripts read ὁ συνέχων, which probably is the true reading. (See Calmet and St. Austin in Speculo, and Orig. in Epist. ad Rom. cap. 9. lib. vii.) Thus the Syriac and Arabic versions expound it, the former rendering, *Ille qui tenet omnia, scienter habet vocem ipsius;* and the latter, *Et qui creaturas omnes amplectitur, possidet notitiam vocis.* Coverdale's version is to the same purpose, *And the same that upholdeth all things, hath knowledge also of the voice.* But the rendering of the Vulgate here is very faulty, and even ungrammatical: as the former sentence respected God's omnipresence, this takes in his infinite knowledge, which extends itself to, and takes cognizance of, what passes every where. With respect to our words, that of the Psalmist is most full, *Lo, there is not a word in my tongue, but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether:* (Psal. cxxxix. 3.) with respect to our actions, that of the prophet Samuel, *The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed;* 1 Sam. ii. 3. where the reading of the LXX. is very observable, Θεὸς γνώστος Κύριος, *i. e. the Lord is a God of knowledges,* which as Bishop Pearson expresses it, are so *plural,* or rather *infinite,* that *of his understanding there is no number,* τῆς συνέσεως αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀριθμός. (See the LXX. in Psal. cxlvii. 5.)

Ver. 9. *And the sound of his words shall come unto the Lord, for the manifestation of his wicked deeds.*] The marginal reading here seems preferable, *For the reproving of his wicked deeds.* Coverdale's version is to the same effect, *The report of his words shall come unto God, so that his wickedness shall be punished;* to which agrees the rendering in the Geneva Bible, *The sound of his words shall come unto God for the correction of his iniquities.* And the Syriac and Arabic versions are to the same purpose. And

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in this sense even our translators themselves have used ἐλέγχω, the very verse before, which they seem here to have forgot.

Ver. 10. *For the ear of jealousy heareth all things.*] *i. e.* God's jealous ear overhears every thing; especially complaints against the dispensations of his providence cannot be kept secret from him, who is jealous of his own honour. The Arabic version therefore of this passage is very just, *Ob zeli causam res omnes audit:* hence his name *Deus Zelotes.* There is no metaphor more frequent in the prophets, than to represent sin as *spiritual adultery;* jealousy, therefore, in a religious sense, means God's quick sense and keen resentment of his injured honour, that, like a suspicious and abused husband, he is ever inquisitive and watchful, always listening to, and actuated by, every report and whisper, so that nothing can be concealed from, or pass unobserved by, him, that reflects the least dishonour upon his judgments or proceedings.

And the noise of murmurings is not hid.] *Murmurings* here may either respect God, or man; with respect to God, the sense is, that he will listen to, and remember, all hard and ungodly speeches against him, that he will punish the secret complaints or open insults of such who dare to find fault with the wise methods of his providence, or, from any seemingly unequal dispensations of it, call his justice or goodness in question. By *murmurings* with regard to men, we may understand, that detraction, though a covert method of evil speaking, and generally conveyed by way of whisper, and under the seal of secrecy, yet shall neither be undiscovered or unpunished. And in this latter sense St. Austin understands this passage, (De Mendacio, cap. 16.) and is pleased with the contrast of the expression, *viz.* "*The noise of murmurings;* which, though imagined to be secret, and the slander of them conveyed privately, and as it were instilled into the ear, yet are as well-known (says he) to God, as if they were spoken aloud, or proclaimed with the voice of a trumpet."

Ver. 11. *Therefore beware of murmuring, which is unprofitable.*] *i. e.* Is very mischievous and hurtful. This figure of speech, called *litotes* or *meiosis,* when less is said than is meant, is frequent both in sacred and profane writings. Thus Prov. xx. 23. the wise man saith, *A false balance is not good; i. e.* very bad, and hateful to God. Thus *idols* are called *vain things, which cannot profit; i. e.* things which occasion much mischief. And the most shameful vices are called *things which are not convenient,* Rom. ii. 28. (See also Gen. xxxiv. 7.) Nor are examples of this kind of speaking wanting in Cicero, Livy, Longinus, and the best writers. Thus Virgil calls the great tyrant Busiris, *illaudatus;* and the Stygian lake, *inamabilis;* though by this negative of praise, he intended to express a great abhorrence of them. (See more instances in Martyn's Notes on the Georgics, lib. iii. p. 210.)

And refrain your tongue from backbiting, for there is no word so secret that shall go for nought; and the mouth that belieth slayeth the soul.] We cannot better or more truly interpret this verse, than of those reasonings which are contained in the five first verses of the next chapter; nor can it be so consistently understood any other way; for in the verses referred to, we have all the particulars inserted in this, *viz.* the γογγυσμὸς ἀνωφελὴς, the καταλαλιὰ γλώσσης, not *backbiting,* as our version hath it, but such representations of our mortal state, as are false and injurious to God the Creator—the φθέγμα λαθραῖον, in the strictest sense, explained by εἶπον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς λογισάμενοι—and οὐ κενὸν, on account of its pernicious consequences—and, lastly, the στόμα καταψευδόμενον, which literally *slayeth the soul,* by filling it with such vile principles as bring it to destruction. From hence the connexion, between this and the next chapter, is both visible and necessary; nor can we account for this verse so well in any other light. None of the commentators have attended to this, and therefore they expound this verse, either of *lying* strictly so called, or of *slander* in general; but if we understand it of *slandering,* with the marginal reading and the Geneva Bible, we must confine it rather to a particular branch of it, *viz.* the speaking evil of God, good men, or sacred things. St. Bernard's observation, that *slander is like a serpent, that at the same time kills several persons,* is very just and applicable here; for a slanderer, that takes a wicked pleasure in ridiculing or discrediting things sacred, ruins himself at length by his libertine notions and false principles; he shoots his arrows against heaven, which are sure to fall on his own head; he poisons the persons that listen to him with consent and pleasure, and so draws them after him into the same ruin; and he wounds religion, and consequently God through its sides, by the scandal and groundless suspicions which he impotently endeavours to fasten upon it.

Ver. 12. *Seek not death in the error of your life: and pull not upon yourselves destruction with the works of your hands.*] The original words ζηλοῦτε, and ἐπισπᾶσθε, intimate, that wicked men labour to be miserable; that they offer a sort of violence to themselves when they commit sin; and thereby oblige God, unwillingly, and, as it were, with reluctance, to inflict death on them. Salvian expresses this in most remarkably strong terms; "God (saith he) is loath to punish men, but they themselves, exigunt et extorquent ut perirent, vim etiam faciunt—manus inferunt pietati divinæ, et omni peccatorum scelere, quasi omni telorum genere, misericordiam Dei expugnant." (De Gubern. Dei, lib. i.) As death and destruction proceed thus from the corrupt abuse of men's own natural power and liberty of will, we hence see the origin of evil.—I observed of the former verse, that it was best explained by a reference to the beginning of the next chapter; so the like reference to it is equally proper and necessary in this, for much the same order of sentiments will be found in the cautions here given: *Seek not death; i. e.* court it not; ἐν πλάνῃ ζωῆς, which *error of life* is explained in ver. 6—9. of the next chapter: and the following verses there, *viz.* 10—12. that express a degree of wickedness which amounts to a *covenant* or *compact with death,* are here cautioned against, by *pull not upon yourselves destruction*; for ἐπισπᾶν ὄλεθρον is as much above ζηλοῦν θάνατον, as acts of violence, cruelty, and injustice, are above voluptuousness in the climax of a bad life.

Ver. 13. *For God made not death.*] *i. e.* He designed not originally the entrance of death into the world. Man, whom God at first made an image of his own eternity, in his state of innocence had the pleasing prospect of immortality; and if he had continued upright, his obedience would have been crowned with it. Bishop Bull hath a most excellent discourse upon the state of man before the fall;

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it is his opinion there, that "this never-ending life of happiness, promised to our first parents if they had continued obedient, and grown up to perfection under that economy wherein they were placed, would not have been continued in the earthly Paradise, but only have commenced there, and been perpetuated in a higher state; and after such a trial of their obedience, as should seem sufficient to the Divine wisdom, they should have been translated from earth to heaven." (Bull's Opera Posth. vol. iv. disc. 5.)

Neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living.] God does not sport himself, like a merciless tyrant, with the lives of his creatures, but is tender of their welfare, ever disposed to do them good, and ready to communicate happiness to them, if their own obstinacy and evil behaviour do not obstruct it. And therefore if, notwithstanding these gracious intentions of God in their favour, men do finally perish, their miscarriage must be ascribed to their own perverse wills, and sinful abuse of their liberty. And thus God declares expressly in Hosea xiii. 9. *O Israel, thy destruction is from thyself; i. e.* God is not the cause of any evil, either of sin or punishment; but thy sin, whereby thou destroyest thyself, and thy misery, which is the consequence of it, are both of thy own procuring. (See Lowth in loc. and Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) Some of the fathers, *viz.* Origen, Chrysostom, Theophylact, &c. have a pretty observation, and which is very pertinent to the passage before us, upon Matt. xxv. 41. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* They observe, 1. That the *punishment* of the wicked is not said here to be *prepared from the beginning of the world,* as the *blessing* is, lest it should be thought that God designed man's punishment before he sinned. 2. That Christ saith, *Come, ye blessed of my Father,* but not, *Go, ye cursed of my Father;* because God is the author and procurer of men's happiness, but man is the only author of his own misery. 3. That punishment is mentioned as designed originally not for *man,* but *for the devil and his angels.* (See Dr. Whitby in loc.)

Ver. 14. *For he created all things that they might have their being.*] *i. e.* God created the world and all things in it for perpetual duration; and that, under the direction of his overruling providence, they might always continue in being; and particularly he designed this favour for mankind, whom at first he created to be immortal, (ii. 23.) This is the sense of the Syriac version, which renders, *Et in ipsa mundi origine vitam expertem mortis veneno.*

And the generations of the world were healthful.] All things which God made in their several kinds were very good, and designed for the use and benefit of man, and were originally appointed to be serviceable to him; there were naturally no hurtful or noxious qualities in the elements, till sin altered the constitution of things; but sin having made a breach in the world, a sad train of evils entered with it; for the world being made for man, and the place of his residence, it hath felt the effect of God's displeasure to increase his punishment. And since the curse consequent upon the fall, famine, pestilence, deluges, wild beasts, diseases, pains, sicknesses, have been in their turns his scourges and destroyers, as if universal nature was armed against him. Or the meaning may be in particular, that all men (*Nationes orbis terrarum,* as the Vulgate reads, and Coverdale's translation follows) were created originally pure and healthful, both as to soul and body, in the person of Adam, the common root from whence they sprung; and that there was no natural contagion, or hereditary taint, to draw him to disobedience, and, in consequence of that, to destruction; *exterminium,* as the Vulgate expresses it, alluding probably to Adam's banishment out of Paradise. Had Adam indeed continued innocent, he then, among many other great privileges, had transmitted downwards, by way of natural generation or descent, a healthful and blessed temper of body: but our great protoplast and representative falling, besides the rectitude of his mind, he lost also that blessed constitution of body, which would have been so great a privilege to his offspring.

And there is no poison of destruction in them.] Φάρμακον ὀλέθρου. The Greeks often use Φάρμακον in a good sense; thus we read in Homer,

Φάρμακα πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ μεμιγμένα, πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά.

And therefore ὀλέθρου is very properly here added; as in Virgil's Georgics we meet with *malum virus,* where *malum* is not to be looked upon as a superfluous epithet, because *virus* is used in a good as well as a bad sense; as in Statius particularly. And that *venenum* itself does not always signify something destructive to life, see Virgil's eighth Eclogue, and Martyn on lib. i. Georg. p. 29. St. Austin observes, that briers and thorns were not of the original product of the earth, much less poisonous plants and herbs; and that none of these had grown upon the face of it but for man's disobedience. (De genes. cont. Manich. lib. i. cap. 13. and St. Basil, Hexaëm. hom. 5.) Accordingly the LXX. render, *Cursed be the ground for thy sake,* by ἐπικατάρατος ἡ γῆ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις σου, *i. e.* in or by thy works of sin. And Aquila and Theodotion render in like manner. But here it may be asked, How can this observation of our author be true, if in the natural world there are confessedly poisonous plants and drugs; and if what some good writers maintain be just, with respect to the moral world, *viz.* that the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was for its specifical quality of a poisonous nature both to the soul and body; and that the first man's nature was tainted by tasting or eating of it? Or how can it be justly said, that God did not create death, since he did create that poisonous fruit, by which the human nature was so deadly poisoned? For the solution of this difficulty, see the learned Dr. Jackson's Works, tom. iii. p. 29.

Nor the kingdom of death upon the earth.] Nor would death have had any power, much less sovereignty over the earth, who now reigns absolute in it, hath made it her place of residence, and even fixed her palace in it. For in the original it is not βασιλεία, but βασίλειον, which means not *kingdom* or *dominion,* but rather *court* or *palace.* Coverdale renders ᾅδου βασίλειον, *the kingdom of hell,* intimating, that the devil's power was usurped, and his sovereignty of man's own erection. Calmet renders, *Le roi des enfers n' avoit pas son palais sur la terre.*

Ver. 15. *For righteousness is immortal.*] If this verse was included in a parenthesis, the sense of the context would be better connected and more perfect; and I have the pleasure to observe, that Coverdale's translation doth so include it: the meaning seems to be, that obedience would not only have made man immortal, and translated him from an earthly to a heavenly paradise, but, as the

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verb is in the present tense, it may intimate farther, that righteousness continued in, would have raised man to an unchangeable state of goodness, and his innocence have been crowned with everlasting perseverance: as the angels, who continued in their duty when the rest revolted, are finally established in their integrity and felicity.

Ver. 16. *But ungodly men with their works and words called it to them: for when they thought to have it their friend, they consumed to nought, and made a covenant with it, because they are worthy to take part with it.*] We meet with the like phrase, *of making a covenant with death*, Isa. xxviii. 14, 15. and upon the like occasion. I shall transcribe it at large, because it will give great light to this passage: *Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves; therefore thus saith the Lord, Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.* This passage of Isaiah is certainly alluded to and imitated by our author in this verse. But the words in the original, and in our version, are so perplexed and obscure, that it will be very difficult, I had almost said impossible, to give any translation of this verse, and many others in this book, that shall answer truly to the letter, and yet be free from obscurity. The words, as they now stand, are certainly intricate and confused, and seem by some accident to have suffered a transposition. Was I at liberty to attempt mending the obscurity of this verse, it should be by a transposition too of the Greek words, by altering the place only of ἐτάκησαν καὶ, thus: Φίλον ἡγησάμενοι αὐτὸν συνθήκην ἔθεντο πρὸς αὐτὸν, καὶ ἐτάκησαν, ὅτι ἄξιοι, &c. *i. e. They called (death) to them, and looking upon it as their friend, they made a covenant with it; and consumed away, because they deserved to share in it.* But though this easy transposition would make the construction very clear, yet I dare not warrant it without plainer authority from manuscripts or ancient versions. Let us then see what construction may be put upon this verse, as the present reading is, by attending closely to the context; and from what goes before in the eleventh and twelfth verses, and what follows after in the whole second chapter, we may in general make this observation, that there seems here to be an intended climax, to shew the progress of wicked men's attachment to death, like that in Psal. i. 1. to shew their progress in iniquity; they first *call* or *invite death to them;* next they *hold it*, or *treat it as a friend;* and lastly, they *enter into covenant* or *strict union with it.* And this progress seems to be represented and explained at large in the next chapter: the first step is in their *reasonings about death*, contained in the first five verses, wherein they put it in a false but the most favourable light to themselves that it is capable of: the next step is a *debauched life*, founded on the foregoing false principles, and recommended in the next four verses; this is, entering into society or friendship with death; and the consequence of it is, they consume and waste away, and shorten their lives, which is represented by ἐτάκησαν. The last step is marked out, ver. 10. by their resolving upon *acts of flagrant injustice and malicious wickedness;* which is as it were entering into *covenant with death*, and makes their attachment to it inseparable, *viz. they die for ever.* But this will appear more fully, when we explain the particulars of the next chapter. I shall observe here, once for all, that we are not to imagine this book to be only a collection of confused discourses or independent sentences; for, from the little sketch here given, and the argument of the several chapters, to every attentive reader a regular method will appear plain and observable.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The author having represented in the former chapter the original of sin and death, as too sadly exemplified in our first parents, proceeds to shew the contagious effects and terrible consequences of sin upon their posterity. For this purpose he introduces some libertines reasoning (if it may be so called) in their loose way, in favour of their darling opinions, "That life is short and uncertain, and therefore its sensual gratifications to be pursued with eagerness, and without delay; that there is no real distinction between good and evil, and therefore all acts of oppression and injustice, such as may best suit men's convenience and interest, are allowable and commendable; that the soul is naturally mortal, and is annihilated with the body; that there is no future state, nor any account to be given hereafter of men's wicked and evil courses in this life:" these poisonous principles are represented from the beginning to ver. 21. of this chapter; and though set out to the best advantage, are not intended to countenance men in bad notions of religion, in false opinions of God, and wrong sentiments of the soul; but are only opinions introduced with an intention to confute them: and therefore, in the very entrance of this chapter, the author, to prevent any possible mistake as to his intention and meaning, pronounces such notions and conclusions to be not right, ver. 1. and at the end of this, and in the three following chapters, confutes them at large, determines in favour of virtue and goodness, and shews the certainty of their reward.

Ver. 1. *OUR life is short and tedious.*] I think the word *tedious*, which is used by the old English translations, improper here; it occurs very rarely in the sense of our version, refers more generally to time, and rather implies a long duration of it: so that *short* and *tedious* seem wrong coupled together; it would have been better rendered, and with less ambiguity, *short and painful*, and so the original indeed reads, ὀλίγος καὶ λυπηρὸς ὁ βίος ἡμῶν, and is confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions. The expression here is like that of Jacob's, *Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been*, (Gen. xlvii. 9.) and that of Job, *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble*, (xiv. 1.) allowing only for the difference of the speakers.

In the death of man there is no remedy.] There is no prevention of, or remedy against, mortality. Death is the portion of every man, though the particular time is uncertain, according to that of Job, *His days are determined; the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;* (xiv. 5.) But neither does our author, nor this passage of Job, countenance that notion of

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the predestinarians, That every particular man's time of life is so absolutely circumscribed, and so strictly and peremptorily assigned him by God, that nothing can shorten or lengthen it beyond such predetermined bounds: for though all things, even the number of our months, are allowed to be foreknown by God, yet does it not from hence, nor from any passage of Scripture, appear, that he has predetermined the precise and particular time of any person's death by any absolute decree: for if every man's time of life is unconditionally fixed, to what purposes serve the promises of long life to good and pious persons, where God sees it best for them; or the many threats of a short one to the ungodly and the wicked? Or why does the wise son of Sirach say, that *there is a time when there is success in the hands of the physician*, or that *they should pray unto the Lord, that he would prosper that which they give for ease and remedy to prolong life?* (Ecclus. xxxviii. 13, 14.) For vain is the help of art, and even prayer itself must be supposed fruitless, where the case is unalterable, and the doom irrevocable. The Vulgate renders, *In fine hominis non est refrigerium*, from a corrupted copy probably, which read ἴανθις, from ἰαίνομαι, *refrigeror, lætitia perfundor*, instead of ἴασις, the true reading. Coverdale's translation follows this mistake.

Neither was there any man known to have returned from the grave.] Both the observation and inference of these vain reasoners are false; for that persons have returned from the grave, appears from several instances under the Old Testament; 1 Kings xvii. 22. 2 Kings iv. 35. xiii. 21. Nor does it follow, if there were no instances of persons returning from thence, that the dead altogether cease to be, or that there is no future life after this, as such libertines would gladly infer. (See Anacreon, Ode 59. who has many thoughts and expressions like the loose and jovial ones in this chapter.)

Ver. 2. *We were born at all adventure.*] *i. e.* We came into the world by chance, without any appointment or direction of Providence: and as we came from nothing (Vulgate reads, *Ex nihilo nati sumus*, which Coverdale follows), so upon our deaths shall we return to nothing again. This language is very natural and agreeable to the persons here introduced speaking, *viz.* materialists and infidels.

And a little spark in the moving of our heart.] According to the notions of these false reasoners, the soul was nothing else but a little fire about the heart, the smoke of which was perceivable by our respiration, and the sparks of it by our words: that when this fire was extinguished, as they imagined it was by death, the body was reduced to embers or ashes, and the soul vanished into air. In like manner the atheistical philosophers, who made *atoms* the principles of all things, thought the soul to consist of some little brisk fiery spirits, which kept in for awhile, but were afterward extinguished by death. Hence we find them using the similes of air, fire, or smoke, with respect to the soul. The Latin also and the Hebrew, it is well known, express both spirit and wind by the same word: and from this agreement only in name, some, for want of better arguments, have been so weak as to infer, that they agree likewise in nature, and at last mix together. The true reading of the original, and which occurs in all the copies, and is followed by the oriental and most ancient English translations, is ὁ λόγος σπινθὴρ; the Vulgate also, with Junius, render it in like manner by *sermo*. Our translators, it is certain, made use of a corrupted copy, which read ὀλίγος σπινθὴρ, and have given the sense accordingly. If there was any authority for this reading, or just reason for its preference (see Flamin. Nobil. in loc. ap. Polygl. though it seems to be owing only to affinity of sound), I should choose to read the whole thus, καὶ ὀλίγος σπινθὴρ ἐκίνησε καρδίας ἡμῶν; i. e. *a little spark of fire moves*, or *hath put our hearts in motion.*

Ver. 4. *Our name shall be forgotten in time.*] When we are dead, our names will not live long after us, but our memorial shall perish with us; our actions will not be remembered in the next generation, much less in future ages: so that as to the shame or infamy arising from them, we are quite unconcerned and indifferent as to what posterity may think or say of them. As there is a commendable ambition in good men to be remembered with honour hereafter, which is a spur to virtuous and laudable actions; so a carelessness as to the present or future opinion of mankind is an encouragement to wickedness, and a certain sign of a profligate and abandoned mind.

Our life shall be dispersed as a mist, that is driven away with the beams of the sun, and overcome with the heat thereof.] Βαρυνθεῖσα ὑπὸ θερμότητος αὐτοῦ, *Made heavy with heat;* and so Vulg. *à calore illius aggravata*—both very improper. *Overcome with heat*, according to our version, is not agreeable to the Greek; and *oppressed with heat*, as in the margin, is no better. *Big with heat* has no better pretence to be allowed, because in the sentence immediately foregoing mention is made of dispersion by the rays of the sun. If I might indulge conjecture, I would, to avoid these difficulties, read here μαρανθεῖσα ὑπὸ θερμότητος, i. e. *wasted away with the heat thereof.* Sophocles applies the same word to time, πάνθ' ὁ μέγας χρόνος μαραίνει τε καὶ φλέγει. (See Ajax Flagell.)

Ver. 5. *For our time is a very shadow that passeth away.*] The comparison of life to a *cloud*, and a shadow, is almost every where to be met with; but Mr. Norris has set this latter resemblance in the best, and as it were a new light; as that "our state here is partly life and partly death, as the other is partly light and partly darkness—that, like a shadow, wherever it passes, it leaves no track behind it—that it seems to be something, when indeed it is nothing—that it is always altering, and ends on a sudden; and when at its full height and prime, is often nearest to its declension, as a shadow is to disappear when at full length." (Miscellanies, p. 178.) Hence Pindar calls men ἐφήμεροι, *people for a day;* and upon account of the shortness and uncertainty of life, the ancient patriarchs, though their span was much longer than ours, thought it hardly worth while to build houses, but contented themselves to sojourn and grow gray in tents.

For it is fast sealed, so that no man cometh again.] The Arabic version runs; *Est enim res obsignata* (scil. *mors nostra*) *quam nemo revocaverit.* The comparison here is taken from the ancient custom of sealing the grave or sepulchre, and rolling a great stone to the mouth of it, to make it the more secure and undisturbed. (See Dan. vi. 17. Matt. xxvii. 66.) Pausanias has a thought which very much resembles this, ἔχει ὁ Πλούτων κλεῖν, καὶ λέγουσιν ἐπ' αὐτῇ τον καλούμενον Ἀιδην κεκλεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλούτωνος, καὶ ὡς ἐπάνεισεν οὐδεὶς αὖθις ἐξ αὐτοῦ, i. e. *Pluto has a key, and with it, as they say, he locks up the place commonly called*

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Hades, and from thence no man returns; lib. v. cap. 20. (See Apoc. i. 18.) Holy Job has the like sentiment upon death, (vii. 9, 10.) *As the cloud is consumed and vanishes away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.* Where it is very observable, that the LXX. express this impossibility of returning by three strong negatives following one another, οὐδ' οὐ μὴ ἐπιστρέψῃ, repeated twice in the same verse.

Ver. 6. *Let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth.*] *i. e.* Whilst the good things or creatures are in their prime; or, rather, Whilst we ourselves are vigorous and young, which is the sense of the Syriac and Arabic versions; youth being the season for the high relish of pleasure, for cheering the heart and gratifying the senses: for every aged person may say with Barzillai, *Can I discern between good and evil? Can I taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing-men and singing-women?* (2 Sam. xix. 35.) There is also a third sense of these words, *viz.* Let us live as if we were young again; which Grotius prefers, and seems countenanced by the reading of the Alexandrian manuscript.

Ver. 7. *Let no flower of the spring pass by us.*] Flowers have always been esteemed symbols or emblems of joy, and in the revellings of debauchees they were usually crowned with them; and so peculiar are they to times of public festivity and rejoicing, that they are looked upon as incompatible with mourning. The spring seems more particularly to be mentioned, because it is the chief season of flowers. But some copies, instead of ἔαρος, read ἄνθος ἀέρος, which Junius prefers: but if this reason be admitted, I would not with him understand it barely of fine weather, *jucundus aer,* but rather, *Let no fragrant breath of air, arising from the wine or ointments,* just before mentioned, *pass by or escape us.* Οἶνος ἀνθοσμίας, *vinum odoratum et fragrans* (see Hesychius, *in voce*), was not unusual in such meetings.

Ver. 8. *Let us crown ourselves with rose-buds before they be withered.*] It is certain, that not only the guests at the feasts of the ancients, but the rooms, were strewed with flowers, and the waiters, and even the drinking-bowls, crowned with them. Roses are mentioned here in particular, because the rose is reckoned to be ἔρωτος φυτὸν, the *plant of love,* and was accordingly consecrated to Venus; and rose-buds are symbols of youth, and of the spring, and from their soon withering, the properest emblems of the shortness of life, and the fleeting nature of its pleasures. (See Anacreon, Od. 5. de Rosa, and Od. 53.)

Ver. 9. *This is our portion, and our lot is this.*] Coverdale's version is more explicit, *For that is our porcion, else get we nothing.* This is the language of Epicurus's scholars, the sum of whose ethics was, "Dux vitæ dia voluptas." Life, in the opinion of such libertines, is bare existence without their sinful pleasures: and it is observable, that in Plautus, Catullus, and Martial, and such writers, *vivere* is generally taken for a merry life, as ζῆν is sometimes among the Greeks; and in this sense we are to understand that old inscription, "Amici, dum vivimus, vivamus." Those that are persuaded that the soul is absolutely mortal, their conclusion must be that of these sensualists: such persons act agreeably to their own principles, if they pursue every thing that their appetites are inclined to, be it pleasure or profit. Such maxims, and a conduct suitable to them, may be expected from persons who had no views beyond the grave. And therefore the Epicureans endeavoured to efface the belief of another life out of men's minds, as well knowing that men could never arrive to an undisturbed sensuality, whilst any notions of futurity checked them in the commission of their crimes. Accordingly, "Metus ille foras præceps Acherontis agendus." (Lucret. lib. iii.)

Ver. 11. *Let our strength be the law of justice.*] The assertion here, that right is founded in might, is a very old opinion, as old probably as Nimrod, but long since confuted by the wisest men and soberest philosophers: "Falsum est (says St. Austin) quod a quibusdam non recte sentientibus dici solet, id esse jus, quod ei, qui plus potest, utile est." (De Civit. Dei, lib. xix.) Upon which, Ludov. Vives remarks, that this false and dangerous opinion is confuted by Plato, lib. i. de Repub. Hobbes in vain endeavoured to revive this notion, so injurious in its consequences to the property, and destructive of the peace and comfort, of mankind.

Ver. 12. *Let us lie in wait for the righteous, because he is not for our turn.*] i. e. *Let us lurk privily for the innocent without a cause,* as it is expressed, Prov. i. 11. where there is the like consultation of the wicked. It is no wonder that atheists and unbelievers, and persons of such vile and libertine principles, should encourage one another in wickedness, and in attempting the most outrageous acts of violence and injustice, in the manner here represented, especially against such as are most likely to cross or contradict their pleasures, and to reprove them in the sinful use of them. Such a kind monitor is not for the turn of the wicked, he is rather δύσχρηστος, as the original has it, *i. e. officious, troublesome,* and *disagreeable* to them. St. Cyprian, who quotes this passage of our author's, reads accordingly *insuavis,* lib. ii. cont. Judæos; and so does St. Austin, lib. xvii. cap. 20. de Civit. Dei. There is exactly the same expression, and upon the same occasion, in Isaiah iii. 10. according to the version of the LXX. δήσωμεν τὸν δίκαιον, ὅτι δύσχρηστος ἡμῖν ἐστι, from which this seems to be taken; and it is the more probable, because, in the Greek text of Barnabas, where this passage of the Book of Wisdom is cited, the reading is, δήσωμεν τὸν δίκαιον, and not ἐνεδρεύσωμεν, as in the common editions.

Ver. 14. *He was made to reprove our thoughts.*] Ἐγένετο ἡμῖν εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐννοιῶν ἡμῶν. Our version seems here neither just nor proper; the meaning is, He is a reprover of our schemes and designs. The Arabic renders it, *Consilia nostra;* and the Syriac, *Est nobis objurgator cogitationum nostrarum.* Thus I would understand ἐγένετο, and not in the sense of our translation.

Ver. 15. *He is grievous unto us even to behold, for his life is not like other men's.*] The very sight of him is uneasy and disagreeable to us: for the presence of a good man is a check to the proceedings of the wicked; and his virtuous example, and singular goodness, is a living reproof which they do not relish in their sight. Hence the many attempts and combinations of ungodly men against the life of the righteous, so frequent to be met with in sacred and profane history. Thus Joseph's virtue was an eye-sore to his brethren, and therefore they conspired his destruction. Thus David, for his superior excellence and uncommon merit,

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was persecuted by Saul. Hence St. Peter observes of the wicked, that it is their custom to speak evil of, and abuse, *such as run not with them to the same excess of riot,* (1 Pet. iv. 4.) And St. John asks this question, *Wherefore did Cain, who was of that wicked one, slay his brother?* and returns for answer, *Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous,* (1 John iv. 12.) The like may be observed of the primitive martyrs and confessors, who were persecuted, afflicted, tormented, because, instead of countenancing fashionable and popular vices, they chose rather to reprove and rebuke them. Tacitus assigns this as the cause of the death of Thraseas Pætus, "That Nero could not bear even the sight of that senator, who was of so unblemished a character, that *his life was as it were animated virtue itself.*" (Annal. lib. xvi.)

Ver. 16. *We are esteemed of him as counterfeits.*] Our version seems here faulty, for such abandoned persons as are here described would not be at the pains to act under the disguise of piety, or assume the mask of religion: the meaning is, that he esteems us like dross, or as an impure and filthy mixture; which sense is confirmed by the very next sentence, and so the original word means, and the Syriac and Arabic versions understand it. The Vulgate reads *nugaces, i. e.* we are looked upon by him as persons that pursue trifles (for such do all the pleasures of the world appear to a truly humble and good spirit); but this term seems too soft and favourable for persons of such bad morals and wicked principles.

Ver. 18. *For if the just man be the Son of God, he will help him, and deliver him from the hand of his enemies.*] Thus the primitive martyrs were insulted, and treated in the like opprobrious manner, *ποῦ ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῶν, καὶ τί αὐτοὺς ὤνησεν ἡ θρησκεία, ἣν καὶ πρὸ τῆς ἑαυτῶν εἵλοντο ψυχῆς.* (Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 1.) The expressions from ver. 16. to 21. of this chapter, very much resemble those of the Psalmist, Psal. xxii. 8. *He trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him now, εἰ θέλει αὐτὸν, if he loveth him.* Compare likewise Matt. xxvii. 43. where the taunt and irony used by the Jews, by way of insult, to our Saviour, then expiring on the cross, very much resemble the manner of expression here. And, indeed, St. Austin thus understands and expounds our author, and says, that in this and the following verses, *there is a plain prophecy of Christ's passion, and that the unrighteous here mentioned are his wicked murderers.* (De Civit. Dei, lib. xvii. cap. 20.) St. Ambrose, St. Cyprian, and many others of the fathers, assert the like; but Lactantius is most express, and presses the Jews home with this testimony, which he says is *so full and particular in describing the wicked counsels against him, that this author may seem almost to have been present,* (lib. iv.) But I am not so sanguine as to imagine or assert, that there is any direct prophecy of our blessed Saviour's sufferings in these verses, which would be doing too much honour to this author, and the times in which he wrote; yet I think, by way of accommodation, they are applicable to our Saviour, who in Scripture is called *the just one,* by way of eminence, and in a very particular and appropriate manner calls God his Father.

Ver. 20. *Let us condemn him with a shameful death, for by his own saying he shall be respected.*] *i. e.* If his own word may be depended upon, God will have respect unto him, *ἔσται αὐτοῦ ἐπισκοπὴ ἐκ λόγων αὐτοῦ, there shall be a visitation* or *interposition of God in his favour,* probably by bringing him from the dust of death again. The expression here very much resembles that of Joseph's brethren, Gen. xxxvii. 20. *Come now, and let us slay him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams.* (See also Jer. xviii. 18.) It is a severe irony, and a sneering sarcasm upon the hopes of *the just man,* not unlike that of the heathens upon the ashes of the primitive Christians, who gloried in the hopes of a resurrection: their persecutors pleased themselves with reducing the dead bodies of the several martyrs into atoms, with scattering them in the air, or throwing them into rivers, and then scoffingly said, *Let us now see whether they can rise again, or whether their God can help them, and deliver them out of our hands.* (Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 1.)

Ver. 21. *For their own wickedness hath blinded them.*] See the like sentiment, iv. 12. St. Chrysostom observes, "That sin doth so blind the senses of sinners, that seeing not the ways of falsehood and error, they run headlong into them: nor could any errors ever have prevailed over man, if sin had not made the way; for first a man is blinded by his sins, and then drawn away and seduced; for error (saith he) begetteth not sin, but sins beget and bring forth error." (Homil. 19. in Matt. vii.) But still it is no less true, on the other hand, that error, especially in fundamental principles, produces generally wicked practices. St. Austin accordingly observes, that the different degrees, and as it were gradations of licentiousness, are very justly described in this chapter: "That men first efface all impressions of a Deity, then deny the immortality of the soul, and a future state; that immorality is the certain consequence of such infidelity; that debauchery and intemperance is their resort in particular, as being the most effectual remedy to drown thought; and that when men are once heated, they easily proceed, through excess, to oppression, cruelty, and murder." (In Psal. lii.)

Ver. 23. *For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity.*] God not only created man *ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ,* free from corruption, but made him *εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἰδιότητος,* which is a very strong expression, to denote a peculiar resemblance of the Deity; and accordingly the Arabic interpreters render, *Fecitque illum imaginem peculiarem;* and the Syriac, *Ad imaginem ideæ suæ.* Our translators undoubtedly read, *ἀϊδιότητος,* which properly signifies eternity; and this Dr. Grabe has inserted in the text, esteeming it probably the best reading.

Ver. 24. *Through envy of the devil came death into the world.*] The devil, jealous at the future happiness designed for man, resolved to tempt him to disobedience, that he might deprive him of the blessing of immortality, and reduce him to the same forlorn condition with himself and his apostate brethren. St. Chrysostom makes the same observation upon the devil, *ὅτι οὐδὲν παρ' ἡμῶν ἠδικημένος, ἰδὼν τιμηθέντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον, εὐθέως ἐβάσκανεν αὐτοῦ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς.* (Homil. 25. de Diabolo Tentat.) *That though man had given the devil no occasion of offence, yet when he saw the honour designed him, he immediately envied him the favour.* (See also Euseb. Præp. Evangel. lib. vii.) St. Austin observes, "That death began at the same time with the transgression; and that neither age nor pain could have touched our first parents, so long as they held the privilege of eating of the tree of life; but afterward their bodies,

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even in a natural way, contracted the seeds of diseases and death." (De Genes. lib. ii.) And thus the Apostolical Constitutions, δύο ὁδοί εἰσι, &c. "Duæ sunt viæ, vitæ una, mortis altera, illæ autem nullam habent inter se convenientiam. Naturale quidem est vitæ iter, adscitum autem iter mortis, quod non ex voluntate Dei extitit, verum ex insidiis adversarii." (Constit. lib. vii. cap. 1.)

And they that do hold of his side do find it.] The Vulgate reads, *Imitantur autem illum qui sunt ex parte illius;* and Coverdale's translation renders in like manner, *And they that hold of his side do as he doth;* and so does Fulgentius, de Prædestin. ad Monimum, lib. i. but the construction before given would be more consistent and agreeable, and the relation between the two chapters more apparent, if the rendering here was, *they tempt it (i. e.* they solicit, they court, they draw death upon themselves), as many as are partakers of it; for the οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες, and the οἱ ἄξιοι τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι, (i. 16.) are the same sons of perdition, those over whom is ᾅδου βασίλειον, (i. 14.) which is not of God's appointing, but their own seeking and procuring. The present rendering of this place is little less than tautology, for to be *partakers of death,* is certainly to *find it.* I shall only observe, that it appears, from the whole drift of these chapters, that the death, which wicked men call, correspond, covenant with, and at last partake of, is all along to be understood of death eternal.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

In order to confute the false and dangerous principles maintained by the irreligious and profane scoffers in the foregoing chapter; in this is displayed the great happiness of the righteous, and the impotent malice of the wicked against them. For though God, for wise ends of his providence, permits the righteous sometimes to be afflicted, and even to die under the severity of their persecutions, yet do they not totally cease to be; but as they die in the Lord, so they still live unto, and with, God, in whose hands their souls are. But the wicked, on the contrary, though they promise themselves great happiness in their sinful courses, are miserable both here and hereafter. The chapter concludes with the praise of chastity, and the sad state and condition of adulterers and their children.

Ver. 1. *THE souls of the righteous are in the hand of God.*] *i. e.* In the state of separation, the souls of the righteous that are departed, shall after death find great refreshment and comfort of their labours; and being in God's keeping, enjoy a state of the greatest happiness and security. This state of the piously-deceased, the ancient Jews, according to Grotius, called Paradise, or the Garden of Pleasure; where, though they enjoyed not the consummate happiness which they were in expectation of hereafter, yet even at present, and in their intermediate state, they had some foretaste and anticipation of their future happiness; but they held none to have this pleasing sense, but the πνεύματα δικαίων τετελειωμένων, such as had their souls well purified before they departed from their bodies. From this expression, *that the soul is in God's hand,* we may infer, that the human soul is not only a substance distinct from the body, but that it lives after it in a state separate from it, and such a state as is susceptible of happiness or misery: for why are the souls of the righteous here said to be deposited in the hand of God, but because it denotes a place of rest and safety? where the departed souls shall not only live and survive, but live too in a manner far different from that in which they lived here, where no temptation shall be able to assault, no sin to pollute, no affliction to discompose them.

And there shall no torment touch them.] Nor are such as die in the Lord only freed from temptations and dangers, from injuries and persecutions, from diseases and death, and all other burdens of the flesh, but we may piously believe, that more is here implied than a bare freedom from evils, that they are possessed of some positive degree of happiness; that in particular, they have pleasing anticipations of their reward, and wait for it with a holy impatience; and in the mean time are in Paradise, or in Abraham's bosom, or some place of rest and refreshment appointed for them by God: but with respect to the martyrs in particular, who had suffered gloriously in God's cause, it was a notion very early entertained in the primitive church, that these entered immediately upon a perfect state of happiness and glory. Or we may understand this passage, of the afflictions which the righteous may undergo in this life, that, though their torments be the most exquisite that heathen malice can invent, yet by the strength of their faith, and a sure dependance upon God, they shall overcome the reluctance of nature, and not only suffer with patience, but with joy and thanksgiving. Not that this resolution of the righteous is the effect of any stoical apathy, or that they have not flesh and blood, like other folks, to feel the force of sufferings; but it is the power of a strong faith that makes them more than conquerors. "If the souls of the martyrs were indeed in their bodies when they had trial of such a variety of sufferings, they could never (says St. Bernard) have been able to have gone through them; but while their bodies were in the hands of their persecutors, and mangled by them, their souls were in the hand of God; and the Holy Spirit, with which they were filled, kept them above all sense of pain, and rendered them quite invulnerable." And whoever reads the letter from the churches of Lyons and Vienna to those of Asia and Phrygia, wherein the exquisite sufferings of the martyrs, and their invincible constancy in the most severe trials, are described, (see Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 1.) will acknowledge the truth of this observation, and at the same time be convinced, that the history of their sufferings is the most complete comment upon the beginning of this chapter.

Ver. 2. *In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die.*] This is a very happy expression, for good men rather sleep than die, their hope and well-grounded assurance changes the nature of death, and turns it into a sleep. St. Chrysostom expresses himself to the same purpose, "Death is no longer to be counted death, it is only a name; nay, the very name also is gone, for Christians call it not death, but rest and sleep," (Homil. 29. in Genes.) Accordingly, in many places both of the Old and New Testament, where the death of good men is mentioned, it is expressed by sleeping. (John xi. 11. Acts vii. 60. 1 Thess. iv. 14.) Hence the day, on which the blessed Virgin died, is in the

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Greek church called κοίμησις, *her rest;* and the places where the first martyrs were buried, κοιμητήρια, or *resting-places.*

Ver. 3. *And their going from us to be utter destruction, but they are in peace.*] The wicked, who are also in the former verse called the *unwise* (for in the book of Proverbs, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus, wickedness and folly are synonymous terms), imagine the righteous to be miserable, because, when alive, they were mortified, as to all pleasures, and when dead, extinct and annihilated, according to their opinion. To such vain reasoners, who had no notion of a life beyond this, it is here very justly replied, that the righteous are so far from being sufferers by death, that when dead they are in peace, and their happiness the greatest. (See Job iii. 17, 18.) And this the *voice from heaven* confirms, Rev. xiv. 13. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours.* Instead of being objects of ridicule and contempt, the character of the righteous is rather that beautiful contrast of St. Paul's, *as deceivers and yet true, as dying and behold they live, as chastened and not killed, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing,* (2 Cor. vi. 8—10.)

Ver. 4. *Yet is their hope full of immortality.*] In the midst of their misery and afflictions, they comforted themselves with the pleasing hopes of a happy resurrection to a blessed state of immortality, as the seven brethren did, 2 Macc. vii. and when, as a reward of their constancy and virtue, the saints shall be finally in possession of their happiness, and receive their μισθὸν πλήρη, (2 John viii.) then in another and no less proper sense of these words may it be said, ἡ ἐλπὶς αὐτῶν ἀθανασίας πλήρης, *their hope of immortality is full,* i. e. *fulfilled* and *completed.*

Ver. 5. *And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded.*] This cannot relate to the smallness or lightness of the sufferings, which are above described so violent, as to affect even the life of the righteous; but the meaning seems to be, that having suffered through the malice of their persecutors for a small space of time, with respect to eternity, those afflictions which were comparatively but for a moment, *will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* Thus the writer to the Hebrews having described at large, chap. xi. the sufferings of the *worthies* mentioned there, says, that such chastening (παιδεία, the word here used), though *for the present it seemeth grievous, yet afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them which are exercised thereby,* (xii. 11.) St. Gregory observes, *that God permits the afflictions of good men, that he may draw much benefit from them:* for this reason he permitted Jacob to be persecuted by Esau, and David by Saul, that the persecutions they suffered, might be at once the exercise and crown of their virtue. And the reward of such suffering virtue follows in the next sentence, that God having tried their faith and constancy, and found them worthy, is pleased finally to translate them to himself, to live with him, and with the blessed society of just men made perfect, of whom the world in their several ages was not worthy, to enjoy his beatific presence.

Ver. 7. *And in the time of their visitation they shall shine.*] The Vulgate, which Coverdale follows, joins this to the former verse, and reads, *Et in tempore erit respectus illorum, i. e.* that God will in due time have a respect to, and reward, such saints and martyrs who fell a sacrifice in his service, who, like the victim in the burnt-offering, were consumed in the flames, and whose souls are purified by their afflictions, and prepared for heaven, and made fit offerings for God to receive. This sense the Syriac interpreters prefer. Our version, with the Arabic, follows the Greek, καὶ ἐν καιρῷ ἐπισκοπῆς αὐτῶν ἀναλάμψουσι; which expression may be taken in two senses, either it may be understood of the afflictions and sufferings of the righteous in this life, for so ἐπισκοπὴ and ἡμέρα ἐπισκοπῆς often signify in the LXX. particularly, Isa. x. 3. According to this acceptation, the meaning of this place is, that the righteous shall shine the brighter for their afflictions, and that God will glorify his saints in and by them. Thus God promises to such as set their love upon him, not only that he will *be with them in trouble, but that he will deliver them from it, and bring them to honour by it,* Psal. xci. 15. We cannot have a more remarkable instance of the presence of God with his servants in afflictions, than in the history of the *three children* cast into the *furnace,* where the text acquaints us, that one in the form of the Son of God, probably an angel, conspicuous and distinguishable by his brightness, walked with them, and accompanied them in the very flames; and that this accident, and their miraculous deliverance from it, was the occasion of their being promoted in the province of Babylon, (Dan. iii.) The sentiments of the primitive writers, upon occasion of the martyrs' sufferings, are most noble and magnificent: "A Christian (says Tertullian) never thinks himself so fine, never so illustrious, as at the stake; he is then in his triumphal chariot, going to heaven in state." (Apol. pro Christianis.) Nor is what Eusebius writes less observable: "That it was a most charming sight, to behold the martyrs in prison, to see how their misery became them, how they adorned their fetters, and looked as captivating in their chains, as a bride in all her glory upon the day of marriage." (Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 1.) Or we may understand this passage in another sense, *viz. That the righteous shall shine with glorified bodies,* ἐν ἐπισκοπῇ ψυχῶν, (ver. 13.) For the Jews have a tradition, that the bodies of the righteous shall be clothed at the resurrection with a clothing of light, as of a pure flame. This is agreeable to the descriptions made in the Old Testament, of the just rising from their graves, *That they shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars, for ever and ever,* (Dan. xii. 3.) And in the New it is said, *That they shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,* (Matt. xiii. 43.) Hence in Scripture, and particularly in the writings of St. Paul, the state and happiness of the blessed is expressed by the word *glory.* (See also Matt. xvii. 2. Acts ix. 3. Rev. i. 14, 15.)

And run to and fro like sparks among the stubble.] By the *stubble* it is certain the wicked are meant, called also *chaff,* by a like metaphor, Psal. i. 5. The expression here is proverbial; and if it be understood of the righteous in this life, and of their conduct, as distinguished from the wicked, the meaning then will be the same with that of St. Paul, Phil. ii. 15. *That the sons of God, i. e.* the righteous, *shine as lights in the world, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.* But if it is applied to the future state of the righteous, it seems to intimate their great swiftness in their heavenly vehicles. Our translation, it must

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be confessed, which renders διαδραμοῦνται, by *running to and fro*, conveys but a flat and low idea, the image only of a few random sparks; the sense would be more sublime and just, after this manner, "They (the saints) shall run or pass through the ranks of the wicked (*discurrent*, says the Syriac version, *justi inter impios*) as fire spreads through the stubble every where uncontrolled and irresistible." Hereby probably is intimated their power over them; a farther description of which follows in the next verse.

Ver. 8. *They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever.*] Though the righteous may be said even in this life to judge the nations, *i. e.* to condemn the wicked, by the conspicuousness of their faith and virtue, in which sense κρίσις is taken by the Arabic version, and is often understood so by St. Jerome, and by St. Austin, (De Civitate Dei, lib. xx. cap. 5. see also John v. 24.) yet I rather incline to apply this passage to the next life, "That in the great and final judgment of the world, the saints shall be assessors with God in judging the wicked:" for it is piously thought by many learned men, that the saints, when crowned themselves by God, shall be invested with the authority of pronouncing sentence even against evil angels and wicked spirits. And it was an opinion that prevailed generally in the early times of Christianity, that at the resurrection every man should rise in order, ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι, *i. e.* according to the degree of his goodness; and that they who were raised and judged first, should themselves have a part in judging those which followed. (See Dan. vii. 18. 22. Matt. xix. 28. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. Rev. ii. 26. See note on i. 1. of this book.)

Ver. 9. *They that put their trust in him shall understand the truth, and such as be faithful in love shall abide with him.*] *i. e.* Persons so qualified shall happily experience this truth in particular; or the meaning may be, that they are the fittest and most likely to attain the knowledge of Divine truths in general, which is the sense of Messieurs du Port-Royal; for the author seems to point out two ways or conditions for that purpose; the first is, trust in God, or rather a distrust of a man's self, and of his own perfection and abilities, because humility is the surest way to Divine knowledge; the second is, a sincere and unfeigned love of God, which displays itself in obedience and a readiness to do God's will; for an honest and well-disposed heart, free from any corrupt passions or affections, may soonest hope to receive spiritual illuminations, and the knowledge of saving truths, according to that observation of our blessed Saviour's, *That if any man will do his will, he shall certainly know of his doctrine*, (John vii. 17.) According to the different pointing of the Greek text, the last clause of this passage of our author may be differently understood; either we may render with the margin, and the Geneva Bible, *Such as be faithful shall remain with him in love;* and thus the oriental versions point the place; or, as our translators take it, *Such as be faithful in love shall abide with him; i. e.* cleave to him with so firm and unshaken a resolution, that neither tribulation nor distress, life nor death, shall separate them from him: and in this sense προσμένειν τῷ κυρίῳ is taken, Acts xi. 23. The Syriac interpreters seem to understand this clause in the sense of not falling away, *Qui sunt fideles, per charitatem permanebunt ipsius; quia gratiam et misericordiam electis suis impertitur.*

Ver. 11. *Whoso despiseth wisdom and nurture, he is miserable.*] This and the former verse refer to those vain reasoners, and wicked libertines, whose character is so justly drawn in chap. ii. The sentiments of this writer agree frequently, we may observe, with the book of Proverbs; and this passage very much resembles that fine advice in the conclusion of the eighth chapter of that inspired writer, particularly the two last verses, where wisdom speaketh thus of herself, *Whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord; but he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me love death.* (See also Psal. ii. 12. in the LXX. version.) St. Cyprian opens his treatise, De habitu Virginum, with an encomium of discipline too fine and remarkable to be here omitted; "Disciplina custos spei, retinaculum fidei, dux itineris salutaris, fomes ac nutrimentum bonæ indolis, magistra virtutis, facit in Christo manere semper, ac jugiter Deo vivere, et ad promissa cœlestia et divina præmia pervenire. Hanc et sectari salubre est, et aversari ac negligere letale." Tertullian, throughout his works, is equally full of its commendation.

Ver. 12. *Their wives are foolish, and their children wicked.*] It is obvious to observe, that the book of Proverbs not only calls wickedness in general by the name of folly, but seems to brand the sin of uncleanness, or lust, with that name more particularly. What therefore our translators here render *foolish*, in the marginal reading is, *light*, or *unchaste;* and the Arabic version confirms this sense, which reads, *Uxores ejus procaces;* and the Port-Royal comment, *Les femmes sont dereglées.* As to what is here observed, that the children of such parents are generally vicious and wicked; this is almost unavoidable: for, as the apocryphal Esdras speaks, *Like as the field is, so also is the seed; and as the flowers be, such are also the colours,* (2 Esd. ix. 17.) This so natural and constant a resemblance shews the great duty and necessity incumbent on parents to be good and virtuous themselves, upon account of their children, and the good or evil consequences derived to them; for, according to their own conduct and behaviour, they entail either a blessing or a curse upon their children, as it follows in the next words, which the oriental versions join with great judgment to this verse.

Ver. 13. *Blessed is the barren, that is undefiled, which hath not known the sinful bed.*] This is to be understood of the *barren wife*, that is chaste and free from adultery, whose great commendation in Scripture is, κοίτη ἀμίαντος, Heb. xiii. 4. And though she may be reproached by some upon account of her barrenness, as was the sentiment of the Jews particularly, through their hopes and expectations of the Messiah, yet shall her virtue be recompensed by God, as far preferable to the most fruitful adultery. In vain have some popish writers endeavoured to ground upon this place, which undoubtedly relates to married persons, *the order of perpetual virgins;* as if that was established and approved of in the age of this writer, and known to the ancient Jews, which is certainly the invention of more modern times.—In this passage no reflection is intended against marriage, nor any preference given to a continued celibacy; the comparison is between married persons only, *viz.* a barren wife, and a teeming adulteress. (See Chemnitii Examen. par. iii. p. 17.) Nor does this writer commend a person in general, ἥτις οὐκ ἔγνω κοίτην,

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but such a chaste wife in particular, who has not defiled the bed, ἐν παραπτώματι. I shall only observe upon the Greek reading of this passage, that the particle ὅτι which introduces it, and seems harsh and ungrammatical, is here, as it is often in the sacred writers, pleonastical. (See instances of this in Blackwall's Sacr. Classics, vol. i. p. 118.)

She shall have fruit in the visitation of souls.] Though she has not the blessing of children, and *the fruit of the womb which cometh of the Lord,* yet shall she have her fruit, *i. e.* her recompence and reward, when hereafter she shall be crowned, and reign in glory with other pure and immaculate souls. The writer of this book probably entertained that notion, so frequent to be met with among the rabbins, and even primitive fathers, that after six thousand years there will be a glorious millennium, when the saints shall reign a thousand years upon earth; this they call *dies magnus judicii,* and is probably the ἐπισκοπὴ ψυχῶν here referred to: in this sense the learned Mr. Mede understands this passage; as likewise ver. 7. and 8. of this chapter. (See Comment. Apocalypt. lib. iii. p. 536.)

Ver. 14. *And (blessed is) the eunuch, which with his hands hath wrought no iniquity—unto him shall be given the special gift of faith.*] The meaning is not, that the special gift of faith shall be given him, as our version has it, but rather that some special gift or reward shall be given him for his faithfulness: and so the Syriac interpreters render, *Dabitur ei pro ipsius gratia et fidelitate hæreditas desiderii.* And in this sense of *faithfulness* we are to understand St. Paul, when he says, *I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,* 2 Tim. iv. 7. And though eunuchs were forbidden under the law to *enter into the congregation of the Lord,* (Deut. xxiii. 1.) that is, were not admitted to honours and offices either in the church or commonwealth of Israel; yet the inward qualifications, and rare endowments of the soul, shall be sufficient to give such pure persons, as offend not against God by any loose action or impure thought, a title to the communion of saints, and not only take off the outward legal restraint, but give them an honourable place in the temple of the Lord, and even make them, for their victory in overcoming the flesh, pillars in it, (Rev. iii. 12.) The sense of this passage greatly resembles that of Isa. lvi. 4, 5. *Thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and daughters.*

Ver. 15. *And the root of wisdom shall never fall away.*] *i. e.* Of chastity, which is the subject of the foregoing verses: and so the Syriac version understands it, *Radices castitatis non evellentur.* The sense of the whole verse is, that every good work will be attended with a reward; and thus the Arabic version, *Bonorum enim operum eximius ac pulcherrimus est fructus;* and that chastity in particular, which is a glorious victory over ourselves, hath this pleasing prospect and comfort in reversion, that many blessings and privileges will descend from God upon the branches of a chaste and holy stock; and that the virtue and goodness of parents is a security and treasure to their posterity. We may observe, that as in the book of Proverbs, the adulterer is described to be a man void of understanding, (vi. 32.) so this writer makes chastity to proceed from wisdom; and this possibly St. Paul might intend, Rom. xii. 3. when he advises, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, which St. Jerome renders, *Sapere ad pudicitiam.* (Cont. Jov.)

Ver. 16. *As for the children of adulterers, they shall not come to their perfection, and the seed of an unrighteous bed shall be rooted out.*] Τέκνα μοιχῶν ἀτέλεστα ἔσται, which we may understand in two senses; either that a bastard shall not be partaker of holy things, *i. e.* shall not be admitted to officiate in the sacred mysteries, nor to hold public dignities, according to the marginal reading, and the Geneva version; and so the sense will be the same with that in Deut. xxiii. 2. *A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord, even unto the tenth generation.* And indeed some lawgivers anciently fixed such a mark of infamy upon bastards, as to forbid their coming to the sacred offices: even the heathens themselves excluded bastards, as well as the profane and wicked, from the participation of their mysteries; and according to the old ecclesiastical laws, bastards were not capable of being ordained without a dispensation. (See Watson's Compl. Incum. p. 102.) That ἀτέλεστος will admit this sense, see Hesychius, and Leigh's Critica Sacra, in voce; and thus it is sometimes understood by the ancient Greek fathers.—Or we may understand this place, with our translators, of the short and uncertain continuance of such a spurious offspring, upon whom God may visit the iniquity of their fathers. And indeed we meet with in Scripture a most remarkable instance of the Divine vengeance in this particular, *viz.* that the darling offspring of David's guilt was smote by God, and perished quickly from before his eyes; and God gives this very reason for it, *Because thou hast done this thing, the child that is born unto thee shall surely die.* (2 Sam. xii. 14.)

Ver. 18. *If they die quickly they have no hope, neither comfort in the day of trial.*] Some learned men have thought, (see Usher's Body of Divinity, p. 16.) that what is said here, and in the context, is a hard and uncharitable sentence upon bastards, whose very birth and entrance into the world, though it be indeed by a crime of their parents, yet themselves may be thought guiltless, and, as such, undeserving of punishment: but the observation of this writer will be less liable to exception, if we consider, that there is often a natural and hereditary taint in wicked and debauched families, and that some particular sins run as it were in the blood, the seeds of future wickedness. Hence holy Job, speaking of such wicked parents, says in very strong and significant terms, that *they lay* or *treasure up iniquity for their children,* (xxi. 19.) which natural propensity and vicious turn of temper God foreseeing, sometimes has recourse to extremities to stop the infection, and hinder the spreading guilt. Though viciously-disposed children more generally hasten their own death by irregularity and loose living; or if by chance they live long, like the wanton elders that tempted Susanna, being grown old in wickedness, they lose all the respect and reverence otherwise paid to gray hairs. And when they come to die, their case, like that of other wicked men, is most desperate; nor will they have any thing to allege in their favour in the great day *of inquiry,* διαγνώσεως. Thus the Psalmist describing the end of the wicked says, *The ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgment,* Psal. i. 6. where the LXX. read, οὐκ ἀναστήσονται οἱ ἀσεβεῖς ἐν κρίσει, which has been

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unaccountably perverted in favour of the opinion, that there shall be only a resurrection of the just. But that passage of the son of Sirach, Ecclus. xli. 9. comes nearest the sense of this writer, *Woe be unto you, ungodly men; if ye be born, ye shall be born to a curse; and if ye die, a curse shall be your portion.*

Ver. 19. *Horrible is the end of the unrighteous generation.*] Calmet very properly observes, (see Comment. in loc.) that what is said in this and the following chapter, of the sad prospect and miserable fate of the children of adulterers, ought not to be understood as spoken absolutely by this writer, but only of such as, being abandoned and debauched themselves, imitate and follow the vicious courses of their parents; for otherwise, the crimes of their ancestors cannot be imputed to them in the judgment of God, nor will they be answerable for them before his tribunal: for it is very possible, that children thus born in sin, and from a criminal and forbidden commerce, may yet prove virtuous and regular in themselves; and that the children of even good men and saints may be lewd and vicious; as was the case of old Eli's children in particular, who made the Lord's people to transgress through their scandalous uncleanness, (1 Sam. ii. 22.)

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter the author pursues the same subject with which he concluded the former, and shews how much happier upon the comparison chaste and virtuous persons are, though without children, than adulterers and the brood of a sinful and polluted bed: that the former, if they enjoy long life, as they generally do, are in a state of peace and security; and if taken away by an early and untimely death, it is an instance of mercy to them, that they may escape thereby some imminent danger or approaching evil. But the life of the vicious and debauched is, on the contrary, both short and unhappy; their death is dishonourable, their hope desperate, and their future estate full of misery and torment.

Ver. 1. *BETTER it is to have no children, and to have virtue: for the memorial thereof is immortal, because it is known with God and with men.*] The Vulgate reads, *O quam pulchra est casta generatio cum claritate!* which is not a just translation of the original words, κρείσσων ἀτεκνία μετ' ἀρετῆς; for ἀτεκνία is very improperly rendered by *generatio;* and then it seems, as does our version, either to confine chastity to celibacy, or to such as, being married, have no children; as if virtue and fruitfulness were incompatible. Whereas the true meaning is, that though a person hath no children, and seeks not any by acts of incontinence, or unlawful mixtures, his virtue supplies what is wanting to him in that respect, and his good actions shall be like children to him, and hinder his name from being lost in oblivion. Such a virtue as can withstand a criminal passion, and is proof against all the dangerous temptations of it, is approved by God, and will be finally rewarded by him, and cannot fail of being respected and well spoken of by the valuable part of mankind. And however the libertine may pride himself in his spurious issue, and the adulteress value herself on the fruit of her womb, yet incontinence will always differ from barrenness, as a crime does from a misfortune.

Ver. 2. *When it is present, men take example at it.*] This observation is not true of men in general, that they have an esteem for virtue; for with respect to very many of the species, that reflection of Horace is still too true, "Virtutem incolumem odimus." The meaning therefore must be, that good men esteem, admire, and follow after, virtue; that they will make virtuous men, while they live, the patterns for their imitation, and honour their memory when they are dead.—And even wicked men have been known to regret the loss of good men, and to lament and even pity their suffering fate. Thus Antiochus Epiphanes wept for the death of Onias the high-priest, (2 Macc. iv. 37.) and the Athenians for that of Socrates, though they occasioned it.

It weareth a crown, and triumpheth for ever.] Ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι στεφανηφοροῦσα πομπεύει, or στέφανον φοροῦσα πομπεύει. Junius understands αἰὼν of the present world, and renders, *In sæculo hoc triumphat; i. e.* that virtue, through a consciousness of having done its duty, through hope anticipates, even in this life, its future reward, and by faith triumphs, as already sure of a crown. And indeed the Syriac and Arabic versions confirm this conjecture, both of which render, *In hoc sæculo.* There is a manifest allusion in this verse to the Olympic games, and the crowning of the conquerors therein; for in the original the following technical terms are worth noting, *viz.* στεφανηφορεῖν, πομπεύειν, ἆθλον, ἀγών. From whence the learned, among other reasons, infer, that this book was not written by Solomon, who was dead above two hundred years before the first Olympiad. (See Usher's Annals.)

Having gotten the victory, striving for undefiled rewards.] The sense of these words, as they stand in our translation, seems obvious enough, and is not much unlike that of Horace; "Virtus repulsæ nescia sordidæ, Intaminatis fulget honoribus;" (Carm. lib. iii. od. 2.) but it does not agree with any of the ancient versions. The Vulgate reads, *Incoinquinatorum certaminum præmium vincens;* St. Cyprian yet more obscurely, *Incoinquinatorum certaminum prœlium vincens;* and the Greek, τὸν τῶν ἀμιάντων ἄθλων ἀγῶνα νικήσασα. The expression in each of these passages is very unusual and singular; with respect to the first, a conqueror that receives the reward of his services, is not properly said, *vincere præmium certaminum,* but *reportare præmium,* or something to that effect: but the next, *certaminum prœlium vincens,* which is the rendering of St. Cyprian (De Singularitate cleri) and of the Greek, has still less authority to justify it; *vincere prœlio* is classical, but *vincere prœlium certaminum,* I believe, is quite without precedent. Nor is ἀμιάντων ἄθλων without its difficulties and objections. If I might be indulged the liberty of proposing a very small alteration, I would read the passage thus, ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι στεφανηφοροῦσα πομπεύει, τὸ τῶν ἀμιάντων ἆθλον, ἀγῶνα νικήσασα; where by ἆθλον I would understand, the reward of the contest, and not the contest itself; and by ἀμιάντων, those that had merited this crown or reward by being undefiled. And I have the pleasure to find this conjecture confirmed by the Syriac version, which renders, *Præbet se victricem agonis eorum qui sine macula sunt,* applying it manifestly to the persons, to the *agoniceta* himself, and not to contests, or the nature of their rewards. Calmet's comment is likewise to

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the same effect, and that of Messieurs du Port-Royal still more explicit; *Elle triomphe et elle est couronné comme victorieuse, apres avoir remporté le prix dans les combats pour la chastete.*

Ver. 3. *The multiplying brood of the ungodly shall not thrive, nor take deep rooting from bastard slips.*] Ἐκ νόθων μοσχευμάτων: probably the true reading may be μοσχεύματα, slips from spurious trees, *i. e.* without a metaphor, children begotten of unlawful beds, as it follows in ver. 6. the sense, as well as ἐπισφαλῶς βεβηκότα, seems to require this. And this reading is confirmed by Coverdale's version, which renders, *And the things that are planted with whoredom, shall take no deep root, nor lay any fast foundation.* And it has been observed in the vegetable world, that slips from such irregular productions do not thrive to any purpose. The book of Job describes the generation of the wicked in like terms: *This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors which they receive of the Almighty: if his children be multiplied, it is for the sword; and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread: those that remain of him shall be buried in death, and his widow shall not weep,* (xxvii. 13—15.) The description in this and the following verses is agreeable to the Scripture dialect, where mankind in general is often represented under the metaphor of *trees,* or a *plantation.* (See Psal. i. 3. xcii. 12, &c.) According to the Hebrew style, a bough or branch often denotes a son; the word *ben,* or son, nearly according with *banna,* which signifies the *root;* see Gen. xlix. 22. where the Hebrew word *banoth,* which we translate *branches,* literally signifies *daughters.* In like manner we find the wicked in particular compared to unpromising plants, or withered and decayed trees: thus St. Jude, speaking of such libertines as defile the flesh, emphatically describes them as *trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the root,* (ver. 12.) The sense of this passage is briefly this, That God will visit the posterity of such loose and debauched persons, and that even their children shall not continue for any long time, but *as plants which God hath not planted, shall be rooted up.* Besides the instance before given of David's child struck with death, St. Austin's account of his is very particular; he ingenuously acknowledges, that he had a son "carnaliter ex se natum de peccato suo," but that God quickly deprived him of the child, though one of very promising hopes; "Annorum erat fere quindecim, et ingenio præveniebat multos graves et doctos viros." (Confess. lib. ix. cap. 6.)

Ver. 4. *For though they flourish in branches for a time, yet standing not fast, they shall be shaken with the wind.*] *i. e.* Though they equal, or even overtop, the prosperity of the good and virtuous, yet having laid their foundation in wickedness, they shall be overthrown by calamities; like a tree that has taken no deep root in the earth, and is violently shaken with storms and tempests: to which agrees that observation of the Psalmist; *When all the workers of wickedness do flourish, then shall they be destroyed for ever; i. e.* they are then hastening the more to their excision, their flourishing being in order to their destruction, ὅπως ἂν ἐξολοθρευθῶσιν, say the LXX. Psal. xcii. 7. But the righteous are compared to the immoveable cedars in Libanus, ver. 12. according to that of Solomon, *A man shall not be established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous shall not be moved,* Prov. xii. 13. See also Ecclus. xl. 15. where the children of the ungodly are called, *unclean roots upon a hard rock.*

Ver. 5. *Their fruit unprofitable.*] Ὁ καρπὸς αὐτῶν ἄχρηστος. This adjective, though it has indeed this signification of *unprofitable,* yet it means rather here *insuavis; i. e.* that the fruit is unpleasant, not of a kindly sort, and has not the right taste or flavour, as fruit will always be that comes from a tree which is wrongly planted, either in a soil that is not proper for it, or where it wants its natural sun, or when the ground is too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry, too sour or too stubborn.

Ver. 6. *For the children begotten of unlawful beds are witnesses of wickedness against their parents in their trial.*] Ἐκ γὰρ ἀνόμων ὕπνων τέκνα γενώμενα. Ὕπνος here does neither mean *bed,* as our translators render, nor *sleep,* as the margin and Vulgate have it; it rather means *concubitus,* in which sense it occurs, vii. 2. and accordingly the Syriac interpreters render, *Liberi ex illegitimo congressu procreati;* who being monuments of their parents' guilt, are a perpetual brand, while they live, of infamy upon them. Agreeable to the sentiments in this and the foregoing verses is that description of the adulteress, and the punishment of her unlawful offspring, Ecclus. xxiii. 25. 26. *Her children shall not take root, and her branches shall bring forth no fruit; she shall leave her memory to be cursed, and her reproach shall not be blotted out:* but the reproach does not terminate in the parent only; the children likewise, according to the sense and opinion of the world, are partakers of the shame, according to that farther observation of the same wise writer; *The inheritance of sinners' children shall perish, and their posterity shall have a perpetual reproach: for the children will complain of an ungodly father, because they shall be reproached for his sake:* (Ecclus. xli. 6, 7.) but such illegitimate children being here mentioned, *as witnesses of wickedness against their parents in their trial,* which Calmet understands to be the same with ἡμέρα διαγνώσεως, iii. 18. I am inclined to think there is this farther meaning in the words, *viz.* that such children *will be* accusers of, and witnesses against, their guilty parents in the other world. And thus the Geneva Bible expressly reads, which is confirmed by the Arabic version, which renders in the future, *Testes erunt nequitiæ parentum suorum, cum explorabuntur.*

Ver. 7. *Though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in peace.*] That the righteous are often snatched away before they arrive at any maturity of age, is evident from observation. This is frequently the effect of God's goodness, which removes them from the evils or dangers of life; but in what time or manner soever they depart, their death ought not to be considered as a personal misfortune, since God fixes them in a place of rest and repose, free from the temptations, as well as troubles and inquietudes of life, waiting with a holy impatience for farther degrees of happiness. The prophet Isaiah has the same reflection, *That righteous and merciful men are taken away from the evil to come, and shall enter into peace,* (lvii. 1.) And one of the ancients has made the like observation, *That he that is a favourite of the gods dies young;* ὃν φιλοῦσι ἀποθνήσκει νέος. By the righteous being *prevented with death,* we are not to understand his being surprised by death when he least thought of it; for the good man can never, properly speaking, be surprised; he is

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always on the watch, prepared and ready to leave the world and appear before God; his death may be indeed sudden or hasty, but not careless or unguarded.

Ver. 9. *But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age.*] Ἡλικία γήρως. Our translators seem not to have expressed ἡλικία at all in their version, which yet has a strong and significant meaning here, *viz.* That an unspotted life is mature old age, or the standard of old age. Fulgentius quotes this and the preceding verse, and adds most excellently by way of comment, "Ad cognoscendum, quantum possibile est, cujuslibet defuncti meritum, non quantum vixerit, sed qualiter quisque vixerit, intuendum. Sicut enim vita mala, quanto magis fuerit temporaliter prolongata, tanto magis delinquentibus multiplicat pœnam; sic in vita bona, quamvis hic brevi tempore terminata, magnam sempiternamque conquirit bene viventibus gloriam. Vita igitur mala immaturos acerbosque senes demergit in Tartarum, vita vero bona defunctos juvenes maturos perducit ad Regnum." (De Statu Viduali, epist. 2.) Philo observes of their great legislator Moses, τοὺς ἡλικίᾳ προήκοντας, &c. "Ut provectos ætate appellat *juvenes* et eos qui nondum senuerunt *Seniores*, non respiciens annorum numerum, aut tempus breve longumve, sed potentius animæ, prout movetur melius aut deterius." (De Resipisc. Noe, et de Vita Contempl.) Agreeably to this the Romans styled their chief council *Senatus*, and the Lacedemonians called theirs γερουσία, not so much upon account of their age, as the wisdom and prudence of those that composed it: in like manner *presbyters* in ecclesiastical history, had their name assigned them on the same account. There is hardly any subject on which the sages have moralized more finely than on this; *honeste acta ætas* is, in the opinion of one of them, the surest way to lengthen our lives, and frustrate the malice of mortality. Cicero has many beautiful sentiments upon this occasion; particularly in his book De Senectute, in the eighteenth chapter there is a thought which is very like what is contained in this and the foregoing verse; "Non cani, non rugæ repente autoritatem arripere possunt, sed honeste acta ætas superior fructus capit autoritatis extremos." And so the poet:—

"Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus; hoc est
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui."

But no reflection of the ancients is more judicious, than that of a learned modern: "Gray hairs (says he) consist not in the multitude of years, but in the number and variety of useful observations that are made; nor is there any reason why wisdom should be peculiarly ascribed to the aged, except such persons, by having lived longer in the world, and having had the opportunity of many and various occurrences to ripen their judgment, have accordingly improved it; for it matters not much, whether a man makes his observations in a longer or a less time, provided he makes them well." (Boyle's Occasional Reflections.)

Ver. 10. *So that, living amongst sinners, he was translated.*] This passage is undoubtedly to be understood of Enoch, whom, being the first example of eminent sanctity, God was pleased to translate, as he had condemned the first instance of transgression, to shew his great detestation of sin. The great question is, whether these words signify a natural death, or a miraculous translation, as that of Elijah was: from some expressions in the context, many learned men have been inclined to conjecture, that the author of this book thought Enoch died a natural death, and that his translation here mentioned, was only such a translation: one reason in particular, that has induced them to think an ordinary death is here spoken of, is, that the holy Scripture often uses the like expressions to signify death. See 1 Kings xix. 4. Jonah iv. 3. and particularly Job xxii. 16. where the Vulgate renders *qui sublati sunt ante tempus*, though the writer is speaking of such as die a sudden death. And it must be confessed, that the Hebrew phrase in all these passages is the same with that which Moses makes use of to express the translation of Enoch; and from hence some have inferred, that even Moses's words, Gen. v. 24. may be understood of a natural death, and do not necessarily imply a miraculous translation. But the reasons and arguments for a miraculous translation seem to carry with them much greater weight: for, first, though the text of Moses abovementioned does not absolutely imply the miraculous translation of a man yet living into heaven or another world; nevertheless, when we compare what he says of Enoch with what he relates of the other patriarchs, it is plain he intended to distinguish the manner in which Enoch went out of the world from that in which the other patriarchs left it; for of all the rest mentioned in that chapter it is said, *they died*, but of Enoch this is not said, but only, that *he was not*, οὐκ εὑρίσκετο, *was not found on earth*, because God had translated him from it. Farther, Moses takes notice of the eminent probity of Enoch's life, which made him well-pleasing to God, as this writer does here, and then immediately adds, according to the Vulgate, *Et non apparuit, quia tulit eum Deus*; implying, that though he was no more seen upon earth, yet he was still alive. This is the sense which the Chaldee paraphrase takes it in, which renders expressly, *Subductus est, et ascendit in cœlum coram Domino*. Again, it is said of Noah and of Abraham, that *they walked with God*, Gen. vi. 9. xvii. 1. but it is not said, that *they were not, because God took them*. This phrase therefore must import something that happened peculiarly to him. Secondly, The holy penman, 2 Kings ii. 3. 5. 9. giving an account of Elijah's translation, which was confessedly miraculous, uses the very same word, *viz. taken away*, several times, to express it by. Thirdly, The son of Sirach seems most favourable to Enoch's being translated alive, Ecclus. xliv. 16. where, to avoid any equivocalness, the Vulgate reads, *translatus est in paradisum*, a term not commonly made use of to express the ordinary death of a man. But, fourthly, The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, xi. 5. puts this matter beyond all dispute, and understands it clearly of a miraculous translation; *By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death*. Lastly, Many of the fathers expressly assert a miraculous translation; the author of the Recognitions, bearing the name of St. Clement, says, "Enoch having pleased God, was translated into immortality." And St. Cyprian, "That he deserved to be taken from the contagion of this world by a singular favour." (De Mortal.) St. Jerome yet more fully, "That he was translated into heaven, and fed with celestial bread." (Epist. 38. ad Pammach. See Calmet's Dissertation more at large.)

Ver. 12. *For the bewitching of naughtiness doth obscure things that are honest; and the wandering of concupiscence*

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doth undermine the simple mind.] This seems to refer to the corruptions introduced by Cain and his descendants, by which the holy seed by degrees fell off, and became infected. Calmet observes, that there is a particular beauty in the word βασκανία, here rendered *bewitching*, and that it is with the greatest propriety applied to sinful pleasures; for as there is a sort of magic or fascination which imposes upon men's eyes, and makes them see false appearances, and obscures what is real; so a like fatal mistake arising from the blindness of men's understandings, or the perverseness of their wills, makes them fancy there is truth and reality in false and imaginary pleasures, and tempts them to overlook the real danger that attends them. Nor is this true only of pleasures in general, but applicable in a more particular manner to the sweets of love or amorous delights; I have therefore sometimes fancied φιλότητος to be the true reading, which seems warranted by what follows. The like observation we may make upon ῥεμβασμὸς, which the Vulgate renders, *inconstantia concupiscentiæ;* and the lexicographers, who refer to this place, no less imperfectly, *occupatio mentis.* The meaning is, that a continual round or circle of criminal pleasures turns people's heads; for so ῥεμβασμὸς properly signifies, and transforms things and persons into other natures, like Circe's enchantments; for so μεταλλεύει may be interpreted, which probably too is a technical term. Dr. Grabe thinks the verb μεταλλοιόω would be more agreeable to this place, and likewise more proper in chap. xvi. 25. (See Prolegom. cap. 4. tom. *ult.*) The sense of this whole verse is not improperly expressed by those words of Tully; "Impedit consilium voluptas, rationi inimica est, ac mentis, ut dicam, præstringit oculos, nec habet ullum cum virtute commercium." (De Senectute, cap. 12.)

Ver. 13. *He being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time.*] It may be asked, with what propriety Enoch is here said to have fulfilled a long time, since he was the shortest-lived of the patriarchs before the flood, and lived but three hundred and sixty-five years? To this the answer is very obvious, "If we measure not his life by the number of years, but by the perfection of his goodness, δι' ἄκραν ἀρετῆς τελείωσιν, by his consummate virtue and extraordinary sanctity in the corrupt age he lived in, he may be allowed, to all useful purposes of living, to have fulfilled an honourable age." (Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. vii. cap. 8.) So of Abraham it is said, Gen. xxv. 8. that *he died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years:* expressions exaggerated on purpose to denote an extraordinary length of life. But here again it may be as justly inquired, how Abraham can properly be said to die in a *good old age;* when, if we compare his age with those that lived before him, it comes much short of theirs: for one hundred seventy-five years may be considered as a small point of time, with respect to those several hundreds of years that the fathers before the flood arrived at; (see Gen. v.) and in the computation of the lives of the fathers after the flood, (Gen. xi.) we find all of them, except one, to be older than Abraham was. The true answer therefore to this difficulty is, that Abraham died in a good old age, not as to the measure of his life by days or years, but in regard to the great progress he had made in faith and holiness.

Ver. 15. *Neither laid they up this in their minds, that his grace and mercy is with his saints, and that he hath respect unto his chosen.*] Ἐπισκοπὴ, though it often signifies visitation by punishment, yet here means that favour and regard which God shews to his elect: and the sense of the whole passage is, that the wicked, among whom Enoch conversed, considered not the true reason for which God took him, that it was an act of his mercy, rather than severity, to remove a saint, *whose righteous soul was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked,* to a state of purity, perfection, and happiness: much less did they consider, that he was taken up alive into heaven, to be an example of that happiness which God has prepared for those who walk with him and please him; and also a proof, that our bodies are capable of immortality. Nor did they make any use or improvement of his translation, though it certainly was the noblest exhortation to piety and virtue that can be imagined. The construction of the Greek in the former part of this verse is singular, λαῶν ἰδόντων is a more usual way of expression.

Ver. 16. *Thus the righteous that is dead, shall condemn the ungodly which are living.*] Our version and the commentators understand this in the future tense, following the present accenting of the Greek; but the Vulgate reads the passage in the present tense, *Condemnat autem justus mortuus vivos impios,* which all the ancient English versions follow; Junius also and Calmet render in like manner: so that probably the original reading, at least of some copies, was κατακρίνει. If we follow this reading, the passage may relate to any righteous person speedily taken away, whose good life condemns or leaves without excuse the wicked that outlive him, and grow old in their wickedness: or it may relate to Enoch in particular, who may be said to condemn his contemporaries, either virtually by his word and doctrine, or judicially, by denouncing God's judgments against the ungodly of his time. (See the same expression applied to Noah upon a like occasion, Heb. xi. 7.)

And youth that is soon perfected, the many years and old age of the unrighteous.] This is what the prophet Isaiah means, when he says, (lxv. 20.) *That the child that has an early sense of goodness and perfects holiness betimes, shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner, being a hundred years old and confirmed in wickedness, shall die as an overgrown child and be accursed.*

Ver. 17. *And shall not understand—to what end the Lord hath set him in safety.*] The wicked triumph over a godly man suddenly snatched away, as if God had forgotten to be gracious, and was unmindful of his piety, or was induced through some secret fault to cut his life short; not considering, for such have not the knowledge of God or his councils, that it was in mercy to him, and for his greater safety and reward. This is assigned by learned men as the reason why Lazarus is mentioned, Luke xvi. as dying before the rich man—because God graciously removed him from the evils of life, but continued the profligate in order to his repentance, or to fill up the measure of his iniquity.

Ver. 18. *They shall see him and despise him, but God shall laugh them to scorn.*] Grotius says, that the future is used in this description for the *præteritum,* and calls it a Hebraism; though it is certain that such changes are not unusual in the best classic writers. The repetition, *they shall see him,* is beautiful, upon the supposition of this book's being metrical; and is otherwise very defensible, especially as supported by the authority of all the editions;

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I should else have thought σκώφονται the true reading, which seems to make the opposition in the words following more beautiful; and so small an alteration might easily be occasioned by the nearness and affinity of the sound.

And they shall hereafter be a vile carcass.] Ἔσονται μετὰ τοῦτο εἰς πτῶμα ἄτιμον. Can all the wicked before referred to with propriety be said to be *a vile carcass*, or to compose *one vile carcass?* and is not this sense in some measure comprised in the sentence following? possibly πεσοῦνται may be the true reading here, which opens a new sense, and yet proper to the occasion, *viz.* that they shall be confounded and fall shamefully; which signification πτῶμα will equally admit of; and it is certain, that εἰς is frequently to be understood in the sense of ἐν: and I have the satisfaction to find this conjecture confirmed by the authority of the Vulgate, which reads, *Erunt posthac decidentes sine honore;* and by the Syriac version, *Erunt posthac in ruinam turpissimam.* Junius also is to the same purpose; and to these agrees the Geneva Bible, which renders, *They shall fall hereafter without honour.*

And a reproach among the dead for evermore.] Εἰς ὕβριν ἐν νεκροῖς δι' αἰῶνος. This expression may seem to relate to the everlasting disgrace of wicked men *in infernis*, that, like the giants of old, they shall stand upon a lasting record there; but it is more probable, it should be taken in a more limited and confined sense, for the phrase νεκροὶ αἰῶνος, or δι' αἰῶνος, is a Hebraism, and may receive some light from Lament. iii. 6. where the prophet, complaining of his terrible situation in his dungeon, says, *He has made me stay in dark places,* ὡς νεκροὺς αἰῶνος, *veluti mortuos sæculi, as those that have been long dead,* as those that lie buried in their graves. And that the term *evermore,* does not here mean eternity, strictly so called, seems the more probable from the order of the description, because the judgment, or day of accounts, is mentioned after, ver. 20.

Ver. 19. *For he shall rend them, and cast them down headlong, that they shall be speechless,* &c.] Ῥήξει αὐτοὺς ἀφώνους πρηνεῖς. Calmet observes, that the author here has expressed in three words three different punishments; ῥήξει implies, that God shall beat or dash them against the ground; and the other two probably allude to a more infamous kind of death, *viz.* that they shall be strangled, and suffocated, and burst asunder. And thus πρηνὴς is used, Acts i. 18. in the description of Judas's death. (See Wall's Critical Notes in loc. and Hammond.) Osiander thinks ἄφνω the true reading, rather than ἀφώνους (see his observations on the Vulgate), but he assigns no reason, and is supported by no authority of MSS. The description of the punishment here is not unlike that supposed to be inflicted upon the Rephaim of old, to whom Enoch in his prophecy refers; and possibly such wicked ones as resembled them in their proud and blasphemous speeches and notorious acts of violence and oppression, are here meant: for can there be a properer punishment for a γιγαντώδης θυμὸς (for so the son of Sirach calls a proud and defying temper), than what is here described to be its fate; or can pride and insolence be represented under stronger circumstances of meanness and disgrace? The opposition is too beautiful in what follows not to be taken notice of: for, were they swollen with pride? the Almighty shall *burst* them. *Disrumpet illos inflatos,* says the Vulgate. Did they aspire against heaven? they shall be *cast down headlong.* Did they use great swelling words and threats of defiance? they shall be *speechless.* Did they pride themselves in works of greatness, and trust in their strong holds of security? they shall be *shaken from their foundations* and become desolate. Did they love noise and disturbance, and was their name terrible upon earth? they shall *come no more into remembrance, but their memorial shall perish with them.* Were they such desperate and bold wretches, as to set every thing at defiance? they shall be afraid even of their own consciences. Did they finally ridicule God and his justice? they shall tremble at the apprehension of their sad punishment.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

To shew the great difference, in point of happiness, between the virtuous and the wicked, the latter are introduced as groaning under inexpressible misery, and lamenting before the tribunal of God their former ill courses, and the sad consequences of them. From hence the writer takes occasion to shew, that the vengeance of God always pursues sinners, either immediately from himself, or by the agency of second causes, his appointed instruments and executioners. Calmet thinks the six first chapters may be considered as a sort of preface to the rest of this work.

Ver. 1. *THEN shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him.*] At the end of the former chapter, the wicked are represented as trembling under a sense of their guilt and the apprehension of punishment due to it: here, by the way of antithesis, is shewn the holy confidence and sweet security which will arise in the breast of every good man in the day of trial, from the justice of his cause, and the testimony and approbation of his conscience. Thus παῤῥησία is used in many places in the New Testament; see particularly, 1 John ii. 28. and iv. 17. where the righteous man is said *to have boldness in the day of judgment.*

And made no account of his labours.] We may understand this of such as laughed at the good man's deeds as fruitless, or endeavoured to make them so by their opposition: but St. Austin, and others of the fathers, understand this passage of such oppressors as, by violence, spoiled the righteous man's goods, which he had acquired by his honest labours. Thus St. Cyprian, *diripuerunt labores eorum.* (Testim. lib. iii. ad Quirin. cap. 16.) And the Vulgate renders accordingly, *abstulerunt labores eorum,* which Coverdale and the Geneva Bible follow. Calmet explains the passage in both these senses.

Ver. 2. *When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear.*] The Syriac and Arabic versions read, *him.* The sense is, The wicked shall be confounded at the sight of him whom they have so much abused, and shall behold with amazement the sudden and wonderful turn of providence in favour of the righteous, beyond what they expected or thought of; and from the happiness conferred upon the righteous, shall conclude and anticipate their own misery. To give the more lively impression of this,

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the author represents them both as standing together before the judgment-seat of God, and as witnesses of each other's happiness or misery. The circumstances of the surprise upon the signal deliverance of the righteous, are very justly here preserved; and the consternation and despair of the wicked, from the killing reflection of a too late and fruitless repentance, are no less beautifully described, with all the terror and exaggeration of expression. For it will be no small torment to the wicked, to see those, whom they most despised for their great advances in piety and goodness, very highly advanced in honour by God, and rewarded by him as his faithful servants: envy at others' happiness, and despair of their own, will render them completely miserable. This is finely represented in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Ver. 3. *And they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, This was he whom we had sometime in derision, and a proverb of reproach.*] The prosopopœia here is very natural, and may be considered either as a soliloquy in each repenting sinner's breast, or as a joint reflection made by them all, and a set discourse which they had one to another. The Greek will admit of either sense, but Calmet thinks the latter most agreeable to the context. It is very observable, that there are three words in this verse to express the same thing, *viz.* γέλως, παραβολὴ, ὀνειδισμὸς, which are designed to denote an excess of abuse and rudeness; but that in Psal. xliv. 14, 15. is still more remarkable, where David uses five synonymous terms upon the like occasion; ἔθου ἡμᾶς ὄνειδος τοῖς γείτοσιν ἡμῶν, μυκτηρισμὸν καὶ καταγέλωτα τοῖς κύκλῳ ἡμῶν· ἔθου ἡμᾶς εἰς παραβολὴν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσι, κίνησιν κεφαλῆς ἐν τοῖς λαοῖς. The confession of these scoffers may be applied to all others of the like turn and denomination; for it has been the unhappy fate of good men in all ages, to be thus ridiculed by libertines. It was the observation of Job long since, that *the just upright is laughed to scorn,* (xii. 4.) And with respect to himself, he complains particularly, that *he was made a by-word of the people;* and *before them,* as the margin reads, *he was as a tabret,* (xvii. 6.) *i. e.* for them to make sport with; (see Mercer in loc.) which is no improbable interpretation of the place, the LXX. rendering it by γέλως.

Ver. 4. *We fools counted his life madness.*] Religious men, and such as retire from the world for the opportunity of a greater piety, are often represented by debauchees as melancholy and disordered; but in the end, such libertines as abuse the world, will be found to be the only fools, and religion acknowledged to be the truest wisdom. The like reflection was thrown upon such of the primitive Christians as were dead to the world; they were looked upon as senseless, for despising the pleasures that courted them, and foolishly credulous, for trusting to invisible rewards: "Let fools and idiots (says Celsus, in his sneering way) come to the Christian mysteries, for such are the most agreeable disciples to the God they worship." (Origen. cont. Cels. lib. iii.) Nor did our Saviour himself escape the censure of *having a devil, and being mad,* (John x. 20.) So certain an attendant upon extraordinary sanctity is obloquy and reproach. There is, seemingly, the like reflection on him, Mark iii. 21. and even uttered by his own friends, as our translation has faultily rendered it: for, as the learned now generally agree in interpreting the place, ἐξέστη does not relate to our blessed Saviour, but to the clamorous multitude, whose behaviour often gives just occasion for such a suspicion.

Ver. 5. *How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!*] How different are the cool reflections of an unbodied spirit, from the wild sallies of a heated fancy; and how do the sentiments of the same persons vary, considered in this different light! The very same scoffers, who rallied the just man upon his glorious title of *the Son of God,* ii. 18. at length confess the truth of what he said: they perceived the invaluable privileges of such a relation in the next life, and that the true inheritance of the sons of God is among his glorified saints: ἐν ἁγίοις ὁ κλῆρος αὐτοῦ. See Dan. xii. 13. where the angel tells him, that *he shall rest in a happy condition, and stand in his lot, at the end of the days; i. e.* in the resurrection of the just; which the LXX. render, ἀναστήσῃ εἰς τὸν κλῆρόν σου. The phrase alludes to the division of the land of Canaan (a type of heaven) among the twelve tribes by lot.

Ver. 6. *And the Sun of righteousness rose not upon us.*] Coverdale's and the other English versions read in like manner, following the Vulgate; but all the Greek copies omit the words, *of righteousness,* and so likewise do several of the fathers, when they quote this passage. (See particularly St. Gregory, lib. xxxiv. Moral. cap. 6. St. Ambr. Serm. 3. 16. and St. Cyprian in many places.) The Syriac and Arabic versions likewise omit them. They seem either to have been put in the margin by way of explanation, and to have crept from thence into the text, or else to have been added from the former sentence, for they are neither in the Alexandrian, nor any other copy.

Ver. 7. *We wearied ourselves in the way of wickedness and destruction.*] One cannot help observing, at first sight, how closely wickedness and destruction are here linked together, and that one seems to follow naturally at the heels of the other: nor is sin, however represented to be all pleasure, without its drudgery. The prophet Jeremiah expresses himself like this writer, *They weary themselves to work iniquity,* ix. 5. (See also Habak. ii. 13.) It is a pretty observation of a very learned writer, that the Greek word πονηρία, which signifies *wickedness,* comes from another that signifies *labour,* viz. πόνος. (Sanderson's Sermons, p. 596.) And it is not without great elegance and particular good reason, that the lusts and practices of sinners are so frequently in Scripture styled *works,* and sinners emphatically called *workers of iniquity,* and said *to work wickedness;* expressions all implying the toil and drudgery of wicked courses. St. Chrysostom is very copious on this subject, and shews, both from Scripture and reason, that the life of a wicked man has more real weariness and slavery, than all the mortifications and severity of a godly life. And this truth the wicked here confess, though too late, *ambulavimus vias difficiles,* as the Vulgate renders. And here again the subject suggests to me the same useful reflection, *viz.* That when men are about leaving this world, and their soul is a little more at liberty to reflect (which holds much stronger of an unbodied spirit), there will then be a strange alteration in their judgment and opinion concerning the things of this world; they will then be sensible of the extreme vanity and folly of them, and fruitlessly wish for a few hours of their irrevocable time, mispent in

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a succession of vanities. But bitter will be the remembrance of former pleasures not innocent, and so much the greater will the detestation and cursing of them be, as they have taken more delight in them. But this will appear in a stronger light from what follows. Our version follows the present reading of the Greek, ἐνεπλήσθημεν τρίβοις, but ἐνεπλάγχθημεν seems to be more suitable, *viz. We wandered up and down in the paths of wickedness and destruction.*

Ver. 8. *What hath pride profited us, or what good have riches with our vaunting brought us?*] *i. e.* What good have all our proud and haughty conceits, our admiration of worldly state and riches, our pursuit of vain curiosities and unlawful pleasures, done us, since these admired trifles are so uncertain, and all vanished into nothing? It is obvious to observe, from this self-reflection of a wicked man, very naturally here represented, that the sensual person in a future state will condemn himself in the first place, that, by pursuing with eagerness the uncertain pleasures of this world, he has forfeited his title to more durable and lasting delights. Secondly, that he is for ever incapable of recovering his lost happiness; and the sad prospect or reflection upon that happiness, which he might have enjoyed, but lost through his own folly, will greatly increase his misery. Thirdly, that the remembrance of his imprudence in this respect, will be a part of his future punishment; all his favourite pleasures and enjoyments being past and gone, they will, by a miserable exchange, be succeeded with dreadful and tormenting reflections: for it will be an addition to the torments of the wicked, that they shall not be able to forget all those sins and follies which they have ever been guilty of, but must have always in their remembrance, as it were purposely to haunt and disturb them, all those once dear delights, which they would now willingly, at any rate, purchase the oblivion of.

Ver. 9—12.] We meet with several of these similes and comparisons, with respect to the shortness of life, and its satisfactions; in the book of Job, ix. 25, 26. *My days are swifter than a post, they flee away, they see no good: they are passed away as the swift ships, as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.* And among the memorable sayings of Agur, (Prov. xxx. 19.) *The way of an eagle in the air, and the way of a ship in the midst of the sea,* are taken notice of as so obscure and uncertain, as to leave no traces behind them. The comparisons made use of in the course of these verses, to represent the uncertainty of life and its enjoyments, we may observe, thicken apace, as if the wicked, described in this chapter, took pains and were concerned to impress upon others that lively sense of the vanity of worldly pleasures, which, by a sad experience, they had unhappily gained. The images are very natural, and placed in different lights, to be more affecting; they seem compassionately designed as notices to warn others, *lest they also come into that place of torment:* and they are each of them particularly proper to express what they are brought to illustrate. I shall only observe thus much of them farther,—that though they very naturally describe the licentiousness of the wicked, and the eagerness with which they abandon themselves to their lusts and passions, and the rapidity with which they are carried away by them; yet herein all the images are deficient, that they do not sufficiently point out the destructive consequences and mischievous effects of a mispent life: for can a wicked life be thought as harmless as a *shadow?* or will it, like that, pass away without any farther notice? Is the speed of a *messenger* an adequate resemblance, without considering the consequence of his errand, and how he will be received at the end of his journey? Does the soaring of *birds* into the upper regions, and their aspiring even towards heaven, sufficiently denote the contrary course of sinners, and their certain tendency *downwards?* Or should a *ship* be described only as passing swiftly over the sea, and no notice taken of the danger of a *shipwreck?* And will the *great gulf* finally be as easily passed over as the *waves*, or come together like the *light air?* The propriety of our translation too, in some of the foregoing similes, may be a little suspected; for, (ver. 9.) ἀγγελία παρατρέχουσα, which in our version is rendered, *as a post that hasted by*, may probably, with more justice, be translated, *as a flying report.* And thus Calmet explains it, *comme une nouvelle qui court; comme la renommée qui vole;* and then he quotes Virgil's description of fame, Æneid. iv. And indeed ἀγγελία properly means the *rumour* itself, and not the *messenger* that carries it. Again, ver. 11. the *light air* is said, in our version, to *be parted with the violent noise of the bird's wings,* σχιζόμενον βίᾳ ῥοΐζου (the next word expresses the motion of them): but certainly this is inaccurate, for the noise does not part the air, but follow from it. Coverdale's, and the other ancient versions, render more justly, *parting the air through the vehemency of her going: per vim itineris.* Vulgate. Our translators were led into this mistake by the double sense of ῥοῖζος, which signifies both *stridor* and *impetus*, but the latter signification is far preferable here: and thus the Syriac and Arabic interpreters understand it. The last observation is upon the Greek text, ver. 12. ὁ ἀὴρ εὐθέως εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀνελύθη, where I would read with Grotius, ἀνελήλυθε, which seems more proper.

Ver. 13. *Even so we, in like manner, as soon as we were born, began to draw to our end.*] *i. e.* Our life has been wasting ever since it was first given us, and we are continually dying by degrees; like that of the poet, "Nascentes morimur," which Seneca seems to explain, "Quotidie morimur, quotidie enim demitur aliqua pars vitæ;" *We die daily, for our life is daily decreasing.* But that of St. Austin is still closer, "Profecto ex quo esse incipit in hoc corpore, in morte est homo." (De Civit. Dei, lib. xiii.) An expression not unlike that moving one in our burial-service, "In the midst of life we are in death;" for life is continually exposed to so many perils, that what David says of himself, (Psal. cxix. 109.) is true of every man, *My soul is always in my hand; i. e.* it is always in danger to be taken from me. The Hebrew word signifies the palm of the hand, out of which any thing will easily slip; and intimates, that he esteemed his life always in danger, and always was ready to resign it.

And had no sign of virtue to shew.] Coverdale's translation is much better, *And have shewed no token of virtue.* The Greek reads in the present tense, *We have no sign of virtue to shew; i. e.* We have nothing to urge in our defence, no good action to produce in our favour. One cannot help observing from hence, how insignificant, even in his own confession, a wicked man is; he is born and dies, can say no good of himself, nor any body else for him.

But were consumed in our own wickedness.] *i. e.* We spent our whole life in wickedness; and as we died in our sins,

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we justly suffer the reward of our evil deeds.—These, and such-like dreadful reflections, will the wicked make in their torments.—Thus far the wicked are introduced speaking: accordingly the Vulgate here inserts, *Talia dixerunt in inferno hi, qui peccaverunt.* And indeed such a soliloquy from a great sinner, or such repenting strains from a company of them in despair, seem very natural; for such is the power of a guilty conscience, that the wicked shall be self-condemned, even before the *books are opened;* they will anticipate their doom, and acknowledge the justice of their sentence, before it be passed upon them. The making the scene of this long prosopopœia, which reaches from the beginning of ver. 3. to the end of this, to be in hell, as the Vulgate does; and the representing them, by an ingenious fiction, as really speaking and lamenting there, in the way they would have done if they had power, can never be enough admired in this writer. We have a remarkable and beautiful instance of this in Luke xvi. 24. where an imaginary discourse is carried on between Abraham and the rich man.

Ver. 15. *But the righteous live for evermore.*] The author, having shewn the dreadful consequences of sin, according to the inward sense and acknowledgment of the wicked themselves, their sad prospect, and the final ruin of all their hopes; and illustrated, by several just comparisons, the shortness of life, especially of one spent in a continual round of sinful pleasures; proceeds, in this and the next verses, to set down, by way of contrast, the glory of the righteous, and their exceeding great reward; that it is not only *with*, but *in* the Lord, for so it is in the original; and the Syriac and Arabic translations render accordingly, *in Domino.* It is also observable, that their reward, and even their future life, is expressed in the present tense, to denote probably the certainty of their reward, and their immediate entrance upon it.

And the care of them is with the Most High.] The true and common acceptation of these words is, that God careth for the righteous, will defend them with his favourable kindness as with a shield, and will provide for them a reward, great even beyond imagination or expression. Stella understands this passage in a different sense, *That the chief care of the righteous is about the Most High, and his whole study and endeavour to please the Lord in all instances of duty.* "Tota solicitudo et diligentia justorum circa id versatur, ut Deo placeant; illi enim vere justi dici possunt, qui Deo curant placere." (Stell. Enarrat. cap. 1. Lucæ.) This sense would indeed have been very proper, if the original reading was, ἡ φροντὶς αὐτῶν περὶ ὑψίστου, as he seems to have understood it; but the true reading, in all the editions, is, ἡ φροντὶς αὐτῶν παρὰ ὑψίστῳ, *Cura eorum penes altissimum,* as the Arabic renders. That of the Syriac, *Cogitatio illorum in altissimo,* may seem to favour either sense.

Ver. 16. *Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand.*] The Arabic reads, *Diadema pulchritudinis,* and the Syriac version more explicitly, *Diadema bonorum operum.* The Greek, τὸ βασίλειον τῆς εὐπρεπείας, καὶ τὸ Διάδημα τοῦ κάλλους· which manner of expression by the substantive is very beautiful. Instances of it are frequent in Scripture and profane authors: thus, i. 10. we have οὖς ζηλώσεως, for the *jealous ear;* and πνεῦμα δυνάμεως, a *mighty wind,* v. 23. And in Luke xviii. 6. the *unjust judge* is, ὁ κριτὴς τῆς ἀδικίας; and the *forgetful hearer,* ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς, James i. 25. (See more instances, John xvii. 12. James v. 15. 2 Thess. ii. 8.) This must be allowed to be a fine description of future happiness, and, considering the times of this writer, very clear and distinct. The New Testament, indeed, speaks of the righteous in heaven, under the idea and character of mighty kings and princes; and no wonder if there are better and clearer promises therein; but in the Old Testament, at least under the particular economy of Moses, we meet with no such explicit discovery of the happy and glorious state after death.

For with his right hand shall he cover them.] As by the organs of *sense* attributed to God, the *knowledge* of God is set forth; so by the organs or instruments of *action* is his *power* deciphered, and most eminently by the *hand:* so that the hand of God, in Scripture, means ordinarily the power of God; but the *right hand* being more active than the *left,* and the more usual instrument in outward works, hence it is taken to intimate the exceeding abundance of the power of God. The sense of this passage is much the same with that of the Psalmist: *The righteous shall dwell under the defence of the Most High, and shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty: he will defend them under his wings, and they shall be safe under his feathers; his faithfulness and truth shall be their shield and buckler.* (Psal. xci.)

Ver. 17. *He shall take to him his jealousy for complete armour.*] I have before observed, that *sin* in Scripture is often compared to spiritual adultery; (see note on chap. i. 10.) so that the sense is, *That his jealousy, i. e.* his enraged justice, *will furnish him with complete armour.* The Syriac version expresses this very fully; *In gratiam ipsorum in zelo suo armabit omnia.* The following descriptions, to the end of the chapter, are full of the sublimest imagery: God is drawn in all that terrible glory with which the strongest imagination can paint him; his whole figure strikes us in the highest and most amazing manner: he is represented as completely armed with terror; we see his helmet, his breast-plate, his invincible shield, his sharp sword, his thunderbolts, and, in fine, his whole artillery of heaven. He is more dreadful than Mars moving to battle, while he commands the *creation* round him (for so I would render τὴν κτίσιν in the following sentence), to execute his decreed vengeance upon his enemies, and to determine the fate of guilty nations. In Moses's song, the Lord, or Jehovah, is represented, in like manner, as a fierce *man of war,* (Exod. xv. 3.) Nor is the description of the Psalmist less to be admired, where he says of God, *If a man will not turn, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready; he hath prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.* (Psal. vii. 12, 13.)

Ver. 18. *He shall put on righteousness as a breast-plate.*] The breast-plate is known to cover the heart, which is the source of all the passions: hence this writer says, that God will arm himself with justice as with a breast-plate, to intimate, that he will do nothing out of mere passion, or by an absolute, uncontrolled power, without regard to the rules of equity; but that he will conduct all his proceedings and determinations, even against his enemies, according to the eternal rules of justice: and therefore it follows very properly in the next sentence, *that he will put on true judgment*

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instead of a helmet; i. e. as a *wise judge,* whose infinite wisdom searches into the secrets of every crime and action, and who cannot be mistaken or imposed upon, he will give true and impartial judgment; and, as a *just judge,* he will observe a strict proportion between the crimes and the punishment. With great propriety therefore is *true judgment* here described as the ornament of his head. This can only be exceeded by that sublime description in the inspired writer upon the like occasion: *He put on righteousness as a breast-plate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; he put on the garments of vengeance for a clothing, and was clad with zeal as with a cloak.* (Isa. lix. 17.) How much more amiable is the description of this writer, representing the Almighty, clothed with the breast-plate of righteousness, than that of Jupiter in Homer, whose ægis grinned terribly with the figures of horror, affright, and discord?

And true judgment instead of a helmet.] Καὶ περιθήσεται κόρυθα κρίσιν ἀνυπόκριτον. The learned editor of Philo Judæus applies the epithet to κόρυθα, rather than κρίσιν, and conjectures the true reading of this place to be, περιθήσεται κόρυθα κρίσιν ἀκαθαίρετον, *Accipiet pro galea inexpugnabili judicium;* which he justifies by two parallel passages in Philo, where the same sentiment occurs, δύναμιν ἀκαθαίρετον τὸ δίκαιον ἡγούμενος; and in another place, ἀκαθαιρέτῳ χρώμενοι τοῦ δικαίου συμμαχίᾳ. (Phil. de Mose.)

Ver. 19. *He shall take holiness for an invincible shield.*] St. Bernard observes upon this passage, that at the time when this *true judgment* is passed, God's equity, as the margin rightly renders, will be so absolutely inflexible, that he will not suffer himself to be overcome by any arguments of pity that can be offered; nor can he possibly relent by any weakness or tenderness of nature. As the wicked have so long abused the riches of his goodness and long-suffering, his dignity calls upon him to do justice to his injured honour. And since this judgment or procedure is founded upon the most perfect equity, it will in all respects be so irreproachable, that even the wicked themselves shall be convinced of the justness of their sentence; and while they experience the greatness of his power, shall acknowledge the justice of all his determinations, and that his equity is no less infinite.

Ver. 20. *His severe wrath shall he sharpen for a sword.*] This is capable of two senses; either that he shall sharpen the sword of his fierce wrath, as the Syriac version understands it, *Mirum in modum exacuet lanceam iræ suæ;* or that he shall sharpen his wrath into a destructive sword, εἰς ἀπότομον ῥομφαίαν, as the Arabic renders, *Iram suam expoliet in gladium acutum.* And thus God punished the transgression of our first parents; he sharpened τὸν θυμὸν τῆς ὀργῆς, (Numb. xiv. 34.) into a flaming sword, to guard the avenue of Paradise against them; "to keep the delinquents (says St. Chrysostom in loc. Hom. 18.) in continual remembrance of what had passed, and to strike frequent terror into them by so menacing an object." The description in this and the following verses is agreeable to the language of Scripture; for when God is mentioned as angry with the wicked, he is represented as standing continually with his bow bent, with his arrow upon the string, as ready to let fly; and with his sword not only drawn, but whetted, as if he was just about to strike. (Psal. vii. 13.)

And the world shall fight with him against the unwise.] This is the same in effect with that sentence in the seventeenth verse, *He shall make the creature, i. e.* the creation, *his weapon for the revenge of his enemies.* Not that Almighty God has any need of all, or any, of his creatures, to assist him in executing his vengeance; but he sometimes chooses to make use of them, as instruments of his wrath, to convince the unwise, *i. e.* the wicked, of their folly, in their immoderate or unlawful pursuit of them; and therefore his wisdom purposely punishes them by such creatures as they have abused, and makes the objects of their pleasures become the instruments of their punishment; "Quia in cunctis deliquimus (says St. Gregory), in cunctis ferimur." (Homil. 35. in Evang.) It is an observation of the book of Job, that all the works of nature are prepared by God to be his instruments, either for judgment or for mercy: thus (xxxvii. 12, 13.) it is said of the clouds in particular, that *they are made to do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the whole earth, either for correction or for plenty.* And of the treasures of snow and hail, the same writer observes, that they *are reserved by God against the time of trouble, against the day of war and battle;* (xxxviii. 23.) In the song of Deborah it is said, that *the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.* And, indeed, God can make all the elements in their turns to conspire against the wicked: he can discomfit them with thunderbolts and tempests, (ver. 21.) as Livy says it happened to the Romans in the great battle at Cannæ; or command the air to be his destroying angel: he can make the waters to rage and swell horribly, (ver. 22.) and to destroy them by another deluge: he can make the fire to fulfil all the purposes of his providence, and his *flame shall burn up the ungodly:* or, he can command the earth to *open her mouth, and death shall come hastily upon them.*

Ver. 21. *Then shall the right-aiming thunderbolts go abroad.*] Βολίδες ἀστραπῶν, *The arrows of the lightnings;* and so the Syriac version has it, *Jacula lancearum igne arum ac fulgurum.* The meaning is, That the Lord shall shew his wrath and indignation against the wicked by terrible thunder from heaven, like that in the days of Samuel, (1 Sam. vii. 10.) when *the Lord thundered with a great thunder upon the Philistines, and discomfited them:* and that these his instruments of destruction shall be so infallibly directed, as to execute his designed vengeance with an unerring certainty. An ingenious writer observes, "That compound epithets heighten the diction; and that even one of these is itself a short description." (Pope's Pref. to Hom. Iliad.) We see the justness of this observation in εὔστοχοι, or *right-aiming;* for can any thing convey a finer or more lively idea, than thunderbolts animated as it were with sense, and discharging themselves with judgment and discretion? We see the uplifted hand of vengeance, and the bolt not only grasped and levelled *rubente dexterâ,* but executing its fated commission with as much certainty, as if each particular stroke had its charge assigned it. Aristotle justly commends Homer, for having found out *living words,* "His hero's arrow is impatient to be on the wing, and his weapon thirsts to drink the blood of the enemy"—δόρυ μαίνεται. Here the Almighty's thunder is winged with death, and his unerring wisdom guides it to the mark; Jehovah but sends out his arrows, and they know where to go, and what to do; in short, to use the

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words of another polite writer upon a like occasion, the description here and in the context "is a noble picture, in which the gusts of hail, and flashes of fire, burst out from the clouds with as much spirit and force as in a real tempest."

And from the clouds, as from a well-drawn bow, shall they fly to the mark.] Ὡς ἀπὸ εὐκύκλου τόξου τῶν νεφῶν, i. e. *As from the well-arched or well-bent bow of the clouds.* Not any well-drawn bow is here alluded to, but that particular bow, the τὸ τόξον ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ, which was *at first set in the cloud,* (Gen. ix. 14.) And thus the Vulgate renders, *A bene curvato arcu nubium.* To which agree the Syriac and Arabic, and most ancient English translations; but Coverdale's is more explicit than the rest, *Then shall the thunderbolts come out of the rainbow of the clouds to the place appointed; i. e.* to execute God's will, and to fulfil their own commission, as is explained above. There is an expression in the Psalmist, with respect to God's vengeance, which, if rightly understood, is much to this purpose: *He* (God) *made a way to his indignation,* (Psal. lxxviii. 50.) ὡδοποίησε τρίβον τῇ ὀργῇ αὐτοῦ, LXX. *i. e.* He directed his anger where, or to what quarter, it should fall: it does not mean in general only that God was angry, but that he had appointed a certain tract or path for his vengeance, which it must follow and pursue; the Latin version therefore expresses this with great judgment, *Libravit semitam iræ suæ.* (See 2 Esdr. xvi. 13.) Isaiah describes the surprising massacre of the Assyrian army by the just vengeance of God in the like figurative way, and with a sublimity suitable to his grandeur, which the Vulgate thus expresses: "Auditam faciet Dominus gloriam vocis suæ, et terrorem brachii sui ostendet in comminatione furoris, et flammâ ignis devorantis; allidet in turbine et in lapide grandinis. A voce Domini pavebit Assur, virgâ percussus;" which the LXX. express more properly, τῇ πληγῇ ᾗ ἂν πατάξῃ (κύριος) αὐτούς. (Isa. xxx. 30, 31. see also Psal. xviii. 13, 14.) In the pagan theology the vengeance of the gods is expressed in the like manner: thus Homer describes the wrath of Apollo, according to Mr. Pope's excellent translation:

"Bent was his bow the Grecian hearts to wound;
Fierce as he mov'd, his silver shafts resound:
Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread,
And gloomy darkness roll'd around his head.
The fleet in view, he twang'd his deadly bow,
And hissing fly the feather'd fates below." (B. i. 63.)

Virgil has expressed the same sentiment:

—— "Arcum intendebat Apollo
Desuper. Omnis eo terrore Ægyptus et Indi,
Omnis Arabs, omnes vertebant terga Sabæi."
(Æneid. viii. 704.)

Ver. 22. *And hailstones full of wrath shall be cast* (as) *out of a stone-bow.*] Hailstones, the artillery of heaven, shall likewise come down upon the heads of his enemies, as in the days of Joshua when God sent hailstones and lightnings from heaven in the faces of the enemies of his chosen people; (Josh. x. 11.) which shall come with such fury and vehemence, as if they were discharged by the force of some machine, which our version calls a stone-bow, and among the Romans had the name of *balista.* The Vulgate renders here, *Et à petrosa ira pleuæ mittentur grandines:* which is followed by Coverdale's, and Pagnine's interlineary version, and is indeed a close translation of the Greek, as it is pointed in all the editions: but if I might offer a conjecture, I think, by the help of a comma only, the sense might be rendered more complete in this manner, καὶ ἐκ πετροβόλου, θυμοῦ πλήρεις ῥιφθήσονται χάλαζαι, ἐκ πετροβόλου, sc. ὀργάνου, or τόξου, from the preceding verse. I am aware of an objection which may be urged, that the particle ὡς, or some such-like note of comparison, is here omitted; but, besides that ὡς may, without any force, be fetched from the foregoing verse, instances of this ellipsis are very frequent in Scripture and profane writers. See Gen. xvi. 12. Psal. xi. 1. xii. 6. xxii. 13. xlv. 2. Gen. xlix. 9. Cant. i. 15. in all which places this particle is omitted in the Hebrew, and supplied in the versions. Our translators, it is plain, understood the words in the sense which I have given them, and have inserted *as,* though this particle be not in the original. In the prophetical writings, this metaphor of hailstones is frequently used to denote an enemy's falling on a country. (See Isa. xxviii. 2. xxx. 30.) It conveys a grand and terribly-magnificent idea, and is but imperfectly compared with the volleys from the artillery of walls closely besieged.

And the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the floods shall cruelly drown them.] *i. e.* God shall take such vengeance of wicked nations, that their enemies shall come pouring upon them like a flood. Rain, showers, storms, floods, and seas, are all symbols of multitudes of men in motion and disorder; or else of armies ravaging and destroying countries: hence Servius has observed, that the sea in a storm, and people in confusion, are reciprocally compared to each other; "Virgilius tempestati populi motum comparat, Tullius populo tempestatem." (Servius in Æneid. lib. i.) In the inspired writings, multitudes are frequently compared to *waters,* and the invasion of an army to the inundations of the *sea,* or a *rapid river,* which carries all before it. It is familiar with David particularly, to represent a vast hostile force under the idea of a flood of waters, a noble instance of which is to be found in Psal. xlvi. (See also Isa. viii. 7. xvii. 12. Dan. ix. 26. xi. 22.)

Ver. 23. *A mighty wind shall stand up against them.*] Wars and commotions are likewise metaphorically denoted by winds; so here, by a most powerful wind blowing, πνεῦμα δυνάμεως, is signified the storm of war, and the calamity attending it, which shall be brought upon the wicked. The description of the fate of the wicked man, Job xxvii. 20, 21. is so close and parallel to this, that I shall set it down at large; *Terrors take hold of him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night, the east-wind carrieth him away, and he departeth, and, as a storm, hurleth him out of his place.* The *east-wind,* which is mentioned particularly in this passage, being a very blasting wind, is most frequently used in Scripture, and especially in the prophetical writings, to denote the calamities of war, and such-like wasting judgments. The prophet Jeremiah often applies this metaphor to those enemies and destroyers whom God makes use of as his instruments of vengeance. (See Jer. iv. 11. xlix. 36. li. 1.) And in Ezekiel, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldean army is foretold under the figures of stormy winds, and overflowing showers, (xiii.

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11. 13.) By these and such-like figurative expressions God's severe judgments upon the wicked are usually denoted in Scripture. But it is not improbable, that the writer of this book had in mind, and herein alluded to, a particular wicked nation, punished in this extraordinary manner, *viz.* the Egyptians, to whom most of these instances of vengeance happened; for *God smote their cattle with hailstones, and their flocks with hot thunderbolts,* (Psal. lxxviii. 49.) By the *east-wind* also he plagued them with the locusts, which laid waste their whole land; and the waters of the Red Sea at last cruelly drowned them. Calmet understands by πνεῦμα δυνάμεως, not a *mighty wind,* as our version has it, but *un vent envoyé par la puissance de Dieu.* And the sense of a *mighty wind* may seem perhaps not so proper here, as it is compared immediately to λαίλαψ, or a whirlwind. If we should understand this expression of the spirit of power, or the powerful breath or spirit of the Almighty, the vengeful breath of God, expressed significantly, and displayed terribly, by the desolation of a whirlwind, furnishes as grand an idea as our imaginations are perhaps capable of. This seems confirmed by xi. 21. where there is the like expression.

And like a storm shall blow them away.] The translators do not seem here fully to have expressed the sense of the Greek word ἐκλικμήσει; it is a technical term, and means, that God will make use of his fan, *and thoroughly purge his floor,* when the wicked, in the language of the Psalmist, *shall be like the chaff, which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth.* (Psal. i. 5.) With what dreadful pomp is the wrath of God here displayed! How magnificently and nobly hath the writer of this book drawn the artillery of heaven, the rapidity of its motion, the terror of its appearance, the desolation occasioned by it, and the certain death attending it! What an assemblage of terrible ideas in a small compass! The earth, the sea, the rivers, the clouds, the winds, the heavens, like so many auxiliary forces, are all listed, and conspire against the wicked. What a lively idea of God's infinite power over all his creatures does this description convey! This latter part of the chapter must certainly be allowed to be a great instance of the hypotyposis, a figure well known to orators and poets.

Thus iniquity shall lay waste the whole earth.] By this expression we may understand *all the earth strictly, terram universam,* as the Arabic renders; and thus the old world, with its inhabitants, was destroyed by water for their iniquity; and St. Peter seems to intimate, that *the present earth, and all the works that are therein, shall at length be burnt up* for the same reason; (2 Pet. iii. 7. 10.) or we may understand this sentence, of judgments that shall befal any particular land or country. And thus the Syriac version expounds it, *Vastabitque totam terram impiorum;* and Coverdale's translation takes it in the same sense, *Thus the unrighteous dealing of them shall bring all the land to a wilderness:* according to that observation of the Psalmist, *A fruitful land maketh he barren, for the wickedness of those that dwell therein.* (Psal. cvii. 34.)

And ill-dealing shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty.] The truth of this observation cannot be better exemplified than in the fate of Nebuchadnezzar and Sennacherib; the latter prided himself in being called the *great king,* the *king,* by way of excellence, and considered himself as the lord of the earth, and the vanquisher of men and gods: this prince, so proud and haughty, God seems to despise as below an ordinary man; he treats him as a wild beast, puts his hook in his nose, and a bridle in his mouth, and turns him back with disgrace and infamy, by the same way that he came triumphant and glorious. (See Rollin on the Belles Lettres, vol. iii. p. 167.)

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

Having established the preference of wisdom or religion above vice and wickedness, the author presses upon princes and rulers, whom he addressed in the first chapter, the study and observance of it, as the means of ruling well; that, through a conceit and imagined privilege of their high station, they should attempt nothing injurious; because God careth for all alike, being the common Father of small and great, and will punish them proportionably to the great trust which they abuse. He concludes with a eulogium of wisdom, its general use to mankind, and the means of obtaining it.

Ver. 1. *HEAR, therefore, O ye kings.*] In Coverdale's translation, this chapter begins, *Wisdom is better than strength, and a man of understanding is more worth than one that is strong:* which he copied undoubtedly from the Vulgate, which is single in inserting this verse, and renders, *Melior est sapientia quàm vires, et vir prudens quàm fortis:* but it is not to be found in the Greek, nor in the Syriac or Arabic translations: it seems taken either from Prov. xvi. 32. or from Eccl. ix. 16. but more probably from the latter. However that be, or however true and useful the reflection may be, yet it is certainly quite out of place here; the connexion between the beginning of this chapter and the conclusion of the last, is really better without it; for if *ill-dealing* or wickedness *shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty,* (v. 23.) the advice here given to kings, to attend to good instruction, and to conduct themselves with religion and justice, is very seasonable and natural. From the great liberty here taken in giving advice and direction to persons in such high authority, some have inferred, that a king is the writer of this book; for who so proper to take this freedom with kings, as one of their own great rank, or who so able as the wise Solomon? But what foundation there is for this pretence, see in note on chap. ix. 7. of this book.

Ver. 3. *For power is given you of the Lord.*] *By me kings reign,* says God, Prov. viii. 15. And to the same high original does this writer ascribe their power. Irenæus very properly remarks, "That the devil never more truly proved himself to be the father of lies, than when he said to our Saviour concerning the kingdoms of the world, *All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it.*" The hint here given to princes concerning the original of their power is very properly inserted, lest, being exalted so high, they should be ignorant or forgetful of him from whom they received their authority; "For they are accountable to God for the abuse of their power, as well as subjects are for disobedience to it; because it was committed to them, not for their own pleasure or advantage,

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to gratify their pride, or to enable them to do acts of tyranny and oppression, but for the good of those who are under their charge." (See Homily of Obedience to Magistrates.) Cyrus has not only given in his own person a perfect model of the manner in which princes should govern their nations, and the real use they ought to make of absolute power; but he lays down excellent rules for the conduct of other princes: Ἐγὼ μὲν οἶμαι δεῖν τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἀρχομένων διαφέρειν, οὐ τῷ πολυτελέστερον, κ. τ. λ. "That a king ought not to be distinguished from his subjects by the splendour of riches, the pomp of equipage, or luxury of diet only, but by a superiority of merit of every kind, by an indefatigable application to make his people happy—that the very glory of their character, and the true use of their eminence and greatness, is being devoted to, and studious of, the public good." (Cyrop. lib. i.) Tully has the same opinion of government; "Mihi quidem videntur huc omnia esse referenda ab iis qui præsunt aliis, ut ii, qui eorum in imperio erunt, sint quàm beatissimi." (Cic. epist. 1. lib. i. ad Quint. Fratr.) This has been assigned by critics as the reason why Homer calls his kings by such epithets as διογενεῖς, *born of the gods;* or διοτρεφεῖς, *bred by the gods,* viz. to point out to themselves the offices they were ordained for; and to their people, the reverence that should be paid them: expressions correspondent to those places of Holy Scripture where princes are called *gods,* and the *sons of the Most High.* (Annot. on book i. ver. 229.) And the like reasoning will hold in proportion with respect to judges, magistrates, ministers of state, generals of armies, governors of provinces, and ecclesiastical superiors, and all other persons in authority.

Ver. 4. *Because, being ministers of his kingdom, you have not judged aright, nor kept the law.*] Both the Vulgate and St. Austin read, *Nec custodistis legem justitiæ.* The meaning is, that, being appointed by God, who is your sovereign in a much higher degree, as his ministers and vicegerents, you have acted as if you were absolute and uncontrollable, and accountable to none for your proceedings; ye have made your own wills and passions the rule of your conduct, and have forgot that for this cause God raised you up to such an eminence above the rest of his creatures, that you might resemble him in goodness, and impartially distribute justice. Tully's reproof of Verres upon this occasion, is very remarkable and fine, "Nunquam tibi venit in mentem, non tibi idcirco fasces et secures, et tantam imperii vim, tantamque ornamentorum omnium dignitatem datam, ut earum rerum vi et auctoritate omnia repagula juris, pudoris, et officii perfringeres, et omnium bona prædam tuam duceres?" (Orat. 5.) But nothing can exceed that charge of king Jehoshaphat to the judges which he set over the land, and ought to be considered as the *urim* and *thummim* of every public magistrate; *Take heed what you do, for ye judge not for man but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment; wherefore, let the fear of the Lord be upon you, and take heed unto it, for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* (2 Chron. xix. 6.)

Ver. 5. *Horribly and speedily shall he come upon you; for a sharp judgment shall be to them that be in high places.*] Not that this sharp judgment shall come upon the mighty, and such as are in high places, merely for being mighty; the expression in this sense is too lax and rigorous, for there is no offence in the office, as such, nor would God raise any of his creatures to such an honour and dignity, as to be his vicegerents, and even to be called *gods,* (Psal. lxxxii. 6.) in resemblance of him, if the office and elevated state itself was faulty or punishable: the meaning is, that, if kings and rulers pervert the order and original design of their institution, and act contrary to the established rules of justice, they will then not only be answerable for this abuse of power to him that entrusted them with it, but be punished in a greater degree, in proportion to their superior station, and the weighty talents committed to them.

Ver. 6. *For mercy will soon pardon the meanest.*] *i. e.* God will sooner or more easily pardon a small fault or breach of duty in a private person, from whom so great a perfection is neither expected nor required, as having wanted perhaps opportunities of knowing his duty, and been deprived of the means of instruction: such a person's transgression, being to himself, proceeding rather from ignorance than malice, and not attended with a train of bad consequences to others, will be less regarded: but the sins of kings and rulers are, as St. Austin styles them, contagious and mortal, their bad example has the most powerful influence, it is fatal through their eminence and authority, and they ruin as many as are led away by it. Hence God commanded Moses to apprehend all the princes of the people, and the rulers of thousands and of hundreds, and other principal persons in their tribes, who had been guilty of foul idolatry, and *to hang them up before the Lord, i. e.* before the sanctuary, as men who had forsaken the worship of their God. And this was to be done openly, or against the sun, that all the people might see and fear, when they saw persons of their distinction and authority made public examples of God's displeasure. (Numb. xxv. 4.) This is the sense of the LXX. who read παραδειγμάτισον αὐτούς. The Vulgate and Symmachus understand it in like manner, and Selden de Synedr. lib. ii. "Nor can we better (says Calmet) account for God's severity to David, for an act of seeming curiosity only in numbering the people, 2 Sam. xxiv. and his threats to Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. for a piece of secret vanity, in shewing his treasures, than by considering them as public persons, who should rather have regarded God's glory than their own." (See Comment. Literal. in loc.)

But mighty men shall be mightily tormented.] Private persons seldom dare take the liberty to represent to kings, and persons in great authority, the wickedness or injustice of their proceedings, much less to remind them of the danger of such steps. This writer therefore very artfully, as St. Bernard observes, assumes the borrowed character of Solomon, to give the greater weight to his reflections: as a king, superior to all others of the same rank in experience and wisdom, he assures them with the greater confidence, that however they may flatter themselves from their high station, that they are out of the reach of danger, and have nothing to fear; their great eminence ought rather to possess them with contrary apprehensions; nothing being more difficult than to fill a high post with sufficiency and credit, nor any thing so easy as to abuse it and miscarry. That God, though he has established them his vicegerents, has not made them independent of himself; he considers them still as his creatures, and, from the nature of their trust, accountable in a greater degree. That if at any time

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they abuse their authority by notorious acts of violence and oppression, they must expect that God will display his own power by punishing them very remarkably, and make them as terrible instances of his vengeance, as many others of their high rank, whose sufferings are recorded both in sacred and profane history. This is finely illustrated in Isa. xiv. 9. where all the ghosts of deceased tyrants, condemned to the infernal mansions, are represented as rising from their *thrones*, called so by way of irony, and coming to meet the king of Babylon, and congratulating his arrival among them. Ver. 8. of this chapter our author again adds, *A sore trial shall come upon the mighty;* which is the very same sentiment, but is not here to be considered as a tautology, but as a repeated warning. It is observable, that all the ancient versions express this *sore trial* in stronger terms than our translation; the Vulgate reads, *Fortioribus instat fortior cruciatus*, which all the old English versions follow; but the Arabic expresses it more terribly by the superlative, *Potestate præditos rigidissimum obruet examen, ad vos enim spectant sermones mei, O rebelles refractarii.* And this sore trial or punishment will be more disagreeable and insupportable to princes, even upon account of their former delicate way of living, and their former absolute sway over others, because disgrace, adversity, and suffering, are far more painful and vexatious to those that have been in high stations, and lived at ease, than to those of an inferior rank, who have been inured to hardships: hence we may imagine Lucifer, the "chieftain of the devils," as Mr. Mede calls him, to be more deeply affected with his sore punishment than any of the rest of his inferior accomplices.

Ver. 7. *For he which is Lord over all, shall fear no man's person, neither shall he stand in awe of any man's greatness, for he hath made the small and the great, and careth for all alike.*] There is a passage in Job xxxiv. 19. 24. 27. which very much resembles the first part of this verse, and probably this was taken from it; *God accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, for they all are the works of his hands: he shall break in pieces mighty men without number, because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his ways.* And the sense of the latter part is agreeable to that of the Psalmist, *The Lord is loving unto every man, and his mercy is over all his works,* (Psal. cxlv. 9.) As common Father of all, he is desirous that all should be saved, and not willing that even the meanest should perish. "Magna Dii curant, parva negligunt," was an unbecoming notion of God, and worthy only of a heathen. (Cic. de Nat. Deor.) How much better is that most excellent sentiment of St. Austin, "Tu sic curas unumquemque nostrûm, tanquam solum cures, et sic omnes tanquam singulos:" *God takes as much care of every particular person, as if each were all; and as much care of all, as if all were but one.* St. Cyprian has a sentiment upon this occasion no less beautiful; "Deus se omnibus ad cœlestis gratiæ consecutionem æqualitate librată præbet parem." "A true knowledge of providence, as it is an attribute of God, is most necessary, and of the greatest importance, as it influences all events both public and private, and every man ought to have it in his view in every circumstance of life, and every action of the day: it makes us more thoroughly sensible of our entire dependence upon God, of our weakness and wants, and presents us with opportunities of exerting the greatest virtues, such as confidence in God, a grateful acknowledgment of his mercies, humility, resignation, and patience; and is the very basis of religion, and of all those holy exercises of prayers, vows, thanksgivings, sacrifices," &c. (Rollin on Sacred History, vol. iii. p. 130.)

Ver. 10. *For they that keep holiness holily, shall be judged holy.*] Calmet applies this sentence to dignified ecclesiastical persons, to such as composed the Jewish Sanhedrin, and were the judges of their nation; "Le Sage parloit aux Juges de sa nation, qui etoient pour l'ordinaire de l'ordre des Prêtres." St. Bernard and St. Austin (de Pastor. Cur. cap. 4.) both apply what is said of rulers here and in the context to the Christian clergy, whose duty likewise rises in proportion to the high dignity of their office. Moses, who had the care of God's chosen people, was considered by him as their lawgiver and chief ruler; and accordingly we find, that even a small transgression of his (if any can be called so that is committed against God) was the reason, in the judgment of many learned men, of his not being permitted to enter into the land of promise. And the like may be said of the severity which befel the disobedient prophet, 1 Kings xiii. 21. But I think it more agreeable to the context, to understand this of good kings, who are full of zeal for the glory of God, the establishment of religion, and the security of its rights; such as are in Scripture said to be *after God's own heart*, who consider themselves as his ministers, and whose authority is employed to make their subjects happy, by making them better. It is a reflection very commonly to be met with upon the kings mentioned in the Old Testament, that *they did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that their fathers had done;* but yet there are some particular exceptions, some instances of illustrious goodness, recorded there, which ought in justice to be remembered, and must with pleasure be related, for the credit of their high calling: let any one but carefully reflect upon the sentiments of piety which David expressed in the translation of the ark; and his magnificent and almost immense preparations for the building of the temple: Jehoshaphat's pious visitation of his kingdom, and his zeal to send Levites with the princes, to instruct the people in the law: (2 Chron. xvii. 7, 8.) Hezekiah's great care and concern to restore religion, to *sanctify the house of the Lord God of his fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place;* and the many other good *works which he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God with all his heart:* (2 Chron. xxix. 5. xxxi. 21.) Josiah's indefatigable zeal from the very beginning of his reign to reform religion, and restore the true worship, not only in Judah, but in the ten tribes also: (2 Chron. xxiv.) and he will plainly see, that these princes thought themselves placed on the throne as guardians of the faith, and as nursing fathers of the church, to establish and promote the kingdom of God in their dominions. Such righteous kings, who have *kept holiness holily*, and been exceedingly zealous for the honour of the Lord God of hosts, will always find what to answer; they may even dare to appeal to him for a reward of their integrity and sincerity, and with humble confidence say, with Nehemiah, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds, that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.* (Nehem. xiii. 14.)

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Ver. 13. *She preventeth them that desire her.*] There is a fine eulogium of wisdom in this and the following verses, not only to raise men's curiosity after it, but likewise their desire of it; and, to encourage them the more in the pursuit of it, the author shews how easy it is to be obtained, that, though she is glorious and beautiful, yet she is not so coy and backward as to hide herself, or fly away from her pursuers and admirers; but rather desires to be known to them, and even makes the first advances and overtures of familiarity and acquaintance to such as are well-disposed to her. What follows in the context is a close imitation of the book of Proverbs, where wisdom is represented as inviting men to come to her dwelling, as going into the most public places to call them to her, that such as listen to her, and watch at her gates, are happy, and those that find her, find life and happiness; expressions so like this writer, that, were there not stronger arguments to the contrary, one would be almost tempted to pronounce that they came both from the same pen.

Ver. 17. *For the very true beginning of her is the desire of discipline.*] We have here, and in the context, the several degrees set down, by which a person well-disposed towards wisdom, may rise by little and little to the perfection of it: the first step mentioned is the desire of discipline or instruction, as the first step to a cure is, being sensible that we are out of order; and this desire of instruction in virtue or wisdom, in religion or science, proceeds from the good opinion which a man entertains of it, and the love which he bears to it; and this love is the cause of his perseverance and willing obedience; and his obedience will produce the reward of happiness: which happiness consists in incorruption, *i. e.* in a state of immortality, and a crown of glory, that fadeth not away. This desire therefore of instruction, by a regular deduction of particulars, and a kind of logical inference and conclusion, may be said to be the principal thing which conducteth men to a kingdom, *ad regnum perpetuum*, according to the Vulgate; as that which sets the machine a going, may properly be reckoned the cause of all the other motions, and of what is effected in the conclusion by them. In this and the three following verses, the learned will easily discern the beauty of the climax, or regular gradation from one thing to another, like that of St. Paul, Rom. v. 3, 4. *Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.* (See also 2 Pet. i. 5.) Not unlike to which is that of St. Austin, "Velle meum tenebat inimicus, ex voluntate perversa facta est libido, et dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo, et dum consuetudini non resistitur, facta est necessitas." (Confess. lib. viii. cap. 5.) But that of St. Chrysostom, with respect to baptism, is still more beautiful, and hardly to be paralleled; "You are herein made not only free, but holy; not only holy, but just likewise; not barely just, but children also; not children only, but heirs; not merely heirs, but brethren of Christ; not brethren only, but coheirs; not coheirs only, but members also; not members only, but his temple; not temples only, but organs of the Holy Spirit." (Homil. ad Neophyt.) After which instances, it may seem almost needless to mention that of Tully, "In urbe luxuries creatur, ex luxuria existat avaritia, ex avaritia erumpat audacia necesse est; inde omnia scelera et maleficia nascuntur."

Ver. 21. *If your delight be then in thrones and sceptres, O ye kings of the people, honour wisdom.*] What has been observed of the usefulness of history by a learned writer, is equally applicable to wisdom, here recommended; "That it is useful both to small and great, to princes and subjects; but more necessary to princes and great men, than to all the world besides. For how can truth approach them amidst the crowd of flatterers which surround them on all sides, and are continually commending and admiring them; or, in other words, corrupting and poisoning their hearts and understandings? How can truth make her modest and feeble voice to be heard amidst such tumult and confusion? How venture to lay before them the duties and slaveries of royalty? How shew them wherein their true glory consists, and represent to them, that if they will look back to the original of their institution, they will clearly find they were made for the people, and not the people for them? How put them in mind of their faults, instil into them a dread of the just judgment of posterity, and disperse the thick cloud which the vain phantom of their greatness has formed around them? How that a Caligula, a Nero, and a Domitian, who were praised to an excess during their lives, became the horror and execration of mankind after their death; whereas Titus, Trajan, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius, are still looked upon as the delights of the world, for having made use of their power only to do good." (Rollin, vol. iii. p. 2.)

Ver. 22. *And will not hide mysteries from you.*] The Vulgate here renders *sacramenta Dei*, without authority from any of the more ancient versions, or countenance from the original; the true meaning is, that he will reveal or discover the arcana, or secret things of wisdom, as the reason of her name, (see Ecclus. vi. 22.) her original and existence, her nature and properties, her effects and operations, *even from the beginning of the creation;* for so I would understand the words in the Greek text, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γενέσεως, *viz.* that wisdom was present at, concurred in, and is displayed by, the works of the creation, in a much better and loftier sense than that of our version. The Syriac translation seems to carry it still higher, understanding these words of wisdom, eternally existing with, or in, God, before all creation, *quod creaturas præcessit investigabo:* the author here endeavours to discover and set down the origin of heavenly wisdom, and indirectly confutes the pretences and boastings of the heathen sages, all whose philosophy is but of human invention, the work of a Socrates or a Pythagoras: but wisdom is not of so late a date, is more ancient than any historical monuments of the Greeks, has existed in all ages, may be traced through the times of the patriarchs, and its origin ultimately resolved into God himself. (See Calmet in loc.)

Ver. 23. *Nor will I go with consuming envy.*] Some Latin translations render, *Neque cum eo, qui invidia tabescit*, &c. So that the meaning may either be, that he would shew no envy or narrowness of spirit, in his discoveries about wisdom, but as he had *learned diligently, he would likewise communicate liberally;* (vii. 13.) or, that he would hold no commerce or society with a person of that selfish and inhospitable temper: for envy does not only pine and grieve at the outward prosperity of others, but is vexed at their inward accomplishments, at any attainments or happy discoveries which they may make, or have communicated to them by others: whereas charity, or a beneficent temper,

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which is kindly disposed towards all, envies no man's merit; nor does it pride itself in the singularity of its own knowledge, nor conceal what may be useful to others; she is not afraid that others may equal, or even exceed, her in knowledge, but with pleasure opens and communicates to them what she apprehends may be of public benefit, and considers not from what quarter a useful discovery comes, only, that its advantage may be made general, and others share in the improvement. St. Basil's observation upon this occasion is very just and useful; "Adepts," says he, or such as have made uncommon discoveries in any science, "should be ready to impart their knowledge without envy; and such as want to be instructed, should offer themselves without any shame," (epist. 12.) And the comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal gives the true reason for imparting the treasures of knowledge to others, "C'est pourquoy on les doit communiquer aux autres sans envie, puisque plus on les repand sur eux, plus on en joüit, et qu'elle ne diminue point par la multitude de ceux qui la possedent."

Ver. 24. *The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world, and a wise king is the upholding of the people.*] The Greek reads σωτηρία κόσμου, and the Vulgate, *Multitudo sapientium sanitas est orbis terrarum;* and Calmet's exposition is to the same effect, *viz. That wise men are as it were the physicians and recoverers of the world, especially of the wicked part of it; and that their examples and discourses are like powerful medicines to the sick.* This is the very language and comparison of Philo; πᾶς σοφὸς λύτρον ἐστὶ τοῦ φαύλου——καθάπερ ἰατρὸς τοῦ νοσοῦντος. (De Sacrific. Abel et Cain.) Plato bears testimony to the truth of the last sentence, when he advises, "that kings should be philosophers, or philosophers kings." "Ille quidem princeps ingenii et doctrinæ Plato, tum denique fore beatas respublicas putavit, si aut docti et sapientes homines eas regere cœpissent, aut, qui regerent, omne suum studium in doctrina ac sapientia collocassent. Hanc conjunctionem, videlicet potestatis et sapientiæ, saluti censuit civitatibus." (Cic. epist. 1. ad Quint. Fratr.) And it was no less piously than excellently wished by Justin Martyr, "that kings and rulers, together with their sovereign power, might be possessed of wisdom and a good mind."

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Under the borrowed character of Solomon, the author proceeds to shew the original and powerful effects of wisdom; that though all men agree in this, that all are born, and all must die, it is wisdom that puts the difference between man and man, according as the intermediate time between the cradle and the grave is improved or neglected; that the wisest man was at first as helpless as other children, and attained to the perfection of understanding by a steady pursuit of wisdom, and prayers to God for it, and that it is attainable by all others observing the same method. The chapter concludes with a fine eulogium of wisdom, as essentially inherent in God, and derivative in man, as a ray from his divinity. Calmet says the six first chapters of this book are as the preface to the work, which may be considered as an abridgment or paraphrase of the nine first chapters of the book of Proverbs. (Pref. sur le Livre de la Sagesse.)

Ver. 1. *I MYSELF also am a mortal man like unto all.*] As nothing is so great an enemy to instruction and improvement as pride, the author, intending to communicate the secrets of wisdom, and the method of obtaining it, begins with shewing man his true original, what he is by nature, and what by grace, thereby to depreciate his conceit and inflame his gratitude: and to humble even kings, and take away all affectation of divinity, a notion which flattery is too apt to insinuate, he assures them that they are equally the children of Adam, sprung from the same first common parent with slaves and the meanest of their subjects; and as liable to corruption and mortality as the very beggars. Well, therefore, may Pliny cry out, "O dementiam hominum, à talibus initiis existimantium ad superbiam se genitos!"

The offspring of him that was first made of the earth.] Eusebius calls Adam πρῶτος γηγενὴς, (Præp. Evang. lib. xi.) and to this St. Paul may be thought to allude, when he says, that *the first man is of the earth, earthy:* (1 Cor. xv. 47.) the derivation of *homo, ab humo,* according to the etymologists, seems natural and proper, and the very name Adam denotes the same original. The Greek writers accordingly make use of the term γηγενὴς, to denote the great antiquity and unknown original of their first and earliest heroes. But though all men thus resemble Adam in their origination, yet may his condition in this respect be considered as singular, that he was created perfect at once both in soul and body, quite different from the state here described of his posterity, who arrive slowly, progressively, and with difficulty, to the perfection of either. Philo has the same observation upon Adam, whom he calls emphatically ὁ γηγενὴς, and says, that he far excelled all that came after him in the excellences of soul and body; ἐκεῖνος ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος ὁ γηγενὴς, ὁ παντὸς τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν ἀρχηγέτης, ἑκάτερα ἄριστος, ψυχήν τε καὶ σῶμα γεγενῆσθαί μοι δοκεῖ, καὶ μακρῷ τινι τοὺς ἔπειτα διενεγκεῖν, κατὰ τὰς ἐν ἀμφοτέροις ὑπερβάσεις. (De Mundi Opificio.)

Ver. 2. *And was fashioned to be flesh in the time of ten months.*] The Alexandrian MS. and all the other versions, make the comma after *flesh,* and join the rest to the next sentence. As to the precise time of *ten months,* mentioned here, the ancient Greek and Latin writers express themselves in like manner: Ovid, speaking of the year of Romulus, which consisted only of ten months, says,

"Quod satis est utero matris dum prodeat infans,
Hoc anno statuit temporis esse satis." (Fast. lib. i.)

And Virgil is no less express;

"Matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses." (Eclog. iv.)

Upon which Servius makes this observation; "Mares decimo nascuntur mense, fœminæ nono." Plautus often mentions the like time; he is particularly jocular in what follows:

"Nam me illa in alvo menses gestavit decem,
At ego illam [Famem] in alvo gesto plus annos decem."
(Plaut. in Sticho.)

The like time is mentioned by Terence, (Adelph. act. iii. sc. 4.) and by Censorinus, (de Die Natali, cap. 12.) Philo calls τὴν τεσσαρακοντάδα, or forty weeks, τὴν ζωογονικωτάτην

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ἐν ᾗ διαπλάττεσθαι ἄνθρωπον ἐν τῷ τῆς φύσεως ἐργαστηρίῳ, (de Mose, lib. ii.) And Menander mentions the same time as most usual, γυνὴ κυεῖ δεκάμηνος. Hippocrates reckons such as are born in the tenth month as most perfect and promising. (Lib. de Septimestri partu.) Theocritus accordingly mentions Hercules as born at this age. (Idyll. 24.)

Being compacted in blood.] Παγεὶς ἐν αἵματι. St. Bernard expresses himself in the same manner, alluding, perhaps, to this very passage; "Quid sum ego? Homo de humore liquido: fui enim in momento conceptionis de humano semine conceptus: deinde spuma illa coagulata, modicùm crescendo, caro facta est." (Meditat. cap. 2.) Παγεὶς occurs in the like sense, Job x. 10. in the most correct editions of the LXX. And Pliny uses *coagulum* upon the like occasion.

And the pleasure that came with sleep.] The modesty and reservedness of this writer are here much to be admired; it is a resemblance of the great decency in the sacred writings upon the like occasion. Ὕπνος in the original, rendered *sleep* by our translators, here means *concubitus;* the Syriac version reads, *concupiscentia concubitûs.* The like expression occurs, iv. 6. where bastards are called, τέκνα ἐξ ἀνόμων ὕπνων· (See note on that passage.) And in this sense, I think, we may understand that expression of Terence, "Interdum propter dormias." (Eunuch. act. ii. sc. 3.) We find *sleep* understood in the like sense frequently by the Hellenist Jews, and the Platonists, and in the following line of Homer:

Πάντων μὲν κόρος ἐστὶ καὶ ὕπνου καὶ φιλότητος.

Ver. 3. *And when I was born, I drew in the common air, and fell upon the earth.*] It is the most general opinion, that the fœtus does not respire or breathe in its mother's womb, but as soon as it is born, it then first begins to breathe, and cannot live without it. Galen, among the ancients, thought that it breathed before its birth; but Aristotle (lib. de Spir. cap. 3.) is of a different opinion, and is followed herein by the moderns. This writer likewise seems to favour the negative. To point out the infant's helpless state after its birth, it is added, that he *fell upon the earth.* The ancient Romans seem to intimate this, by their custom of laying the new-born infant immediately upon the bare ground, and imploring the help of the goddess Ops, to assist and bring it forward. (St. Austin. de Civit. Dei, lib. iv. and Calmet in loc.)

And fell upon the earth, which is of like nature.] Coverdale renders, *I fell upon the earth, which is my nature.* And the Syriac, *Omnium more hominum, super terram decidi.* So that probably ὁμοιοπαθὴς may be the true reading; and I have the satisfaction to find this conjecture confirmed by Junius, who renders, in the nominative case, *iisdem perpessionibus infestus.* The word ὁμοιοπαθὴς, which our translators have in this place very justly rendered, occurs, Acts xiv. 15. καὶ ἡμεῖς ὁμοιοπαθεῖς ἐσμεν ὑμῖν ἄνθρωποι, where they have as remarkably miscarried; the true rendering of it, according to Erasmus, is, *We also are of like nature with you;* and not, *Men of like passions with you,* as our version there has it; which destroys the beauty of the antithesis. It is judiciously rendered in the ancient Latin version, *Mortales sumus, similes vobis homines,* which, in the judgment of a great critic, is far preferable to the rendering of our translators. (Bentley's Boyle's Lect. p. 179.)

And the first voice which I uttered, was crying, as all others do.] Instead of the common reading in all the editions, πρώτην φωνὴν τὴν ὁμοίαν πᾶσιν ἴσα, I would read, πρώτην τε φωνὴν ὁμοίαν πᾶσιν ἦκα· ἴσα seems tautology after ὁμοίαν. We have here, and in the context, a fine picture of human nature, and the state and condition of it very naturally represented in its several stages, *viz.* "That man is a creature turned naked into the wide world, and cast upon the bare ground, without any covering to shelter or defend him; that, unfurnished with what is fit and necessary for him, he is bound up and swaddled, and requires help and teaching even for the very feeding and supporting himself; that he is perfect in no other instance of nature's teaching, except that of crying; this he brings into the world along with him, and a very fit emblem it is of our fortune and condition; that infirmities and miseries make up his middle state, and rottenness and worms his latter end: and histories of good authority assure us, that some nations welcome their children into the world with this salutation, 'Child, thou art come into this world to suffer, take it patiently, and hold thy peace.'" (See Charron. de la Sagesse.) And therefore Zoroastres's laughing when he was born, instead of crying, as all other children do, is remarked by many writers as a prodigy. (Solin. Mirabil. lib. i.) In this just representation of the condition of human nature, our author imitates the true Solomon, who has drawn man at full length in his true colours and proportions, from the cradle to the grave. St. Chrysostom's observation upon this first stage of life is very apposite, *viz.* "That nature seems, by the cries of the infant, to foretell its future misery; and when God said to our first parents before the fall, *Increase and multiply,* he intended it as a blessing; but it was a curse and a punishment upon Eve and her posterity, when he afterward told her, *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children.*" (De Utilit. Lect. Script.) St. Austin's account is still more melancholy: "Nascuntur homines homine generante, Deo creante, peccato inficiente, diabolo possidente." But Pliny's description of the infant-state is most natural, and comes nearest to this writer: "Natura hominem tantum nudum, et in nuda humo, natali die abjicit, ad vagitus statim et ploratum; nullumque tot animalium aliud ad lacrymas, et has protinus vitæ principio—Ab hoc lucis rudimento (quo ne feras inter nos genitas) vincula excipiunt, et omnium membrorum nexus—infeliciter natus jacet, manibus pedibusque devinctis, flens animal, cæteris imperaturum; et à suppliciis vitam auspicatur, unam tantùm ob causam, quia natum est." (Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. in Procem.)

Ver. 6. *For all men have one entrance into life, and the like going out.*] The meaning is very plain and obvious, that all are born, and all must die; not that all depart by the same means, or in the same manner, as our version seems to countenance: for though there is but one passage into life, there are, perhaps, a thousand ways out of it, and almost every accident sufficient, though different, to let in death. The word ἔξοδος, in the original, is the term used by sacred and profane writers for death, or a departure out of this life. (See iii. 2. Ecclus. xxxviii. 23. 2 Pet. i. 15.) The connexion of the following verse is intricate; nor is it easy to determine what διὰ τοῦτο, or *wherefore,* refers to. I take the sense to be, that as his nature was the same with that of others, and wisdom was not a natural gift to him

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above others, therefore he prayed to God to bestow it on him.

Ver. 7. *I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me.*] Calmet observes, that, throughout this book, we are to understand wisdom, or the spirit of wisdom, as synonymous to religion, piety, the fear of God, &c. in a sense far different from that in which wisdom is taken in the writings of the heathen philosophers, where wisdom has no connexion with, or relation to, religion, nor aims at its improvement, by enforcing the practice of virtue; its chief design appears to be only to make men more knowing, to brighten and improve their natural parts, to raise and elevate the genius, and to instil some dry, useless notions of an imperfect morality; "Quelques connoissances steriles d'une morale fort imparfaite." (Pref. sur le Liv. de la Sagesse.)

Ver. 8. *I preferred her before sceptres and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison of her.*] The author gives here, says the comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal, "une excellent marque pour juger si on a veritablement l'esprit de Sagesse et l'esprit de Dieu," &c. *an excellent rule to judge whether a man has the true spirit of wisdom and piety; for a true sincere piety is that which esteems God above every thing, which desires nothing but him, which prefers his favour before thrones and sceptres, and, placing its whole happiness and crown of rejoicing in him, is pleased, easy, and contented, under the loss of all other things besides.* Such was that elevated piety of St. Paul, which *counted all things but dung, for, or in comparison of, the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus.* (Phil. iii. 8.)

Ver. 9. *Neither compared I unto her any precious stone.*] Λίθον ἀτίμητον, ὅτι ὁ πᾶς χρυσὸς, κ. τ. λ. Perhaps the true reading may be, λίθον ἀτίμητον τοπάζιον, *I did not compare unto her the invaluable stone, the topaz:* see Job xxviii. 19. where the topaz and gold are joined together in the same verse, as not comparable to wisdom: nor does there seem any occasion for ὅτι or πᾶς; the former, probably, is improper, and the latter unnecessary. But I submit this conjecture to the learned.

Ver. 10. *And chose to have her instead of light.*] Ἀντὶ φωτός. Our version seems faulty here, for though ἀντὶ is often used in the sense in which it is taken by our translators, it is probably improper in this place. The meaning here is, That I determined to have her for a light or guide; in which sense ἀντὶ often occurs. The Vulgate accordingly reads, *Proposui pro luce habere illam,* and the Arabic, *Elegi ut esset mihi pro luce,* which is the sense of Junius. Coverdale follows the Vulgate, and renders, *I purposed to take her for my light;* to which agree the other ancient English versions. Or the meaning may be, that he chose her *for the sake of* her light, *gratiâ lucis.* There may be also another sense, that he chose her *præ luce, before* light, because, as it immediately follows, *The light that cometh from wisdom never goeth out,* but *after light succeeds darkness.* (See ver. 30.) In all these senses ἀντὶ is used by good writers, whose authority will warrant our interpretation: any of which is preferable to that in our version. This and the two preceding verses seem taken from Job xxviii. 15, &c. and are a close imitation of that ancient writer. Or they may refer to Prov. viii. 10. xi. 18, 19.

Ver. 11. *All good things together came to me with her, and innumerable riches in her hands.*] i. e. *Through her hands.* So the Vulgate, *per manus illius,* which the ancient English versions follow. I have before observed, that this writer often personates Solomon, and this long prosopopœia is spoken under that borrowed character. This verse refers to that grant of wisdom which is mentioned 1 Kings iii. where Solomon, upon his advancement to the throne, prays earnestly to God for the direction and assistance of wisdom, without any mention made of wealth, honour, or long life; and God bestows upon him, for his disinterested piety, the two former in great abundance, though unasked, and even unexpected by him, together with *wisdom and understanding to discern judgment.* The like promise of additional good things occurs in other parts of Scripture, to such as *seek God's kingdom in the first place.* And, indeed, throughout the whole history of the Old Testament, and particularly under the Mosaic dispensation, rewards and promises are annexed to piety or true wisdom, and almost all temporal advantages distributed in proportion to the degrees of it; as, favourable seasons, plenty, fruitfulness, health, peace, deliverance from dangers, and victory over enemies; which, though very valuable privileges, and such wherein the prosperity and welfare of any nation chiefly consist, are yet very far exceeded by those greater blessings, and more worthy of God's magnificence to bestow, reserved for the righteous in another state. On the other hand, wickedness, especially when it becomes general, draws down all the scourges of God's anger,—famine, plague, war, destruction, bondage; and is the true cause of the ruin of whole kingdoms. After this account, it may seem needless to mention the curse which it brings upon private families, which are often observed to dwindle away insensibly; and their prosperity, like Jonah's gourd, withers through the venom of this worm, which preys upon its vitals.

Ver. 12. *And I rejoiced in them all, because wisdom goeth before them.*] Αὐτῶν ἡγεῖται σοφία, *i. e. Wisdom* not only brings them with her, but conducts and *heads them,* like their leader and commander. The Geneva Bible renders, *For wisdom was the author thereof;* but the rendering of Vatablus is more exact and judicious, *Ut quorum caput sit sapientia,* that wisdom was the head, or most valuable, of all the gifts which God gave him. The Vulgate reads, without any authority, *Quoniam antecedebat me sapientia,* which seems not so proper or agreeable to this place.

Ver. 14. *Which they that use become the friends of God, being commended for the gifts that come from learning.*] *i. e.* Recommended to God, which is the better rendering; and thus Coverdale's and the other ancient English versions understand it, which read, *And are accepted with him for the gifts of wisdom.* Our translators followed a corrupt Greek copy in the first part of this sentence, which read, ὃν οἱ χρησάμενοι, and the Vulgate and Arabic seem to have followed the same; and so do the most ancient English versions: but we need no other argument to prove this a corrupt reading, than the badness of the Greek; for χράομαι does not admit of such a construction. The Alexandrian MS. preserves the true reading, ὃν οἱ κτησάμενοι, and the Syriac renders accordingly, *qui possederint eam, i. e.* they that possess wisdom enter into friendship with God, as the margin rightly has it (see ver. 27. of this chapter, and vi. 19. where the like sentiment occurs). For *incorruption* as it is there called, or a life led according to the rules of piety and wisdom, *maketh us near to God,* and *to be allied unto*

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wisdom, is not only the way to obtain immortality, (viii. 13.) but it is called (ver. 17.) immortality itself. But that passage of St. Paul, *He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit*, (1 Cor. vi. 17.) which can never enough be admired, points out the nearest intimacy and relation; such a happy and accomplished Christian is mystically one spirit with God, by a spiritual and more noble union than that of flesh. Our author probably refers in this passage to Abraham, who had the singular honour of so high a title, for he was called, says St. James, for his faith or righteousness, *the friend of God*, (James ii. 2.) and probably he should be so styled, Gen. xviii. 17. where Philo's reading is very observable, μὴ ἐπικαλύψω ἐγὼ ἀπὸ Ἀβραὰμ φίλου μου, which our version wholly omits, and the LXX. express not so fully. The like observation may be made upon the ancient Vulgate, Judith viii. 26. where the rendering is, *Pater noster Abraham per multas tribulationes probatus, Dei amicus effectus est;* of which there is no mention in the LXX. nor in our translation of the place: it shews, however, the sense of those interpreters. And the like appellation we find given to Abraham by Clemens Romanus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and other writers. (See note on ver. 27.)

Ver. 15. *God hath granted me to speak as I would.*] *Ex animi sententia*, according to the Vulgate; but Coverdale's rendering is preferable, *God hath granted me to talk wisely. Ut consultè loquar*, says the Syriac; and Vatablus not less properly, *Sententiosè*. And so Calmet, *de parler d'une maniere sententieuse, et pleine de Sagesse*, which the Greek phrase κατὰ γνώμην will well admit of. Some copies express this by way of prayer, ἐμοὶ δῴη ὁ Θεὸς εἰπεῖν, which is the marginal reading, and of the Syriac, and of St. Gregory; (23 Mor. cap. 17.) but there is no reason for such an alteration, the sense of our version, which is followed by Calmet and all the commentators, exactly agreeing with the character of Solomon, whose fame for wisdom was such, that people came from all parts of the world to hear and be instructed by it: and we have the prayer for wisdom at length throughout the whole ninth chapter, so that it may seem here superfluous.

And to conceive, as is meet, for the things that are given me.] Or, more properly, *to conceive, as is meet, of the things that are given me: i. e.* to have just and worthy sentiments of the gifts which I have received; *D'avoir des sentimens dignes des dons que j'ai reçûs*, says Calmet. Our translators follow the Vatican copy, which reads διδομένων, which is the sense likewise of the Vulgate, and of the ancient English versions. The Alexandrian MS. prefers λεγομένων, which both the Syriac and Arabic interpreters follow, and seems indeed the truer reading.

Ver. 16. *All wisdom also, and knowledge of workmanship.*] Even wisdom itself, which men are so apt to value themselves upon, and to boast of as their own, as being the supposed fruit of their own understanding, acquired with much industry and pains, must yet be acknowledged to come from God, τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων. The heathens themselves ascribed the first invention of the several arts and sciences to supernatural assistance, and looked upon the authors of them as so many gods; as if it were out of the power of unassisted reason, or man's bare ingenuity, to make such useful discoveries. But the honour which they ignorantly ascribed to some deified benefactor, with justice belongs to the true God; for, as Job expresses it, *It is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth men understanding*, (xxxii. 8.) But what are we to understand by *the knowledge of workmanship*, in the following part of the verse? The present reading of the Alexandrian, and the other copies, is ἐργατειῶν ἐπιστήμη, which seems to be a mistake, for no such word is to be met with; I think the true reading is, ἐργασιῶν ἐπιστήμη, which is very properly expressed by, *the knowledge of workmanship*, in our version. Vatablus renders with great judgment, *operum scientia*. And the Geneva Bible expresses it accordingly, *the knowledge of the works, i. e.* works of art. The sense is, that the attainment to a great perfection in these is the gift of God, and cannot be complete without his inspiration and assistance: for I am rather inclined to think, from the manner of expression, that wisdom and knowledge are not to be taken here in their usual high sense, and as they generally are in this writer, and in the book of Proverbs, but mean only extraordinary skill or accomplishment in work. Thus Exod. xxxi. 3. (which I am persuaded this passage refers to, and probably viii. 6.) it is said, that God called Bezaleel for the work of the tabernacle, and filled him with wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, in all manner of workmanship, where ἐπιστήμη, σύνεσις, σοφία, are all used by the LXX. to express a great perfection in manual skill. And what follows in ver. 6. of that chapter, is very observable, *In the hearts of all that are wise-hearted*, or ingenious, *I have put* (says God) *wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded them; i. e.* God, by an inspiration from above upon this occasion, endued the minds of all such ingenious persons as were employed with an extraordinary skill, which they could never have attained to by their own industry, at least not so soon, nor so perfectly, as to go immediately and skilfully about the building of the tabernacle in the manner he designed it. (See Patrick in loc.)

Ver. 17. *To know how the world was made.*] Though philosophy, through the improvements which it has received in every age, may be able to explain the operations of the elements; how the clouds are engendered, the rain and thunder produced, the treasures of the snow and hail collected, and *where is the way in which light dwelleth*, may judge of the force, qualities, and temperature, of the elements, and the sensible effects which they have upon human bodies, and understand the other phenomena of nature, which follow in this chapter, and are enumerated more at large Job xxxviii. where God proposes the like questions, and challenges Job to answer them; yet this important truth of the creation of the world can only be certainly known, and truly understood, by communication from God, or revelation in his word: for neither can reason, nor philosophy, nor the best account in profane history, which takes in only temporal facts and events, give any satisfaction about the original of the world which we inhabit, whether it had a beginning, how or when it was made, by whom or to what end it was created, how it is supported and governed, whether it is continually decaying, or to last to all eternity: we learn nothing certain from thence, what we really are ourselves, what is our original, nature, design, and end. Whereas Divine wisdom, imparted by God, and contained in sacred history, teaches us in a few words all these great truths; that the world was not the product of chance, but the work of God's power; that it was made in

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time; that he made it out of nothing, or rather called it into being by his almighty fiat, according to, and in the manner related in, the book of Genesis, so denominated from containing the true account of its creation; that his providence continues it in being, and God is almighty in that respect likewise; that man, the lord of the creation, sprung from the dust, and is resolvable into it at God's pleasure; that his infinite wisdom is no less displayed in the beauty, symmetry, and contrivance, of the world, than his omnipotence in the act of creation; and in this latter sense I find the Vulgate understands this place, which renders *dispositionem orbis terrarum,* which seems rather to include the nature and constitution of the world, its order and economy, the arrangement and union of the several parts, their wonderful correspondence, relation, harmony, and mutual dependance, for the good of the whole. But in either sense, Divine wisdom is the best instructor; it shews when this beauty and order first existed, who is the ὁ τοῦ κάλλους γενεσιάρχης, (xiii. 3.) and the fountain of all perfection. Calmet observes, that the author here designed by his eulogium, to set forth the superiority of Divine wisdom, and to advance it above the theology or philosophy of the heathens, *d'elever la vraye sagesse au dessus de la philosophie des gentils.* (Comment. in loc.)

Ver. 18. *The beginning, ending, and midst of the times, the alterations of the turnings of the sun,* &c.] Origen understands by *times* here, the most early, the future, and the present times: (Hom. 21. in Luc.) St. Ambrose reads *rerum,* instead of *temporum,* and expounds the place, of things done in ancient times, of events to come to pass hereafter, and the transactions of the present age: (lib. ii. de Abrah. cap. 7.) Grotius understands it, of the several seasons of the year, their beginning, continuance, and ending, and their successive and regular returns, which is most agreeable to the context: the sense of the whole seems to be, that Solomon knew the greatest elongation or distance of the sun from the earth, and its nearest approach to it; the solstices, *solstitiorum vicissitudines,* says Vatablus, the equinoxes, and all the alterations which proceed from its course and motion through the ecliptic; as, the change of the seasons, the vicissitude of day and night, the succession of time, and the revolution of years. As these phenomena succeed one another in the account of this writer, almost as regularly as they do in the heavens, it is surprising that the Vulgate here should translate τρόπων ἀλλαγὰς, *morum mutationes,* which has no manner of connexion with the subject. Our translators have rightly judged in applying it to the sun, and, by attending to the sense of the context, have avoided the equivocalness of the Greek.

Ver. 19. *The circuits of years, and the positions of stars.*] Ἐνιαυτῶν κύκλους. By κύκλους in the plural number I would rather understand the cycles of years, the lunar and solar cycles, especially if these were known and used in this writer's time; and ἀστέρων θέσεις I would rather translate the *places of the stars, i. e.* the longitude and latitude of them, which the word *position* does not so strictly express.

The violence of winds.] Πνευμάτων βίας. Junius renders, *Spirituum vires,* by which he understands the powers and faculties of the human soul: he thinks the mention of winds and their force very absurd in this place, and supports his conjecture from the very next sentence, which contains the *reasonings of men.* Origen reads, *Spirituum violentias,* and understands the passage, of the power and violence of evil spirits; which is a probable interpretation enough, if there was any foundation for the tradition which he mentions of Solomon's writing several books de Exorcismis. (Homil. 21. in Luc.)

Ver. 20. *The natures of living creatures, and the furies of wild beasts.*] Calmet renders, *L'instinct des bêtes, ou leur penchant; the temper, inclination, or instinct, of beasts.* This is agreeable to what is recorded of Solomon, (1 Kings iv. 33.) that *he spake of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.* And the account in the latter part of this verse, *viz.* his great skill in *the diversities of plants, and the virtues of roots,* answers to the former part of the place referred to, *viz.* that *he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall.* It is obvious to observe, that this writer very frequently assumes several particulars in the character of the real Solomon, with an artful design to pass for the same person, and to make his pretences more plausible, and his judgment more infallible.

Ver. 21. *And all such things as are either secret or manifest, them I know.*] Ὅσα τέ ἐστιν κρυπτὰ καὶ ἐμφανῆ ἔγνων, which is the reading in all the printed copies, and followed by our translators; but there seems to be a mistake in all the editions: for where is the great wonder in Solomon's knowing things that are manifest; or what glory is there or excellency in any man to make such a discovery? the true reading undoubtedly is ἀφανῆ, which is confirmed by the Alexandrian MS. by Eusebius, Præp. Evang. lib. ii. cap. 7. and St. Ambrose, de Abrah. lib. ii. cap. 7. The comment also of Messieurs du Port-Royal takes it in this sense, *J'ay appris tout ce qui estoit caché, et qui n' avoit point encore esté decouvert; i.e.* such things as have not yet been discovered. The Vulgate very justly renders, *Quæcunque sunt abscondita aut improvisa didici,* which Coverdale's version follows, *All such things as are secret and not looked for, have I learned;* which is the rendering likewise of the Doway Bible. Γνῶναι seems also a better reading than ἔγνων, as it agrees with εἰδέναι, which goes before, especially as it is connected with the conjunctive particle τέ.

Ver. 22. *For wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me.*] Wisdom may be considered either as a Divine attribute, the infinite wisdom of God, or as it is in some measure made known to, and participated by, a finite creature, not as the natural property of the creature, but as a superadded gift of God: it is capable therefore of very exalted epithets, as it is the wisdom of God, such as, πάντων τεχνῖτις, μονογενὲς, ἀκώλυτον, παντοδύναμον, παντεπίσκοπον, and all that follow in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses. But wisdom considered in man as the gift of God to him in proportion as he deserves it, will admit of inferior, yet proper, epithets, as διὰ πάντων χωροῦν πνευμάτων νοερῶν, καθαρῶν, καὶ εἰς ψυχὰς ὁσίας μεταβαίνουσα φίλους Θεοῦ καὶ προφήτας κατασκενάζει, (ver. 27.) *It is a treasure that never faileth,* (ver. 14.) It may be *communicated liberally* to others, (ver. 13.) It maketh men *speak wisely,* and *conceive as is meet,* (ver. 15.) It is more to be desired, as being more profitable, than any thing else, and teaches the cardinal virtues, and every thing useful to be known, (viii. 5—8.) All the other epithets, as νοερὸν, ἅγιον, λεπτὸν, τρανὸν, ἀμόλυντον, σαφὲς, ἀπήμαντον, φιλάγαθον, &c. will suit wis-

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dom, either as original and essential in God, or as it is communicated to, and may be considered as derivative in, man; for, as Calmet very judiciously observes, *Ce qui est dit dans ce livre touchant la Sagesse, s'entend tantôt de la Sagesse increée, et tantôt de la Sagesse créée et inspirée aux hommes:* this distinction is very necessary for the right understanding this chapter.

Ver. 22, 23.] The author here, in his enumeration of the several excellences and perfections of wisdom, seems to use different words of the same signification, to set forth his description the more copiously, and for the stronger conveyance of his own sentiments: but perhaps, upon a nicer attention to the peculiar force of the Greek words, and to their order and situation, a separate consistent sense may be given to each epithet: thus ἅγιον, and ἀμόλυντον commonly give the same sense, but in strictness are different; as are also ενεργετικὸν and ἀπήμαντον: the negative in either case falls short in sense of the positive epithet. Our translators, indeed, who render ἀπήμαντον, *not subject to hurt, i. e.* incapable of receiving hurt, have explained away the true meaning of the word (see the note on i. 4. where the like mistake in our version is taken notice of); it means rather, not disposed or inclined to do hurt, and would be better rendered *harmless, innocuus,* according to Vatablus, the same as ἀπήμων. The Geneva Bible renders, *not hurtful;* and Coverdale's and the other ancient English versions, following the Vulgate, *sweet;* which yet falls short of ενεργετικὸν, which means, not only *inoffensiveness,* but a *readiness* to do *positive* acts of kindness. Βέβαιον and ἀσφαλὲς differ likewise in degree; for here the negative expresses more than the positive, *viz.* such a steadfastness as is not to be moved or shaken. Among the *positives,* τρανὸν and σαφὲς give commonly one sense, but they may be understood differently; the first may be expounded *eloquent,* (see x. 21.) the latter *clear,* or *manifest.*—The difference between λεπτὸν, εὐκίνητον, and ὀξὺ, will best be explained by a parallel passage, Heb. iv. 12. Ζῶν γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐνεργὴς, καὶ τομώτερος ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν μάχαιραν, καὶ διικνούμενος ἄχρι μερισμοῦ ψυχῆς τε καὶ πνεύματος, ἁρμῶν τε καὶ μυελῶν, καὶ κριτικὸς ἐνθυμήσεων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας. Λεπτὸν, *subtle, i. e.* piercing into the secrets of men's hearts, answers to the latter part of that verse; εὐκίνητον answers to ἐνεργὴς in the beginning, *i. e. active,* or operative, which is more expressive than *lively;* ὀξὺ may as well signify *sharp,* and so indeed Coverdale's version has it, and the Vulgate, and Junius, and then it answers to τομώτερος ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν μάχαιραν, in the middle; which passage will equally explain the twenty-fourth verse of this chapter.—By μονογενὲς, πολυμερὲς, may be understood, that wisdom is in its origin or fountain simply one and the same in God, *la même,* says Calmet, *en substance et en nature,* but variously expressed, and infinitely diversified, in his works. The thought is not very unlike that of St. Paul, *There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; and there are diversities of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, that worketh all in all;* (1 Cor. xii. 4—6.) in which sense it is farther said of wisdom, (ver. 27.) that, *being but one, she can do all things, and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new.* (See note on that place.)

Ver. 23. *Going through all understanding* (*i. e.* intellectual) *pure, and most subtle spirits.*] This may be understood in two senses, according to the different reading of the Greek; our version follows the Vatican edition, which reads, διὰ πάντων χωροῦν πνευμάτων νοερῶν, καθαρῶν, λεπτοτάτων. According to that, the sense is, that wisdom, as a Divine attribute, not only penetrates into things corporeal, but things spiritual and intellectual; is not only a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of the heart, but the several orders and degrees of intellectual beings, even the most pure and invisible spirits, how knowing or subtle soever, are subject to it, and within its influence.—The Vulgate reads in the nominative case, *intelligibilis, mundus, subtilis,* which Coverdale's version and the Syriac follow, from a copy, doubtless, which read, νοερὸν, καθαρὸν, λεπτότατον, still applying each particular epithet to wisdom itself, exclusive of the consideration of other spirits.

Ver. 24. *For wisdom is more moving than any motion; she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness.*] The account of Camilla's swiftness, according to Virgil's beautiful description of it, is surprising and incredible:

——"Assueta pedum cursu prævertere ventos:
Illa vel intactæ segetis per summa volaret
Gramina, nec teneras cursu læsisset aristas:
Vel mare per medium, fluctu suspensa tumenti,
Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas."
(Æneid. lib. vii.)

No bodily motion can be conceived to exceed this in quickness; but the spirit of wisdom being incorporeal, and, by reason of her pureness, not meeting with any sensible resistance or impediment, far surpasses it; nay, she is quicker than thought, because she pervades the mind itself, is not only present to men's thoughts, but prevents and influences them: *She meeteth them,* as this writer elegantly expresses it, *in every thought,* (vi. 16.) *Elle vient au devant d'eux dans tous les bonnes pensées qu'ils forment;* and powerfully acts upon the will to put such good thoughts and resolutions into practice. And this power she exerts in an instant, and carries her view through all things at the same time, which perhaps is Fulgentius's meaning, when he translates this place, *Attingit ubique propter suam munditiam,* (de Persona Christi, lib. ii.) In this sense wisdom may be said to be, *Permeator universitatis;* which short sentence of Seneca is more expressive, than the many metaphysical circumlocutions of the schoolmen.

Ver. 25. *She is the breath of the power of God.*] Ἀτμὶς τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ δυνάμεως, *i. e.* The afflatus of the Almighty; where ἀτμὶς, even applied to eternal wisdom itself, is not such a degrading or diminutive term, as Capellus, in his strictures upon this book, has represented it; for ἀτμὶς may be considered as equivalent to πνεῦμα; and our translators, we may observe, render accordingly ἀτμὶς by *breath:* but it certainly stands clear of that objection, if understood of infused or derivative wisdom, communicated from God to his saints and prophets in such degrees and proportions as were necessary. Plato makes use of the same image, and represents wisdom as a vapour, or spark of celestial fire, communicated from heaven to men. (Plato in Protag.) The like thought is to be met with in Philo, de Somniis.

A pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty.]

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Ἀπόῤῥοια δόξης, *i. e.* A pure efflux or emanation issuing from God's glory; which is more agreeable to the Greek than *influence*, which our version uses. The Vulgate reads, *Emanatio quædam claritatis*, which the ancient English versions follow: or it may be rendered, in fewer words, *a glorious emanation of the Deity*. Some of the primitive writers express themselves in like manner concerning the Λόγος, whom they style πρόσωπον Θεοῦ: we meet with the like expression, Eccles. v. 6. which a learned writer translates, *the personating Schechinah of God*. (Tenison on Idol. p. 334.) And for the same reason he is called *the angel of his face*, by Philo and the ancient Jews, because he truly reflected the glory of his person.

Ver. 26. *She is the brightness of the everlasting light.*] *i. e.* Wisdom is an effulgence or ray streaming from the original fountain of light, the resplendence of the eternal glory, and the reflection of its brightness. St. James accordingly styles God, from whom all wisdom and illumination proceed, Πατὴρ τῶν φώτων, (i. 17.) It is observable, that the word used by our author for brightness, is ἀπαύγασμα, the very same that is made use of in the Epistle to the Hebrews, (i. 3.) which by Estius upon the place is very properly rendered *deradiatio*. (See also Leigh's Critica Sacra in voce ἀπαύγασμα.) This similitude of a ray from the sun, or light from light, must be allowed to be a fine illustration, and a proper representation, of the infinite wisdom of God, considered as a Divine attribute; and the same has been applied to illustrate the consubstantiality of the Λόγος. Thus Justin Martyr says, that he proceeds from the Father, ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου φῶς, *as light from the sun;* and in another place, ὡς ἀπὸ πυρὸς πυρὰ, *as fire from fire*. (Dial. cum Tryph.) And by the Nicene council he is called more closely, "Light of Light:" but whether any such notion is here meant, or the Λόγος described by our author, shall be considered under the next words.

The unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness.] *Limpidissimum divinæ virtutis speculum*, according to Vatablus; *i. e.* she is the true and unsullied glass, in which we may discern the beauty of God's works, which therefore reflects his power in the strongest and best light, and exhibits the perfection of his goodness. One cannot help observing, that from ver. 21. to the end of the chapter, the epithets thicken, and that the character of wisdom is expressed in a very sublime style, a magnificence and grandeur of language, and in terms seemingly importing divinity itself. Hence some have taken occasion to imagine, that something more and higher is contained herein, than an encomium of wisdom considered in its highest denomination, as a Divine attribute, and have applied therefore these passages to the person of the Λόγος, or to the Holy Spirit. And indeed it must be confessed, that however originally intended, they may, by way of accommodation, be so used and applied, and considered as expressive similes, to illustrate the eternal generation; nor is the manner of expression very unlike that of Heb. i. 3. which is very full and explicit on that occasion: and it must be farther allowed, that these passages have been so understood and explained by most of the commentators, and even some of the fathers, many of whom use expressions concerning the Λόγος, very much resembling these, and endeavour to explain that mystery by the very same similitudes and illustrations. (See Justin Martyr, Dial. cum Tryph. Epiphan. in Anomæo. Hæres. cap. 3. et cont. Ætium. Hæres. 76. Holstenii Dissert. 2. in loc. quæd. Concil. Nicæn. and Waterland's Serm. passim.) And some of the primitive writers, to confirm their point, have actually quoted and argued from these very passages. (See particularly Fulgentius de Persona Christi, ad Trasimund. lib. ii.) Philo, who speaks the sentiments of the ancient Jews, and is by some thought the author of this book, from its great resemblance to many of his notions, has some expressions, in relation to the Λόγος, very similar to these, de Confus. Linguar. and de Monarchia, which others, with more probability, contend he borrowed from hence. But as this kind of reasoning, drawn from authorities, is precarious and inconclusive, and slender or suspicious proofs are really disserviceable to a cause; and as that great mystery, of the eternal generation and coequality of the Λόγος, is sufficiently established by canonical and undoubted Scripture, and wants not to be defended by any disputed testimony, *non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis:* I rather incline to the following sense, *viz.* That the writer of this book, who personates, and, as far as he can, imitates, Solomon, observing in the book of Proverbs, particularly chap. viii. how wisdom is praised under the character of a Divine female, or celestial beauty, pursues the same figure or image in a more copious and encomiastic way, using indifferently wisdom and the spirit of wisdom, as the same beautiful object, which he loved, and desired to make his spouse, &c. But though he speaks of her as an intelligent person, and personal acts are ascribed to her, yet this seems to be a figurative way of writing, taken, as I said, from Solomon's Proverbs. And if the well-known passages in the chapter above-cited be scarce allowed to be understood of the Λόγος (see Bishop Patrick's argument to that chapter, and the writers in the Trinitarian controversy), much less reason have we to assert these passages of the Book of Wisdom to belong to the Λόγος, or to the Holy Spirit, considered as persons in the Godhead. For if this encomium be supposed to come from any (Hellenistic) Jew, or even from the pen of Solomon, such titles and attributes of the Divinity, if interpreted of the Λόγος or Holy Spirit, seem incompatible with those times. I am therefore more inclined to understand this high encomium of a Divine attribute, the infinite wisdom of God, communicated sometimes, according to the exigence of the occasion, to his saints and prophets in different portions, as a drop from his fulness, (ver. 27.) and then there will be no occasion to suppose these passages to be an addition or interpolation of some Christian writer, who borrowed ideas and expressions from the New Testament, which seems to be the sentiment of Grotius, with respect to many passages of this book; but how far his conjecture is right, and whether it is always safe to follow him, I shall not determine. I shall only subjoin C lmet's remark upon this assertion, and answer in his words: "Grotius s'est imaginé que ces passages y avoient été ajoutez par quelque Chrêtien depuis la mort du Sauveur; ce qui est contre toute sorte d'apparence, ces passages êtant tellement liez avec la suite du discours, qu'on ne peut les en separer sans violence" (Pref. sur le Livre de la Sagesse): *i. e.* "The passages objected against are so interwoven with the rest of the subject, and have such a necessary relation to the

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context, that they cannot be separated without manifest violence." And the same learned writer there observes, that this author often speaks of wisdom, considered as an attribute only, even in the most pompous and magnificent terms, and applies to it that which in strictness only belongs to the Deity itself. In his comment upon this place he has this further remark, which will justify my sense of it: "That as it is very common in natural cases, to assign to the effect many properties and attributes of the cause; so in matters spiritual, that perfection is frequently attributed to qualities proceeding from God, which strictly belongs only to the Holy Spirit which communicated them."

Ver. 27. *And remaining in herself, she maketh all things new.*] *i.e.* She is the author of all changes and spiritual renovations, though herself remains unchangeable; *Toujours immutable en elle-même, elle renouvelle toutes choses.* St. Austin explains this renovation, and shews from whence it proceeds; "De plenitudine ejus accipiunt animæ, ut beatæ sint, et participatione manentis in se Sapientiæ renovantur, ut Sapientes sint." (Confess. lib. vii. cap. 9.) The Scripture furnishes us with many instances of her good offices and kindness to men in this particular; all graces are ministered to us by her, and she purifies the soul, to make it fit to receive them; she enlightens men's understandings with the knowledge of saving truths, disposes and inclines their wills to virtuous and holy actions, and comforts and supports them in the discharge of their duty under the greatest difficulties and discouragements. And though her communications are so various, and, with respect to all ages and nations, may be considered as infinite, yet her nature continues unchangeable. What Plato says of God with a very remarkable emphasis, is very applicable to her, οὐδέποτε, οὐδαμῇ, οὐδαμῶς, ἀλλοίωσιν οὐδεμίαν ἐνδέχεται. (Plato in Phæd.)

And in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God, and prophets.] Κατὰ γενεὰς, which may be interpreted either of ages or nations; the Vulgate takes it in the latter sense. This observation is not only true of Abraham, (see note on ver. 14.) and Moses, whom God favoured in an especial manner, and admitted to a more particular intimacy, (Exod. xxxiii. 11. Philo de Mose, lib. i.) but of David, whom God *took away from the sheepfolds, that he might feed Jacob his people and Israel his inheritance.* (Psal. lxxviii. 71, 72.) The like may be said of Joseph, and the other instances of this truth, mentioned by this writer in the tenth and eleventh chapters; from whose history it appears, that Divine wisdom, without any respect of persons, in every age and nation, makes choice of such as are well disposed, to confer her favours and blessings on, and sanctifies them, by her inhabitation and presence, for her own great purposes. True religion, indeed, seemed for some time as it were confined to Judea, and the Jews to have been only entrusted with sacred truths; but yet we sometimes find the spirit of wisdom discovering herself to other people, and enlightening them amidst their ignorance and darkness. It is more than probable, that God made uncommon discoveries of himself to Job, and that in proportion to the greatness of his sufferings, he was favoured with a greater degree of light, and larger communications of Divine knowledge. (See Bp. Sherlock, Dissertat. 2.) The like may be observed of Balaam, who, according to Scripture, *heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High,* (Numb. xxiv. 16.) which implies some discovery of God's will to him; and as a prophet, he foresaw and foretold what should happen in the latter end; and particularly, has left a very remarkable prophecy relating to the Messiah. We are sometimes surprised with uncommon discoveries in the writings of the heathen philosophers, and the several important truths therein scattered, seemingly above the reach of mere unassisted reason, are enough to convince us, that Divine wisdom has communicated itself in all ages, and conversed with her favourites in every generation. As to the gift of prophecy here mentioned, it is certain, that the qualifications that did fit a man for the prophetical spirit, which rendered him *habilem ad prophetandum*, were inward piety, true wisdom, probity, and virtue. The rabbins universally agree in this, that the spirit of prophecy never rested but upon a wise and good man; and no instance, says Maimonides, (More Nevoc. par. ii.) can be mentioned of its ever dwelling in a vicious person, unless he had first reformed himself; and among the preparatory dispositions for obtaining it, he reckons the perfection of virtuous qualities or manners, a heart purified and free from sinful affections and sensual passions. Hence we find, that anciently many were trained up in the way of school-discipline, and fitted by religious nurture to become *Candidati Prophetiæ.* (See Smith's Sel. Disc. on Prophecy, chap. 8, 9.) And the several schools of education at Naioth, Jerusalem, Bethel, Jericho, Gilgal, were only so many colleges for disciplining and training up young scholars in those preparatory qualifications which might more dispose them for the gift of prophecy.

Ver. 29. *For she is more beautiful than the sun—being compared with light, she is found before it.*] This is true of wisdom, considered as a Divine attribute, in many respects: 1st, Because the sun, the stars, and the whole system of inanimate bodies, are not fit to be opposed in value to the human mind or spirit; for the enlarged intellectual powers, and improved faculties of the mind, can arrive at the knowledge, and explain the glories, of the firmament; whereas the sun, though a most glorious body, is utterly insensible, and has no consciousness of that light which he gives to others: which prerogative of the mind, Tully finely remarks; "Nec vero illa parva vis est rationis, quod eorum ipsorum, quæ adspectu sentiuntur, nullum aliud animal pulchritudinem, venustatem, convenientiam partium sentit." (Cic. de Off. lib. i.) 2dly, As Divine wisdom formed and fashioned the glorious body of the sun, it is not only prior to it, or before it in point of time, which is the sense of the Vulgate, but it must be, in the order of causes and effects, more beautiful and excellent than any or all the creatures; Vatablus therefore renders with great judgment, *Luci comparata, potior deprehenditur.* 3dly, The sun cannot make that which is deformed or ugly to be beautiful, and his light is often hurtful and injurious to tender and diseased eyes; his beams are too bright to be borne sometimes, they not only dazzle and confound, but frequently hurt and weaken the sense: but wisdom never offends by its excess, the brighter and more heavenly it is, the more she pleases, and where she finds any moral defects or imperfections, she removes or amends them. Is the soul polluted and disfigured by trespasses and sin? Divine wisdom purifies it by the infusion of her supernatural grace. Do any wander in darkness and error? she guides and assists them by

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the brightness of her saving truths. Are any sensible of their sad estate, and really desirous of a cure? she giveth medicine to heal their sickness. So that what was said by Tully of virtue, and has been so justly applauded, is equally applicable to the spirit of wisdom, "That could we behold all her charms, the whole world would be infinitely in love with her." (Cic. Off. lib. i.)

Ver. 30. *For after this cometh night.*] That wisdom does thus exceed the light, is manifest from this farther argument, because night constantly succeeds the day, and therefore the light is as constantly interrupted by darkness. But Divine wisdom admits of no such privations or inequalities; it has no mixture of light and darkness, of good and evil, but is always the same, *yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* St. Austin reasons in like manner upon the transitoriness of worldly things: "Omnis iste ordo pulcherrimus rerum valdè bonarum, modis suis peractis, transiturus est, mane quippe in eis factum est et vespera." (Confess. lib. xiii. cap. 35.) But St. Chrysostom comes nearest this writer, and has the very same thought applied to grace; οὐχ οὕτως ὁ κόσμός ἐστι λαμπρὸς, κ. τ. λ. "Non sic mundus clarus est oriente sole, ut anima illustratur et splendidior fit, à Spiritu gratiam recipiens: hanc nempe lucem et volentibus nobis et nolentibus nox subsequitur; (τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ διαδέχεται νὺξ, which are the very words of our author) illum verò radium tenebræ non nôrunt." (Homil. 21. ad Pop. Antioch.)

But vice shall not prevail against wisdom.] If we attend only to what passes ordinarily in life, this observation may perhaps seem not to be altogether just or well grounded; for human wisdom, or that which God is pleased to communicate to mankind, is subject to many frailties: as *the bewitching of naughtiness* will obscure men's reason, so the *wandering of concupiscence* quite perverts and undermines it, (iv. 12.) Such as have been admired in all other instances for their wisdom, have been hurried away by sinful passions; and the finest understanding has been found a weak fence against a criminal passion. Solomon himself is a lamentable instance of this truth, who fell shamefully, notwithstanding his singular accomplishments; and his wisdom served only to heighten his transgression and disgrace. We must understand this writer, therefore, of Divine wisdom, which sin cannot approach, nor its contagion sully, much less can the power of it prevail over her. Grotius understands this place of adversity, and refers to Matt. vi. 34. where κακία, the term here used, is taken in that sense. According to this acceptation the opposition is no less just and beautiful, for as prosperity is the sunshine of fortune, so adversity may be considered as its shade; in this view, the meaning is, that however dark the cloud may be, which hangs over a good man, yet shall it not overwhelm him; though misery be his lot, as it is too often the fate of goodness, yet shall it not get the better of him: *We are troubled on every side* (says St. Paul, speaking of himself and other suffering Christians), *yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* (2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.) And even in such a sad catastrophe, when vice is so triumphant and successful as to destroy a good and virtuous man, yet if we take in the consideration of another life, the righteous, however afflicted or tormented, will be found to have come off conqueror.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The praise of wisdom is continued, which, upon a comparison of the most desirable things in life, is shown to be preferable to them, and, from an induction of several valuable and weighty particulars, she appears to be the procurer of such great advantages, and ought, therefore, to be honoured and followed after by such as have the greatest regard to their own happiness. The chapter concludes with the proper dispositions to obtain wisdom.

Ver. 1. *WISDOM reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth she order all things.*] *i. e.* The Divine wisdom is infinite and immense, extends itself throughout the whole world, and does every thing in it *mightily*, that is, effectually, in respect of the end, and *sweetly*, that is, without any violence or difficulty, in the use of the means. This is the sense of the Arabic version: *Porrigit autem sese, ab extremo terrarum orbe ad extremum usque integrè.* St. Bernard expounds it in the same manner: "Attingit à fine usque ad finem, i. e. à summo cœlo usque ad inferiores partes terræ: à maximo angelo usque ad minimum vermiculum, substantiali quâdam et ubique præsenti fortitudine, quæ utique universa potentissimè movet, ordinat, et administrat suaviter, i. e. sine necessitate aut difficultate." (Bern. Lib. de Grat. et Lib. Arbitr. See also Fulgentius de Persona Christi, lib. ii.) But by *sweetly*, we may farther understand the manner in which the Divine wisdom works upon men's minds; for she begins the great work of salvation in men's hearts, by overruling them through her motions and impressions, inclining them to their duty, and assisting them in the performance of it; and at length, having happily perfected it, she conducts them to glory and a blessed end of their labours. But though she reaches from one end to the other of this important event, and acts powerfully upon the soul to bring it to pass; yet she does it sweetly, and without any violence or inconsistence with men's free agency; she encourages them by all the endearing methods, and in the most engaging manner, to their duty; and by this amiable mixture of sweetness, tempers and softens the yoke, which would otherwise be complained of as hard and rigorous.—Some have understood these words of God's foreknowledge, that his prescience reacheth to the end of the world, and by it he foresaw, from all eternity, all future events, even to the consummation of all things; so that, when the whole mystery of God's dispensations shall be finished and unravelled, it will appear, that nothing is contained in them but what God had formerly foretold and declared by his prophets. (See Lowth's Preface to his Comments.) And to this purpose he applies what Isaiah says of God's foreknowledge, (xlvi. 10.) that *he declares the end from the beginning;* an expression, it must be owned, not very unlike that of this writer. I shall only observe farther, that this verse, in some copies, is made the conclusion of the former chapter.

Ver. 3. *In that she is conversant with God, she magnifieth her nobility.*] This is but indifferently expressed; it would be better rendered literally thus, *Herein she displays her high birth, that she exists with God, and is intimately united to him. Elle fait voir la gloire de son origine, en ce qu'elle est étroitement unie à Dieu,* says Calmet. Vatablus very

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properly renders, *Nobilitatem gèneris ejus hoc illustrat, quod convictu Dei utitur;* συμβίωσιν Θεοῦ ἔχουσα, which is imperfectly rendered in our version, *conversant with God,* as that phrase is now commonly understood, for it implies much more, *viz.* that wisdom, as a Divine attribute (for I would understand the place of this principally), is intimately united with God, lives always in and with him, and is inseparable from him, as his spouse and partner; and thus συμβίωσις is used ver. 9. (see more in that note.) Nor is it better expressed in the Vulgate by *contubernium.* The Syriac version uses *consortium;* but those interpreters, as if they were sensible of some defect, and that they had not reached the force of the original, add immediately after, by way of explanation, *quoniam Deus est pater ejus.* Philo, in his allegorical way, explains the nearness of this relation between God and wisdom; his words are a close and excellent comment upon this place, τὸν γοῦν τόδε τὸ πᾶν ἐργασάμενον δημιουργὸν ὁμοῦ καὶ πατέρα εἶναι τοῦ γεγονότος, μητέρα δὲ τὴν τοῦ πεποιηκότος ἐπιστήμην, ᾗ συνὼν ὁ Θεὸς ἔσπειρε γένεσιν. (Phil. de Ebriet. et alibi.) In a lower sense we may understand this passage of human or derivative wisdom, that this likewise shews her great worth, and singular excellence, in that God himself vouchsafes to communicate himself to, and converse with, a truly wise soul, not in dreams by night, as with Joseph; not by an audible voice, as with St. Paul; but with the *still small voice,* speaking to the soul, in breathings not to be uttered.

Ver. 4. *She is privy to the mysteries of God.*] The marginal reading is, *teacher,* which agrees with the Vulgate, *Doctrix enim est disciplinæ Dei,* and with Μύστις ἐπιστήμης in the Greek; for Μύστις is a technical term, and, according to Budæus, signifies an interpreter of sacred mysteries. The sense here is, that Divine wisdom can best teach the knowledge of God, reveal its mysteries, and initiate men into them, as, *knowing the deep things of God,* and being in his bosom, cannot but be privy to them. And so the Syriac happily renders, *Ipsa est à secretis Dei, et à consiliis ejus.*

And a lover of his works.] Αἰρετὶς, with which agrees the marginal reading; and the Vulgate renders in like manner, "Electrix operum ejus," *Chooser of his works.* Dr. Grabe and Budæus read εὑρετὶς. According to either reading the sense seems to be, that the Divine wisdom designed, contrived, and appointed, God's works, as is declared more explicitly in the two following verses. Calmet understands it in a more extensive sense, of wisdom's superintendency and direction of his works, *qui est la directrice de ses ouvrages.* The Syriac and Arabic versions understand this passage of wisdom in the most exalted sense; the former reads, *Gloria cunctorum operum ejus,* and the latter, *Sublimior dignitate cunctis operibus ejus.*

Ver. 5. *What is richer than wisdom, which worketh all things?*] *Sapientiâ omnium rerum artifice,* according to the Arabic; and the Syriac renders, *Quandoquidem ipsa fecit omnia.* But the meaning probably here is, that skill and wisdom make men successful and thriving in every business and calling, and are the most likely means to procure men reputation and a good fortune. *Riches and honour are with wisdom,* says the true Solomon, (Prov. viii. 18.) who could confirm this truth from his own plentiful experience of both, which God annexed to his gift of wisdom. But we must observe at the same time of wisdom, that she teaches men rather the contempt, than an immoderate and eager pursuit of riches; to be content with a little, and to esteem spiritual attainments, and the improvements of the soul, as their chiefest good, their truest riches.

Ver. 6. *And if prudence work.*] Εἰ δὲ φρόνησις ἐργάζεται, *i. e.* If skill and industry produce the most admired works of art, who is so justly to be esteemed the author of them, as wisdom, the most accomplished, and, I may add, universal artist? and is therefore, with great propriety, called, πάντων τεχνίτις σοφία, (vii. 22.) for she presides over every instance of science, directs and perfects it. Instead of ἐργάζεται, which is the common reading, and followed by our translators, Dr. Grabe reads ἐράζεται, as more agreeable to what goes before and follows after, *viz.* εἰ δὲ πλοῦτος ἐπιθυμητὸν κτῆμα. (ver. 5.) εἰ δικαιοσύνην ἀγαπᾷ τις. (ver. 7.) εἰ πολυπειρίαν ποθεῖ τις. Expressions all equivalent to ἐράζεται. (See Prolegom. cap. 4.) In the midst of these he thinks it comes in very properly, *And if prudence is admired and loved;* the only objection with him is, that ἐράζεται is a poetical word, which will indeed have but little weight, if what that learned critic seems to insinuate be true, that the Book of Wisdom was originally wrote in metre. It is certain, he has placed it among the metrical books, and in the Alexandrian MS. it preserves the appearance of verse, as well as the Book of Psalms, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, &c. Calmet also is of opinion, that it was wrote in metre. (See his Dictionary in voce *Wisdom.*) However the learned may determine about this nicety, still I am of opinion, that ἐργάζεται is not only the true but the better reading; for φρόνησις without it is too general, and may be applied to any thing else as well as work, and for want of it the beauty of the next sentence is lost. The same words very nearly occur together, vii. 16. (see note on that place;) and in Exod. xxxi. where works of different sorts are mentioned; ἐργάζεται is the term used often upon the occasion.

Who of all that are, is a more cunning workman than she?] Τίς αὐτῆς τῶν ὄντων μᾶλλόν ἐστι τεχνίτης; The ancient Vulgate reads, *Quis horum quæ sunt magis quam illa est artifex?* which can neither relate to persons nor things, as different interpreters have understood the place; not to the former, as our version takes it, for then the reading should be, *Quis horum qui sunt,* &c. not to the latter, as Coverdale's version and the Geneva Bible have it, for then it should be, *Ecquid horum quæ sunt,* &c. or something to that effect, and in the Greek, Τί τῶν ὄντων; as in the verse foregoing it is, Τί σοφίας πλουσιώτερον. I think, therefore, the sense of this place has hitherto been mistaken, and that the true rendering of it, as it stands connected with the context, is, *If wisdom is so good a worker as to work all things, who has a better claim, or is more likely to be the maker,* τῶν ὄντων, *of all things existing?* This sense the very placing and structure of the Greek points out to us; it is likewise the meaning of the Vulgate quoted above, and probably of Junius, who renders, *Quis eorum quæ in natura sunt, artifex potiùs est quàm ipsa?* Messieurs du Port-Royal understand it of wisdom, as being the supreme directress and architect, by whom all things were made, *Qui a plus de part qu'elle dans cet art, avec lequel toutes choses ont esté faites?* (See Rom. iv. 17.)

Ver. 7. *If a man love righteousness, her labours are virtues.*] This is obscurely expressed: the meaning is, that wisdom produces the several following virtues, or that they are her work; for the very end and scope of wisdom is,

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to make men just and virtuous, considerate and resigned; and that which does not propose this as its object, may be looked upon as curiosity, folly, or vanity. The pursuit therefore of wisdom, necessarily leads to the four cardinal virtues, as they are distinguished, which compose righteousness, considered in its largest sense; and the following virtues, or graces, are so many branches of it: for temperance teaches men moderation, and a restrained use of pleasures and the good things of the world; fortitude, how to bear and behave under the evils and afflictions of it; prudence is employed in finding out and making use of proper ways and means; and justice, in a fair and impartial rendering to all their dues. Philo has exactly the same thought and distinction, expressed only in his allegorical way, upon Gen. ii. 10. *A river went out of Eden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads;* which he thus allegorizes, *Fluvius est virtus generalis, quatuor autem derivationes sunt totidem virtutes ex Edene, id est sapientiâ Dei, effluentes; nimirum, prudentia, temperantia, fortitudo, justitia. Prudentia circa agenda, terminos illis ponens; fortitudo sustinendo; temperantia eligendo; justitia suum cuique tribuendo.* (SS. Legum Allegoriarum, lib. i.) Which are the four species here enumerated, arising from one common fountain-head, *viz. righteousness.*

Ver. 8. *If a man desire much experience.*] Πολυπειρίαν. The Vulgate renders more justly, *Multitudinem scientiæ,* to which Coverdale's version agrees, *If a man desire much knowledge:* the Syriac is to the same effect, *Si quis item cupiat admodum esse peritus,* which Vatablus also favours. The word *experience* seems here improper and disagreeable to what follows; for experience cannot possibly relate to what is to come, nor foresee any future events; but wisdom can prognosticate what shall happen, can foresee the change of weather, and foretell eclipses of the sun and moon, which are called here signs and wonders: for anciently such discoveries were extremely rare, and the ignorance of the people was so great, that they looked upon such phenomena as prodigies. Plutarch remarks, that "Anaxagoras, and such as first discovered and explained the cause of them, durst not speak in public, for fear of being thought atheists or magicians, but instructed their disciples in the reason of them privately, and by word of mouth, without committing their observations to writing." (In vit. Niciæ.)

Ver. 9. *I purposed to take her to me to live with me.*] Ἔκρινα ταύτην ἀγάγεσθαι πρὸς συμβίωσιν. *I purposed to take her to be my partner for life, to be my spouse,* as is expressed ver. 2. for I understand ἀγάγεσθαι in both places to refer to the marriage ceremony of leading the bride to the bridegroom's house. What follows seems to confirm this acceptation, for she was to be to him his bosom-counsellor, "bona daturam consilia," says Vatablus, one that would faithfully advise him in all difficulties, comfort him tenderly in all afflictions, and kindly divide his cares and griefs with him; which is the description of a happy marriage. The reading of all the copies is, παραίνεσις φροντίδων, possibly παραινετὶς may be the true reading, agreeably to μύστις, εὑρετὶς, σύμβουλος, which go just before, *adhortatrix.*

Ver. 11. *I shall be found of quick conceit, and shall be admired in the sight of great men.*] This was eminently true of the real Solomon, as appears by that distinguishing judgment which he shewed in the case of the two contending harlots, when by a nice decision he brought to light what artifice and dissimulation had concealed, and artfully found a way to come at even the bottom of the heart, and to unravel its most secret intentions; for, by an appearance of severity only, without any violence to the parent or the child, nature herself at once declared, by the motions and sentiments of either tenderness or indifference, which were then visible without disguise, which was the counterfeit, and which the real mother; upon which the text adds, *That all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment,* (1 Kings iii. 28.)

Ver. 12. *If I talk much, they shall lay their hands upon their mouth.*] It is a proverbial expression, and implies silence. (See the like, Ecclus. v. 12. Prov. xxx. 32.) The poet well expresses it, *digito compesce labellum:* accordingly Harpocrates, by the ancients feigned to be the god of silence, is pictured with his finger on his mouth, to recommend, by this expressive gesture, either a well-timed silence, or at least a discreet government of the tongue. (See Stephan. Dict. Histor. in voce.)

Ver. 15. *I shall be found good among the multitude, and valiant in war.*] We have here the two essential qualities to constitute a complete prince, goodness in the care and management of his own people, and valour to head them in any warlike expedition against others. Alexander the Great is said to have studied much, and repeated often, that fine maxim of Homer, which the expression of this writer very much resembles, and is worthy indeed of the true Solomon:

Ἀμφότερον, βασιλεύς τ' ἀγαθὸς, κρατερός τ' αἰχμητής.

Virgil has happily expressed the same thought in the following line;

"Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos:"

Where both those celebrated poets agree with our author, in making the excellence of a king to consist in goodness and clemency to his own subjects, and in martial courage to reduce an insulting enemy; in being amiable to the one, and terrible to the other. So that even according to the notions of paganism, a prince is only so far great, as he is tender and careful of his subjects; nor should he think of his power but with a view to do good, and, in imitation of the title of the gods, to place the character of *very good,* before *very great,* to be *optimus maximus,* like Jupiter, from whom he derives his power. Seneca has an observation to the same purpose, "Proximum Diis locum tenet, qui se ex Deorum natura gerit; hoc affectare, hoc imitari decet, maximum ita haberi, ut optimus simul habeare." (Senec. lib. i. de Clem. cap. 19.) But, upon the comparison, a prince should prefer the amiable name of *Pater Patriæ,* or father of his country, to all the pompous titles and appellations which victory and triumph can heap upon him, and not so much to aim at his own glory, or the enlargement of his dominions through ambition, as to protect his subjects, and labour to make them happy: for the trophies of even a successful war are not so much to be coveted, as the blessings of a settled peace; nor the conquest of foreign nations, as the love, preservation, and good order, of his own people.

Ver. 18. *In the works of her hands are infinite riches.*]

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Πλοῦτος ἀνεκλιπὴς, *i. e.* Riches which are durable, and fade not away. Vatablus renders accordingly, *perennes divitias*, and the Vulgate is to the same effect. Calmet understands it of riches, *qui ne manquent jamais*. And that this is the true rendering, appears from the like expression upon the same subject, vii. 14. where wisdom is called θησαυρὸς ἀνεκλιπὴς, which our translators rightly there render, *A treasure that never faileth*. The expression in our version, seems rather to denote the quantity than the quality of the riches, and so it is commonly understood. The sense of the passage is, that true wisdom which is from above, and makes us wise unto salvation, will procure for us riches which fade not away, together with that glory, satisfaction, and pleasure, which preferment, honour, and wealth, the rewards of other studies, are only faint resemblances of. For such is the excellency of Divine knowledge, that it will not only forward our admission into heaven, but accompany us thither: St. Jerome therefore well advises, "Discamus in terris, quorum nobis scientia perseveret in cœlo." (Epist. ad Paulin.)

Ver. 19. *For I was a witty child, and had a good spirit.*] Παῖς ἤμην εὐφυὴς, ψυχῆς τε ἔλαχον ἀγαθῆς. Εὐφυία answers to *bona indoles*, and in Junius's version is properly expressed by it; *i. e.* I was naturally well disposed towards wisdom, and of a good capacity, had a quickness of parts, and readiness of apprehension, and a soul more susceptible of instruction than many others, and superior to them in its natural talents and endowments. That all souls are not equal as to their disposition, nor equally capable of, or inclined to, wisdom, is the sentiment of most writers; particularly St. Austin says, "Alii fatui, alii tardissimi ingenii, et ad intelligendum quodammodo plumbei, alii obliviosi, alii acuti memoresque nascuntur, alii utroque munere præditi." (Aug. lib. iv. cont. Jul. cap. 3.) But I rather choose to understand this of moral dispositions, and of the inclination of the soul to goodness. But Philo's notion comes nearest our author, who acknowledges two sorts or species of souls, placed in the air; "That some always continue there, and others descend into and inhabit bodies; of the latter, some apply themselves to sublime and useful knowledge, which, even after the death of the body, they continue to pursue, to purchase a life incorruptible and eternal; but others, overwhelmed by the weight of the flesh, neglect the care and study of wisdom, are intent upon riches and vanity, and attached wholly to things sensible and corporeal." (De Gigantibus.) Our author mentions it as his good luck and fortune to have a soul well inclined, and of the better sort, with the additional happiness of its being joined to a body pure and undefiled. I say *good fortune*, for the learned father above observes upon ἔλαχον, which the Vulgate renders *sortitus sum*, that "it intimates, that he received his good spirit or disposition as it were by accident, by the free donation and undeserved bounty of God's goodness, to exclude and guard against the least surmise of any precedent merit, 'ad auferendam suspicionem præcedentium meritorum sortis nomen accersit.'" (De Gen. ad Lit. lib. x. cap. 18.) How justly this remark is grounded, and whether this writer intended such a sense, the learned will determine.

Ver. 20. *Yea, rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled.*] This sentence seems to favour the opinion of a pre-existence of souls. It was a notion of the Pythagoreans and Platonists, of the Jewish doctors, and rabbinical writers, and, after them, entertained by Origen, and some other Christian writers, that all souls were created by God at the beginning of the world out of nothing, and were reserved and deposited in some of the heavenly regions; that, according to their good or ill behaviour in the state and region above, antecedent to their being incorporated with mortal and earthly vehicles, they were afterward, as infinite wisdom saw occasion, sent down into bodies ready fitted for, and properly disposed to, receive them, and were accordingly lodged here below, either in sickly or healthful, in vicious or well-inclined bodies. This notion, that souls pre-existed, and descended into suitable bodies, was the opinion of the pharisees particularly, which they are thought to have borrowed from the Platonists. (Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 12.) Philo, who, upon all occasions, speaks the sentiments of the ancient Jews, favours this notion in many places (de Confus. Linguarum, de Gigantibus, de Abraham); but he is most express in the following passage: Τούτων τῶν ψυχῶν, αἱ μὲν κατίασιν ἐνδεθησόμεναι σώμασι θνητοῖς, ὅσαι προσγειόταται καὶ φιλοσώμαται—*Harum aliæ descendunt illigandæ corporibus mortalibus, quotquot viciniores sunt terræ, amantioresque corporum.* (De Somniis.) To this notion that question of our Saviour's disciples is generally thought to allude, John ix. 2. *Did this man sin, or his parents, that he was born blind?* And some have interpreted to the same sense, ἀναλῦσαι, Philip. i. 23. and ὁ καιρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς ἀναλύσεως, 2 Tim. iv. 6. but ἀνάλυσις, even though we should understand it in these and other places where it occurs, in the sense of *return*, rather than *departure*, does not countenance the notion of a pre-existence, as it is commonly understood. It is farther objected against this passage, that it is inconsistent with the doctrine of original sin; for we cannot suppose the body of any descendant of Adam to be pure, untainted, or undefiled, as is here asserted, nor any soul to enter into an earthly vehicle, that is entirely clean and perfect, and altogether free from any original leaven: *Nemo mundus à peccato* (says St. Austin,) *nec infans, cujus est unius diei vita super terram.* (Confess. lib. i. cap. 7.) In the Belgic version, the translators, in their preface prefixed to the Apocrypha, single out this passage as exceptionable on this account. (See Limborch. Theol. Christ. lib. i. cap. 3.) To obviate this objection, founded upon a truth which we must all own, and do sensibly experience, as being equally by nature sinners, and children of wrath, Calmet observes, that this writer is not to be understood as speaking of a body absolutely pure and undefiled, and entirely free from any hereditary infection, but of a body less corrupt and less disposed to evil than many others, *Moins corrumpu et moins porté au mal que beaucoup d'autres.* (Comment. in loc.) But the justness of this solution itself, will perhaps be disputed; and it may probably be questioned, whether a body less vicious, or less subject to human corruptions, can, with any more propriety, be said to be both pure and undefiled, than a body can be said to be chaste, that is less unclean; or sound and healthful, that is less infirm and sickly. Lyranus, and some other commentators, have attempted another interpretation of the place to the following sense, *Increasing more and more in virtue and goodness, I came to have a body chaste and undefiled*, which is founded upon the ren-

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dering of the Vulgate, *Et cum essem magis bonus, veni ad corpus incoinquinatum; i. e.* says Tirinus, "Cum magis magisque per virtutum exercitium crescerem in bonitate, eo deveni ut etiam corpus mihi esset bene temperatum, mundum, et castum." (Comment. in loc.) And even Messieurs du Port-Royal take it in the same sense, *Devenant bon de plus en plus.* But neither does this remedy seem quite to heal the sore, for the true rendering of the Greek, μᾶλλον δὲ ἀγαθὸς ὢν, is not *cùm essem magis bonus,* but literally *magis vero,* or rather *imo vero cum essem bonus;* so that *magis* is transposed in the Vulgate, either designedly or by accident: nor is μᾶλλον ἀγαθὸς the usual comparative way of expression among the Greeks, but ἀμείνων, or βελτίων; as in the Latin tongue, we do not usually say *magis bonus,* but *melior,* or *emendatior:* nor does ἦλθον εἰς σῶμα ἀμίαντον signify, *I came at length to have a body undefiled,* but, *I entered into a body at first undefiled.* Upon the whole, as the expressions here seem to favour a pre-existence, and this writer labours, as it were, to establish that notion, using an ἐπανόρθωσιν, or a rhetorical correction of himself, as if he had said too little, in the words ψυχῆς ἔλαχον ἀγαθῆς:—as the Syriac and Arabic versions both understand and render this passage in a sense rather favouring the notion of a pre-existence; the former very expressly, *Propter bonitatem meam veni in corpus purum;* and the latter, *Imo bonus eram, ideoque immaculatus ingressus sum in corpus:*—and, lastly, as the solutions offered to evade the objections urged against this place, seem weak and unsatisfactory,—I must ingenuously acknowledge, that it seems to me to savour of Platonism; nor is it improbable, that this writer, who was undoubtedly a Jew, received a tincture in this and some other instances, to be met with in this book, from the prevailing notions among his countrymen. This, however, is certain, that whether we understand this verse of a body absolutely and originally chaste and undefiled, free from all taint of original sin; or of one, subject to its frailties, lusts, and corruptions, but subdued and freed from the power and dominion of them, by temperance, prayer, and religious exercises; in either respect we cannot well understand or apply this to the true Solomon, whose purity more especially cannot be mentioned to his honour.

Ver. 21. *Nevertheless, when I perceived that I could not otherwise obtain her.*] Γνοὺς δὲ ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλως ἔσομαι ἐγκρατὴς, which the Vulgate renders, "Ut scivi quoniam aliter non possem esse continens, nisi Deus det, adii Dominum:" *And knowing that the gift of continency was from God, and that his grace could alone preserve me chaste, I prayed unto him;* which Coverdale follows in his version, *When I perceived that I could not keep myself chaste,* &c. The Syriac also takes the words in the same sense, *Sciens quod non possim me ipsum domare;* and St. Austin, Confess. lib. x. cap. 31. It is surprising that an interpretation, which is by no means agreeable to the context, and founded probably upon a mistake, should be supported by so great authorities; for it seems to have taken its rise from a misunderstanding of the meaning of the Greek word ἐγκρατὴς, which signifies both *continens* and *compos;* but the latter sense, which is followed by our translators, the Arabic version, Vatablus, and the Geneva Bible, is far preferable, as will appear if we include the nineteenth and twentieth verses in a parenthesis, as indeed they ought to be; and then the true sense of this passage will be clearer, and the connexion more visible; for the meaning will then plainly be,—I went about seeking wisdom, to take her to me, and when I found that I could not otherwise obtain wisdom, "Me non aliter fore compotem illius, nisi Deus dederit," says Junius, *I prayed unto the Lord for it.* There is the same mistake in the Vulgate, and upon the very same occasion, Ecclus. vi. 27. where ἐγκρατὴς γενόμενος, in the Vulgate, *continens factus,* is much more justly rendered in our version, *When thou hast got hold of her* (wisdom), *let her not go,* in the sense which the context necessarily requires. Vatablus and Junius expound the place in the same manner; the latter expressly renders, *Compos factus, eam ne dimittito.* See also Ecclus. xv. 1. where there is the like mistake in the Vulgate.

Except God gave her me.] Wisdom, which is here meant, and not the gift of continency (see the note above), like other good and perfect gifts, is *from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights,* (James i. 17.) It is a pretty observation which Bishop Sanderson makes on these words, and very applicable, "That those perfections and virtues which the heathen moralists call ἕξεις, or *habits,* the apostle, by a far better name, calls δόσεις, or *gifts,* to intimate to us how we came by them, and whom we ought to thank for them:" (Serm. 3. ad Clerum.) and the same inspired writer has a more particular direction as to the very point before us, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and it shall be given him,* (i. 5.) The ingenious Mr. Cowley observes of Virgil, "That his first wish was to be a good philosopher, and that God, whom he seemed to understand better than most of the learned heathens, dealt with him just as he did with Solomon; because he prayed for wisdom in the first place, he added all things else which were subordinately to be desired." (See Martyn's Georgics, lib. ii. p. 198.)

I prayed unto the Lord, and besought him.] To apply to God for the gift of wisdom, who has the sole disposal of it, was not only an instance of it, but a sure and infallible way of obtaining it. Philo has a fine observation upon God's disposal of his gifts and graces, Αἱ τῶν χαρίτων αὐτοῦ πηγαὶ ἄενναοι, οὐ πᾶσι δ' ἀνειμέναι, ἀλλὰ μόνοις ἱκέταις. The efficacy of prayer, was what the heathens themselves greatly depended upon in most of their great undertakings. It has been observed by critics, that Homer hardly ever makes his heroes succeed, unless they have first offered a prayer to heaven; whether they engage in war, go upon an embassy, undertake a voyage, or whatever they enterprise, they almost always supplicate some god; and whenever we find this omitted, we may expect some adversity to befal them in the course of the story. We must likewise mention it to their honour, that they prayed to, and thanked, the gods for the advantages of riches, honour, and health; but I cannot find, that the heathens ever acknowledged God for the author and giver of wisdom, or, indeed, of any virtue. Thus Cotta, in Tully, "Num quis, quod vir bonus esset, gratias diis egit unquam? Jovemque Optimum Maximum appellant, non quod nos justos, temperatos, sapientes efficiat, sed quod salvos, incolumes, opulentos, copiosos. Neque Herculi quisquam decimas vovit unquam, si sapiens factus esset." (De Natura Deor. lib. iii.) How much finer is this writer's description of wisdom, than that of a conceited stoic; and how much

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more deservedly is he to be admired for referring wisdom so justly to its true original, and acquainting us with its Divine extraction? Herein our author agrees with the Scripture account of the original of wisdom, which assures us, that it is he who *giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and commandeth the light to shine out of darkness,* that must, in this case more particularly, *shine in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.* I shall shut up this chapter, with an apposite and fine reflection of Messieurs du Port-Royal, in their comment upon this place; "Happy are those that have this knowledge, that wisdom and all perfection come from God, which may be called the knowledge of the truly humble—they know all things, because they are persuaded and sensible that they know nothing; they can do all things, because they are convinced, that, of themselves, they can do nothing. We ought, therefore, to put up often to God that excellent prayer of St. Austin's, not very unlike the beginning of this, 'Da mihi, Domine, gratiam tuam, quâ potens est omnis infirmus, qui sibi per illam conscius sit infirmitatis suæ.'"

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

The author's prayer for wisdom is set down, wherein is shewn particularly, how necessary the gift of wisdom is to enable kings and rulers to discharge their high office with sufficiency and credit. The prayer itself is so like that of the real Solomon, (1 Kings iii. 9.) which he made to God in the beginning of his reign, that some from hence have been induced to ascribe this book to him. Calmet says, this prayer is continued from the beginning of this chapter to the end of the book, and is of opinion, that the book itself was never finished, or at least that the conclusion of it is lost; for the author does not conclude his prayer, as it is natural to suppose he should have done, according to his first design. (Preface sur le Livre de la Sagesse.)

Ver. 1. *O GOD of my fathers.*] It is very observable that Solomon, or rather this writer under that borrowed character, begins his prayer with great humility, and a religious spirit of meekness; he beseeches God to hear him, not for his own merit's sake, but for the worthiness of the ancient patriarchs, for Abraham and David his father's sake. He builds all his hopes upon the pure goodness of God, as knowing that humility is an essential in prayer, and the most likely means of success.

Lord of mercy, who hast made all things with thy word.] Κύριε τοῦ ἐλέους σου. All the editions which retain this pronoun, which may as well be omitted, have the same corrupt reading; the true one probably, instead of σοῦ, may be Κύριε τοῦ ἐλέους, σὺ ὁ ποιήσας, κ. τ. λ. Coverdale seems to have followed a copy which read so, *O Lord of mercies, thou that hast made all things with thy word, i. e.* who spakest all things into being, and *by thy almighty fiat they are and were created.* Or, Who madest all things by thy Word, thine eternal Λόγος, that same Word, who was *in the beginning with thee, and without whom was not any thing made that was made,* (John i. 3.) In this latter sense Calmet understands it, *Le seigneur a créé l'univers par son verbe, par son fils;* and so do many of the fathers.

Ver. 4. *Give me wisdom that sitteth by thy throne.*] *i. e.* The assessor of thy throne, which may mean more than being present with God, *viz.* assisting in his councils and presiding over them. *Sitting* here may be considered as a technical forensic term, and not only to imply a right of judicature, in which sense it is used in many places of Scripture, (Prov. xx. 8. Isa. xvi. 5.) but even dominion and sovereignty, according to St. Jerome, (Comm. ad Ephes.) by which supreme dignity of place, wisdom is distinguished from ministering spirits; for when angels, principalities, and powers, are described as attending about the throne of God, they are generally represented as standing, or falling down before it, (2 Chron. xviii. 18. Isa. vi. 2. Rev. iv. 10.) In this high sense some primitive writers have explained this passage, as implying a joint sovereignty of the Λόγος with God: see ver. 9, 10. of this chapter, where the same exalted character is continued, which seems a very close imitation of Prov. viii. especially ver. 27. ἡνίκα ἡτοίμαζε τὸν οὐρανὸν, συμπαρήμην αὐτῷ. But, for the reasons before given, (see note on chap. vii. 26.) I think the meaning rather to be, that wisdom, as a Divine attribute, is always present with God; as his joint-counsellor, his assistant, if I may be allowed the expression, and the partner of his throne or tribunal; that she always exists in the eternal mind, is privy to its sovereign decrees, and influences all its deliberations and actions; that wisdom therefore is not only the ornament, but the support and basis of God's throne, in as high, exalted, and proper a manner, as righteousness and equity are by the Psalmist said to be *the habitation of his seat,* (Psal. lxxxix. 15.) Philo describes Justice in the same manner, τὸν πάρεδρον Δίκην τοῦ πάντων ἡγεμόνος. (Philo, de Justitia. et de Joseph.) And the heathens made her equally an assessor on Jupiter's throne, Δίκη σύνεδρος Ζηνὸς, (Sophoc. in Œdip.) But Plutarch expresses himself concerning her in a manner which most resembles this writer: "Justice (according to his description) does not only sit like a queen, at the right hand of Jupiter, when he is upon his throne; but she is in his bosom, and one with himself."

Ver. 6. *For though a man be never so perfect among the children of men, yet if thy wisdom be not with him, he shall be nothing regarded.*] This observation, according to the comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal, holds true, applied to rulers in the church, as well as those in the state; "For though a man have all knowledge, and be so consummate in wisdom as to discourse even with the tongue of angels; though he have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries; though he could work miracles, even to the removing mountains; and though he give all his goods to feed the poor,—yet, if he is devoid of the only true wisdom, that wisdom which proceedeth from God, and should be employed in his service, he may appear great indeed in the eyes of men, but, according to St. Paul, he is nothing, or will be accounted as nothing, in the sight of God." (1 Cor. xiii. 2.)

Ver. 7. *Thou hast chosen me to be a king of thy people.*] Melchior Canus and Sixtus Senensis lay great stress upon this passage, to prove Solomon the writer of this book; but their way of reasoning will prove too much, for if a bare assertion, the mere assuming the person of another,

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shall be thought sufficient to establish this point, then the Apostolical Canons may for the same reason be pronounced canonical, for in the last of them we meet with these words, πράξεις ἡμῶν τῶν Ἀποστόλων. And yet, notwithstanding this assertion, and though the title itself seemingly bespeaks them to be the authors, they are now generally decried and disclaimed, even by some of the Romanists themselves. (See Rainald's Cens. Libr. Apocr. Præl. 15.) It is most probable this passage of our author is spoken μιμητικῶς, *i. e.* by a feigned representation of a person, to take away any odium from the speaker, and to give the greater weight to what is delivered. Upon this occasion, no character was so proper to be assumed as that of Solomon, who himself was a king, and eminent above all others for his understanding and wisdom; because instruction offered and inculcated under so great a name, would be more regarded and attended to by persons of the same high rank and authority. Such a rhetorical artifice we often meet with in books of oratory: thus Tully sometimes argues under the person of Cato the elder, "Omnem sermonem tribuimus Catoni Seni, quo majorem autoritatem habeat oratio." But what comes nearest the point is, that Isocrates inscribes a whole oration, Nicocles, and speaks in the person of that king, as if he really was the author, to give the greater sanction, and procure more reverence, to the duties enjoined in it: and yet nobody, from that name or title, supposes it to belong to Nicocles, or that it was any thing else but an ingenious fiction of Isocrates. "The ancients (says Calmet) do often call their works by the names of the persons they introduce as speaking: thus Plato has given to his dialogues the names of Socrates, Timæus, Protagoras, &c. And Cicero, in the same way, gives to one of his pieces the title of Brutus, and to another that of Hortensius. Xenophon styles the history in which he has drawn the model of a complete prince, Cyrus, as being the principal person or character in it: but none will pretend that these were wrote by the persons whose names they bear, for it is agreed on all hands, that Plato, Cicero, Xenophon, were the true authors who composed those pieces under feigned names." (Dissert. sur l'auteur du Livre de la Sagesse.) And in another place the same learned writer gives the reason for this artifice and invention: "It may be considered as a prosopopœia, as a sort of device wherein a person, to give more weight to what is delivered, speaks in the name, and assumes the person, of some other more ancient. The Scripture has some instances of this sort, as that artful fiction of the widow of Tekoah, 2 Sam. xiv. to incline David to fetch home Absalom; that of the prophet, 1 Kings xx. 35. to rebuke Ahab; and that of Nathan, reproving David by that significant and fine parable of the ewe-lamb, 2 Sam. xii. And thus the prophets sometimes introduce God, Moses, Abraham, &c. speaking, to make their discourses more lively and more affecting." (Pref. sur le Livre de la Sagesse.)

Ver. 8. *A resemblance of the holy tabernacle, which thou hast prepared from the beginning.*] *i. e.* Upon the model, says Calmet, of the tabernacle, which Moses, by God's direction, erected for the people in the wilderness; and the temple was a true resemblance of it in all respects; only what was small and as it were in miniature in the one, was inconceivably grand and magnificent in the other; but the disposition in both was nearly the same, and framed according to the pattern which God at first exhibited in the Mount, Exod. xxv. 40. The Arabic version understands it in the same sense, "Simile tabernaculo sancto, cujus delineamentum ab initio præmisisti." But Grotius, and other writers, understand these words in a higher sense, *viz.* that the temple was a resemblance of heaven itself, prepared by God from the beginning for the righteous. And indeed the Jews seem to have had the same notion, for they fancied three heavens, and the third or highest heaven to be the habitation of God, and of the blessed angels; and to this distinction they imagined the *atrium*, *sanctuarium*, and *sanctum sanctorum*, answered in the temple and tabernacle: the encampment of the twelve tribes about the tabernacle, they fancied likewise to be a representation of the angels and heavenly host about the throne of God: Philo has the same sentiment in several places, and Josephus, lib. iii. cap. 7. No wonder therefore that this writer, from the great analogy and agreement which the Jews supposed betwixt them, should call the temple, in which was the *sanctum sanctorum*, the resemblance or image of heaven itself, prepared by God from everlasting. This is the language of an inspired pen, even the writer to the Hebrews, who, speaking (viii. 5.) of the tabernacle, calls it the exemplar and *pattern of heavenly things;* and (ix. 24.) he calls *the holy places made with hands, the figures of the true,* or celestial ones. St. Chrysostom, speaking of the temple, calls it, *the great and typical fabric, the image of the whole world, both sensible and intellectual;* and he justifies his notion from these canonical passages. (Homil. de Nativ.) And as the comparison in all these places is made to heavenly things, so St. John in the Revelations describes the heavenly sanctuary by representations taken from the Jewish temple; particularly the throne of God, with his ministering spirits, is represented like that over the ark, where the Schechinah, or Divine glory, sat encompassed with the cherubims. (See Spencer de Leg. Hebr. tom. i. p. 215.) It may not be amiss to observe upon the Greek reading of this passage, *viz.* μίμημα σκηνῆς ἁγίας, ἣν προητοίμασας ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, that however the passage itself be understood, whether of the heavenly or earthly tabernacle, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς seems unnecessary after προητοίμασας. I would therefore carry these words forward to the beginning of the next verse, and read ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ μετά σου ἡ σοφία, κ. τ. λ.

Ver. 13. *For what man is he that can know the counsel of God? or who can think what the will of the Lord is?*] From this passage some confidently affirm St. Paul borrowed the thirty-fourth verse of the eleventh chapter to the Romans, and therefore they would infer this book to be canonical. But this is a groundless pretence: for, first, we do not perceive in any part of the New Testament, this, or any other ecclesiastical book, cited or referred to as Scripture: secondly, it does not follow by any necessary consequence, that such sentences in Scripture as are like and parallel to some others in apocryphal or ecclesiastical writings, should be really taken from thence; nothing being more common, than for different authors to hit upon and agree in the same moral maxims, without having read or ever seen one another's writings: thirdly, some of those very sentences which are said to be taken out of the Book of Wisdom, or Ecclesiasticus, occur in some part of those books which are confessedly canonical; and particularly this passage of St. Paul is in the same terms, or to the same

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effect, Isa. xl. 13, 14. where the words are, *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him and taught him in the path of judgment?* That St. Paul had this place of the prophet in view is the opinion of many learned men: (Tertull. cont. Marc. lib. v. Basil de Sp. Sanct. cap. 5. Du Pin's Hist. Can.) fourthly, supposing St. Paul does actually refer to this passage in the book of Wisdom, does not the same St. Paul confessedly quote the heathen poets, and some ancient apocryphal book, for the story of Jannes and Jambres? (2 Tim. iii. 8.) And does not our Saviour himself, in the opinion of some learned men, (see Bishop Sherlock, Dissert. 1.) quote another such apocryphal book, under the title of The Wisdom of God, and appeal to it as containing ancient prophecies? (Luke xi. 49.) Did apocryphal writings receive any higher sanction or authority from hence, or ever any one imagine the canon of Scripture imperfect for the want of them? One may easily see the design of the Romanists, in endeavouring to bring the apocryphal books into the canon; they hope by their authority to establish some favourite notions of their church, which yet, if examined and compared with the original, upon which they are pretended to be grounded, will be often found to have no other foundation than in a wrong version, as may be proved more particularly from the books of Maccabees.

Ver. 15. *For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things.*] Γεώδες σκῆνος. This expression is manifestly borrowed from the Platonists. Thus Clemens Alexandrinus, Τὸ σῶμα, γήϊνόν φησιν ὁ Πλάτων σκῆνος, (Strom. 5.) We meet with the like expression, 2 Pet. i. 14. where death is called ἡ ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματος. But the description of the body is most remarkably exaggerated by St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 1. ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους. Philo, Hippocrates, and other Greek writers, in like manner, use τὸ σκῆνος for a human body; and Lucretius, in imitation of the Greeks, uses *vas* in the same sense, (lib. iii. ver. 441.) We may hence, therefore, very properly render ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, (John i. 14.) *he dwelt in a human body amongst us.* (See Pearce in Longin. p. 102.) This powerful pressure of the body is so apparent, that it is acknowledged by all the wiser heathens: hence the Platonists frequently impute the diminution of the powers of the soul to its conjunction with the body. And in the ancient academical philosophy, it was much disputed, whether that corporeal and animal life, which was always drawing down the soul into terrene and material things, was not more properly to be styled death than life. (See Smith's Sel. Disc. p. 447.) There is a thought not unlike this in Philo, which he seems to have taken from Plato, in Cratyl. καὶ γὰρ σῆμα τινές φασιν αὐτὸ [σῶμα] εἶναι τῆς ψυχῆς, ὡς τεθαμμένης, ἐν τῷ νῦν παρόντι. (S. Leg. Allegor. lib. i.) The Pythagoreans looked upon the body as no better than the prison of the soul, τῆς ψυχῆς δεσμωτήριον, as Philo expressly calls it, (De Migrat. Abrah.) And to this agrees that of Scipio, "Imo vero, inquit, ii vivunt qui è corporum vinclis, tanquam è carcere, evolaverunt; vestra vero quæ dicitur vita, mors est." (Somn. Scip. cap. 3.) Xenophon introduces Cyrus, speaking after the same manner to his children just before his death; "I could never think that the soul, while in a mortal body, lives, and when departed out of it, dies, or that its consciousness is lost, when it is discharged out of an unconscious habitation; but that it then truly exists, when it is freed from all corporeal alliance." In the same contemptible manner the saints and martyrs speak of the flesh, calling it the chain and burden of the spirit: hence we find them praying and longing with St. Paul, to be dissolved and set at liberty from it, as soon as God pleased. (Theophyl. in Luc. ii. Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. ii. Marc. Anton. lib. iii. Ambrose de Bon. Mortis.) "This state of human imperfection is finely represented (says St. Austin) by that *woman* which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, Luke xiii. 11. *and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself,* who was immediately *made straight, and loosed from her infirmity,* by the powerful Spirit of our Saviour working on her, whose cure is a figure or emblem of man's recovery from the bondage of sin, through the power of grace. It is for this reason, and because men's thoughts are apt to wander, and grovel upon the earth through the infirmity of the flesh, that the priest calls upon us, in the celebration of the holy mysteries, to lift up our hearts, *Sursum Corda.*" (Aug. De vera Relig. De bono Perseverant.) Horace exactly expresses our author in what follows:—

——"Corpus onustum
Hesternis vitiis animum quoque prægravat unà,
Atque affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ."
(Sat. lib. ii.)

Virgil too has some fine thoughts upon this occasion; he shews how the *vigor animæ* is impeded by the body in the following lines:

——"Noxia corpora tardant,
Terrenique hebetant artus, moribundaque membra.
Hinc metuunt cupiuntque, dolent gaudentque, neque auras
Respiciunt, clausæ tenebris et carcere cæco."

And even after death, he imagines some *sordes,* contracted from its union with the body, still to adhere to it, and therefore supposes it to undergo a sort of purgation in another state:

"Quin et supremo cum lumine vita reliquit,
Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditùs omnes
Corporeæ excedunt pestes; penitusque necesse est
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.
Ergo exercentur pœnis." (Æn. vi.)

Ver. 16. *Hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth But the things that are in heaven, who hath searched out?*] This writer argues very justly here from our ignorance of natural causes, which we every day see and experience, to our imperfect views and conjectures of things spiritual and invisible; for since the most illuminated understanding in this world sees only in part, and cannot have a perfect or adequate idea of things that shall be revealed more fully hereafter, reason should confine itself within its own province, and not attempt the knowledge or explanation of such arcana as are confessedly out of its reach. *If I have told you earthly things* (says our blessed Saviour), *and ye believe them not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?* (John iii. 12.) It is

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a very just observation therefore of Lord Bacon's, "That he laboureth in vain, who shall endeavour to draw down heavenly mysteries to human reason; it rather becomes us (says that great philosopher) to bring our reason to the adorable throne of Divine truth." The heathens have prettily couched this moral, in that excellent fable of the golden chain, with which neither gods nor men were able to draw Jupiter down to the earth, but he could with ease draw them up to heaven. If this observation, even of an apocryphal writer, was but well weighed, the great advocates for the all-sufficiency of reason, would surely be more modest and humble, nor would the credibility of mysteries be so obstinately disputed.

Ver. 18. *For so the ways of them which lived on the earth were reformed, and men were taught the things that are pleasing unto thee.*] Τὰ ἀρεστά σου. Would not this be more correct if we read, τὰ ἀρεστά σοι? The sense is sufficiently clear, *viz.* that, through the help and instruction of wisdom, mankind, from the beginning of the world, have been informed in their duty, and attained to the knowledge of the Divine will and pleasure, by the careful observance of which they were preserved both from sin and punishment. The Vulgate very properly restrains this to good men, which otherwise might seem too general. This appears from the ancient patriarchs, who lived before and after the flood, and through wisdom kept themselves free from the general corruption, and escaped those evils which others suffered; many of whom, as instances of this truth, are mentioned in the next chapter, which in some editions begins with this verse: the ancient versions differ very much in the rendering of it; some understand it of the future, some of the present, but it seems best to refer these words to the times past, from the very early instances which immediately follow.

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The great advantages of wisdom are enumerated from the earliest account of time; that such as would not be conducted by it, have been miserable, exemplified in Cain and his descendants; and such as have followed its guidance have remarkably prospered, from Adam to Moses inclusively.

Ver. 1. *SHE preserved the first-formed father of the world that was created alone.*] Μόνον κτισθέντα. Does this mean, that Adam alone was created by a true and proper creation, and that all others, as being descended from him, were formed out of him, as from a pre-existing principle? Or does it mean, that Adam was created when nothing else existed? This cannot be the sense, as the works of the former days, and even the serpent amongst the rest, were confessedly before him: or are we to understand this of the creation of Adam, before the existence of Eve, or any of the human species? But is not as much implied in his being called here πρωτόπλαστος and πατὴρ κόσμου? Or is it usual to express one and the same thing by three synonymous terms? I am inclined to conjecture, that the true reading here is, μόνον τιθέντα, and not μόνον κτισθέντα, as all the copies have it, which mistake might easily happen from the likeness and affinity of the sound: *i. e.* wisdom preserved Adam free from all harm and danger, when he was placed alone and by himself in Paradise; see Gen. ii. 8. where the LXX. read, ἐφύτευσεν ὁ Θεὸς Παράδεισον, καὶ ἔθετο ἐκεῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον. Nor am I quite singular in this interpretation; Tirinus expounds the passage in the same manner, *Quamdiu solus fuit, nec à consorte solicitatus ad malum.* (See Comment. in loc.)

And brought him out of his fall.] It was wisdom which preserved Adam in Paradise when alone, and, after his fall, by particular grace vouchsafed to him, produced in him humiliation and repentance, proportionate to his great transgression: he was sensible upon his expulsion from Paradise, that all that sad train of evils and miseries which he saw entering into the world, and now are natural and hereditary to the whole species, were so many punishments brought into it, and imposed upon his posterity, purely on his own account; he considered the growing wickedness of the world, as introduced and occasioned by him; he considered the mortality of his descendants, their frequent, and often violent, deaths, as the consequence of his sin. These reflections, arising from his ingratitude to God, and his affectionate concern for his unhappy race, sunk so deep into the mind of the first-formed father of the world, that during the nine hundred and thirty years which he lived upon earth after his fall, he continued under such a lively sense of his sin, and God's just displeasure, that he became an humble and remarkable penitent. This penitence, or recovery of our first parents from their fall, which seems here referred to, has, by some of the fathers, been represented as the effect of the grace of the second Adam, to whom the glory of being the deliverer of the first was justly due, and been maintained by the church in the most early times, as a catholic truth. Irenæus, who lived at the end of the second century, reckons it accordingly (lib. i. cap. 31.) among the heresies of Tatian, that he held, that Adam and Eve were not saved; "For (says that father), as Jesus Christ had undertaken to redeem man from the power and dominion of sin, it is but reasonable to give him the glory of the delivery of our first parents from it; for he would not have been so entirely victorious over the devil, if he had left them under the hands of that apostate spirit, who, by his subtilty, had taken them out of God's hands." (Iren. lib. iii. cap. 34. St. Aug. epist. 99. ad Evod. Tertull. lib. ii. cont. Marcion. Epiphan. Hæres. 46.) This was the sense of antiquity concerning Adam's fall, and his happy recovery from it. Milton has finely represented Adam's tender concern for his unhappy posterity in the following lines:—

> "All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
> Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
> Delightfully, Increase and multiply,
> Now death to hear! for what can I increase
> Or multiply, but curses on my head?
> Who, of all ages to succeed, but feeling
> The evil on him brought by me, will curse
> My head,—Ill fare our ancestor impure,
> For this we may thank Adam?" (Book x.)

Which concludes with Adam's seeking peace and forgiveness of God, whom he had offended, by supplication and repentance:—

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"So spake our father penitent, nor Eve
Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
Before him reverent, and both confess'd
Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd, with tears
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek."

It is observable that Moses, in the book of Genesis, where he mentions Adam's fall, says nothing of his repentance, which though it be not expressly asserted in the text, yet neither can any thing certain or conclusive to the contrary be inferred from Moses's silence: this author has supplied what is there wanting, and acquainted us with the opinion of those of his time, with respect to this very important inquiry.

Ver. 2. *And gave him power to rule all things.*] Before his fall, God gave to Adam the dominion over the creation, (Gen. i. 28.) and it is not improbable, that upon his transgression God deprived him of it, by way of punishment, at least for a time, or in part, and, upon his sincere repentance, restored him to his full sovereignty and power. This seems to be the sentiment of this writer, who, after the mention of Adam's recovery from the sad consequences of his fall, says, that God *gave him power to rule all things*, which cannot relate to the original grant, which was previous to his misfortune. Perhaps, instead of the present reading, ἔδωκέν τε αὐτῷ ἰσχὴν κρατῆσαι ἁπάντων, the true one may be, ἀνέδωκέν τε αὐτῷ ἰσχὴν κρατῆσαι ἁπάντων· or thus, ἔδωκέν τε αὐτῷ ἰσχὴν κρατῆσαι αὖ πάντων, *i. e. She restored to him the power of ruling all things*, or, *She gave him the power again to rule all things.* And such a fresh donation of power seems necessary; for, as Calmet judiciously observes, "Avant son peché, toutes choses lui etoient soumises; il exerçoit sur elles un empire libre, aisc, agreable, volontaire, tant de sa part, que de la leur: mais depuis sa chûte, il ne conserva qu'avec peine le reste de domaine que Dieu lui avoit laissé;" *i. e. Before the fall, Adam's government of the creatures was free, easy, and agreeable, and their submission voluntary and willing; but after the fall, he with difficulty maintained his sovereignty, and the state of his affairs being altered, called for the same or a greater power.* (Comment. in loc.)

Ver. 3. *When the unrighteous went away from her in his anger.*] *i. e.* Cain, who had no regard either to wisdom, piety, or even humanity: he is eminently called the *unrighteous* here, because he committed the first act of violence in the world; as the Scripture calls him, for the same reason, *the offspring of the wicked one, who was a murderer from the beginning*, ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ ἦν, (1 John iii. 12.) And his brother is there denominated, *righteous Abel*, from his extraordinary and exemplary goodness. (Matt. xxiii. 35.)

He perished also in the fury wherewith he murdered his brother. For whose cause the earth being drowned with the flood.] The Scripture makes no mention of the perishing, or death of Cain; on the contrary, we read, that God prolonged his life in a miserable estate, as an example of his vengeance, and to continue Cain's punishment: and for this reason he gave a strict charge, that no one should for this fact destroy him, threatening to take vengeance sevenfold upon any that should kill him, (Gen. iv. 15.) God is said also to have set a mark upon Cain, *i. e.* to have given him a sign or token to assure him, that none should take away his life. (See Shuckford's Connex. vol. i. p. 8.) How therefore are we to understand this writer when he says here, that *Cain perished also in the fury wherewith he murdered his brother?* Did Cain then perish at the same time, and by the sudden and violent effects of the same fury and passion? Or shall we imagine him to allude to a traditional story among the rabbins, that "Lamech being blind, took his son Tubal Cain to hunt with him in the woods, where Cain used to lurk up and down in the thickets, afraid of the commerce and society of men; that the lad mistook him for some beast stirring in the bushes, and that Lamech, by the direction of Tubal Cain, with a dart or arrow killed him." I cannot persuade myself to think that our author refers to this uncertain tradition, which has no countenance from any good history, and is generally exploded as an idle and unsupported conceit. Nor can the meaning be, that Cain perished in the deluge, which happened, as is generally agreed, about Ann. Mun. 1656. (see Usher's Annals) long before which time Cain was dead. Much less reason is there to assert, that the deluge happened purely upon his account, or was occasioned by his single transgression, as the sense seems to be of our present version. I think therefore that our translators have quite mistaken the sense of this place, which is not to be understood of Cain solely or exclusively, which seems manifest from the following reasons: 1st, Ἄδικος is improperly joined with συναπώλετο, except we suppose that more persons perished. 2dly, Ἀδελφοκτόνοι θυμοὶ, expressed in the plural number, relates not to Cain's fury, which is mentioned immediately before, but to persons of the like bloody temper and disposition. 3dly, The Arabic version expressly understands it of such persons, which renders, *Periit unà cum animabus fratricidis.* 4thly, Coverdale's version, following the ancient Vulgate, renders, *the brotherhood perished through the wrath of murder:* which means a number of persons, probably a whole fraternity or kindred, that perished on that account. It remains then to inquire next, what wicked and unhappy persons are here meant in particular. This difficulty, Origen, who incidentally mentions this passage, helps us to explain, who understands it of the descendants of Cain: for in the antediluvian world there was not only a general neglect of virtue, and pursuit of wickedness, but there was one reigning crime, which Moses takes notice of in particular, *viz.* that the earth was filled with violence. This expression, and the severe law made against murder soon after the flood, makes it probable, that the men of this first world, especially the descendants of Cain, had, in imitation of him, and by the evil influence of his example, taken great and unwarrantable liberties in usurping upon, and destroying, the lives of one another: these seem to be the persons whom this writer, for their unnatural and bloody temper, styles ἀδελφοκτόνοι θυμοὶ, for whose sake, and upon account of whose violence and blood-shedding, the deluge really happened. Hence then I am induced to offer a conjecture, that the true reading of the next verse is not, δι' ὃν, but δι' ὃ, and most probably the copy which Origen made use of, read so, for he expressly renders, *Hanc ob causam diluvium fit, ut deleatur Cain semen*, that God's purpose in bringing the deluge, was to extinguish the pos-

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terity of Cain. (Orig. in Evang. Joh. See also St. Basil. Orat. 6. St. Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. xv. cap. 24.) And the comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal, which understands it, *De Cain, et des autres mechans qui l'avoient imité.* This is farther confirmed from the testimony of the son of Sirach, (Ecclus. xl. 10.) who, enumerating the several instruments of God's vengeance against the wicked, as the sword, famine, &c. immediately adds, καὶ δι' αὐτοὺς ἐγένετο ὁ κατακλυσμὸς, that for their sakes came the deluge, *i. e.* for the wickedness of such ungodly and bloody-minded men as went in the ways of Cain, as St. Jude expresses it. For the single fact of Cain, though very shocking, was not a sufficient cause alone of bringing the universal deluge, nor of consequence enough to involve the whole earth in it: but when the earth was filled with violence, through the wicked manners and attempts of Cain's descendants, then, or on that account, God destroyed the earth with a flood. We may lastly add the authority of the Arabic version, to establish this conjecture, which reads, as I before observed, *Periit unà cum animabus fratricidis,* and then adds, *ob id obrutam diluvio terram,* &c. and Vatablus, I observe, renders in like manner. Such being then the fate of Cain's descendants, Cain himself may with propriety enough be said to have perished with them, inasmuch as his whole race thereby became extinct. The words, therefore, ἄδικος συναπώλετο are not to be understood of Cain personally, as our version takes them, but as consequentially suffering in the destruction of his posterity. From this general calamity of the flood, we may make this useful reflection,—that it is no security to ungodly persons that there are great numbers of them; they ought rather for that cause to be so much the more apprehensive of speedy and dreadful judgments. For because of the greatness of their number, because *all flesh,* as the Scripture expresses it, *had corrupted themselves,* the inhabitants of the old world were so much the nearer destruction, and it involved them for that reason.

Ver. 4. *Wisdom again preserved it.*] *i. e.* By preserving Noah and his family, by whom, and their posterity in successive ages, the earth was replenished by degrees, and the several parts of the world at length inhabited: we may also, with Messieurs du Port-Royal, consider this preservation mystically, for the ark was a figure and type of the church, as Noah and his family were of the members of it, whose preservation in the flood prefigured also our redemption by the laver of regeneration or baptism, as St. Peter explains it, 1 Pet. iii. 21. So that the power of one and the same element, may be considered as the end or destruction of vice, and as the original and fountain of virtue.

And directed the course of the righteous in a piece of wood of small value.] *Per contemptibile lignum,* according to the Vulgate. (See note on xiv. 6.) Our author intends here no reflection on the structure or usefulness of the ark, which was the design of infinite wisdom, and the work of a whole century, and so conveniently contrived, as to contain Noah (whose very name, according to Philo, signifies righteous), and his family, and all living creatures, according to the appointed number of them; he speaks only as to appearance, and as it was then judged; for while it was building it appeared so contemptible, that Noah and his sons were laughed at for their design, as being seemingly unable to endure such a conflux of waters. And, indeed, that such a piece of wood should ride safely when all the high hills were covered, and not be overset by winds or waves, or the many violent shocks it must necessarily meet with; that it should not be dashed to pieces against rocks which were invisible, nor sink under so prodigious a weight as it contained,—displays most illustriously the power and providence of God, who chooses to effect his purposes oftentimes by means the most unpromising and unlikely. Nor is the wisdom of God less to be admired in the contrivance of the ark, which may truly be said to be a world within itself, than his infinite power in directing it; for it has been demonstrated mathematically, that there was sufficient room in it to contain all the things, animate and inanimate, which it was designed for; and that the measure and capacity of the ark, which some sceptics have made use of as an argument against the Scripture, ought rather to be esteemed a most rational confirmation of the truth of it, and of the wisdom that designed it. (See Bishop Wilkins's Essay on a real Character.)

Ver. 5. *Moreover, the nations in their wicked conspiracy being confounded.*] Our version here is faulty, the true rendering seems to be, *When the nations around conspired or joined together in wickedness; Lorsque les nations conspirerent ensemble pour s'abandonner au mal,* says Calmet, and with him agree Messieurs du Port-Royal; and the Vulgate renders accordingly, *In consensu nequitiæ cùm se nationes contulissent; i. e.* when they were overrun with idolatry: for neither the creation of the world, nor the universal deluge, nor the confusion of languages, could preserve the belief of one supreme God only; but the new world was as universally overrun with polytheism and idolatry, as the old world was with violence, and the very dispersion of mankind probably contributed to it. Then, when all the nations around were sunk into idolatry, God called Abraham from Chaldea, whom the context shews to be here meant. This I take to be a truer sense of the place, than with some to interpret it of the conspiracy to build the tower of Babel. The learned Usher, it must be confessed, seems to understand it in this latter sense, for in his account of that bold and presumptuous design, he refers to this very place, which is somewhat surprising; for this cannot be reconciled even with his own chronology, for the building this tower was A. M. 1757. and Abraham was not born till A. M. 2008. Calmet therefore mentions this, in his Preface, as an objection against our author, *Il semble croire qu'Abraham étoit au tems de la construction de la tour de Babel:* but this anachronism is removed by the sense which I have given of this passage.

She found out the righteous, and preserved him blameless unto God.] Some have asserted, that Abraham not only lived blameless in the midst of idolatrous nations, but that even in his father's house, where he spent the first part of his life, he preserved himself free from the idolatrous worship which infected all the rest of the family. (See Sherlock on Div. Provid. p. 293.) But others, with more probability, say, that he was at first engaged in this wrong way of worship, and, like other Chaldeans, adored the sun (Phil. de Abrah. Clem. Recogn. lib. i. Cyril. cont. Jul. lib. iii. Suidas voce Ἀβραὰμ), but that by God's giving him a better understanding he renounced it: and on this account

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he is said to have suffered a severe persecution from the Chaldeans, who threw him into a fiery furnace, from which God miraculously rescued him. (Hieron. Tradit. Hebr. in Genes.) And, indeed, the text of the ancient Vulgate Nehem. ix. 7. seems to confirm this tradition, which reads, *Eduxisti eum de igne Chaldæorum;* and the Jews generally assert the same. However this be, which probably is a mistake from confounding the word *Ur*, which signifies both fire, and the city, from which God called Abraham, it is certain that Abraham, from the time of his call, A. M. 2083. (see Usher's Annals) became the great restorer and reviver both of natural and revealed religion to a corrupt world; and we cannot have a stronger proof of his extraordinary piety and virtue, than that God thought him the fittest person to reveal himself to, and to begin a new reformation of the world by. It is very likely Abraham demonstrated to his father the vanity of idols, since he engaged him to forsake the city where he was settled. (See Calmet's Dict. in voce *Abram.*) And by his own sons, and his nephew Lot, he spread the true religion far and wide, and their very numerous descendants carried the knowledge of it still farther. After all this care, we cannot think that Abraham relapsed, but that God preserved him blameless ever after. We are not therefore to understand this passage, as if Abraham was always free from idolatry, for that Terah and all his children were infected with, by living among the Chaldeans and sorcerers, which are synonymous terms in the book of Daniel: (see Usher's Annals, tom. i. p. 7.) but the meaning here is, that when God removed him from the infection of Chaldea, and vouchsafed to him the knowledge of the true religion, through his assistance he continued pure, and was not any more polluted.

And kept him strong against his tender compassion towards his son.] The rendering literally is, *She kept him strong in his bowels towards his son*, as the marginal reading is; *i. e.* she gave him strength to vanquish the tenderness which he had for his son; for Abraham was so entirely devoted to God, that he was dead to all the moving calls of nature and instinct. Nor is such an instance of obedience to be wondered at in him, whose faith was so strong, that he was verily persuaded that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead again after the sacrifice, to make good his promise to him of a numerous progeny. "What a number of virtues meet (says St. Ambrose) in this single action! the piety of the patriarch appears, in his readiness to offer up his son at God's command; his courage is displayed, in resisting the sentiments of nature on so trying an occasion; his justice, in returning to God that which he had received from his liberality; and his faith, in believing that God could restore him from the dead, and bring him from the deep of the earth again." (Ambros. de Offic. lib. i. cap. 2.)

Ver. 6, 7. *When the ungodly perished, she delivered the righteous man, who fled from the fire which fell down upon the five cities; of whose wickedness, even to this day, the waste land that smoketh is a testimony, and plants bearing fruit that never come to ripeness.*] Καρποφοροῦντα φυτὰ ἀτελέσιν ὥραις. Philo describes the destruction of the cities where Lot dwelt in the same terms, ἡ φλὸξ, κ. τ. λ. *Vim vitalem in summam sterilitatem convertit flamma, ita ut nihil superesset, unde vel fructus vel herba germinaret, in hodiernum usque malo durante;* where the learned editor, referring to this place, very judiciously conjectures, that the true reading of it is, ἀτελέσιν ὀπώραις, (Mangey's Philo, de Abrah. vol. ii.) Grotius thinks it probable, that by *plants bearing fruit that never come to ripeness*, may be meant fruits in appearance only: and in this sense the author seems to allude to the *apples of Sodom* in particular, which are said to have been beautiful in appearance to the eye, but within were full of rottenness. Messieurs du Port-Royal understand it in like manner of trees, *Qui portent des fruits bastards semblables aux autres en apparence, mais qui se reduissent en cendre lors qu'on les ouvre.* (Comment. in loc.) And this Tertullian confirms, *Sodomam et Gomorram igneus imber exussit, olet adhuc incendio terra, et si qua illic arborum poma, oculis tenus, cæterùm contactu cinerescunt:* and thus Solinus describes them: *Pomum quod gignitur, habeat licet speciem maturitatis, mandi tamen non potest, nam fuliginem intrinsecus favillaceam, ambitus tantùm extimæ cutis cohibet, quæ vel levi pressa tactu, fumum exhalat, et fatiscit in vagum pulverem.* (Solin. Polyhistor. cap. 37.) But Josephus's account comes nearest our author, who, speaking of this once-happy region, says, Φασὶ ὡς δι' ἀσέβειαν οἰκητόρων κεραυνοῖς καταφλέγη, κ. τ. λ. *Fertur eam ob incolarum impietatem fulminibus conflagrasse. Adhuc ignis à Deo immissi reliquias, et oppidorum quinque isthic videre licet umbram: insuper et fructus, specie quidem et colore edulibus similes sunt, manibus autem decerpti, in favillam et cinerem resolvuntur.* (Lib. v. de Bello Jud. cap. 8.) Nothing was more known or celebrated among authors, sacred and profane, than this fire which fell down upon Pentapolis, or the five cities of Sodom. Diodorus Siculus, (lib. xix.) Strabo, (lib. xvi.) and Philo, speak of it as burning in their times: and some have thought St. Jude alludes to the continuance of this fire, ver. 7. and that he calls it πῦρ αἰώνιος, because it continued burning. (See Tacit. Hist. lib. v. Chrysost. Hom. 19. ad pop. Antioch. Maccab. lib. iii.) But I shall not be so disingenuous, as to omit what Mr. Maundrell, who was upon that spot, says, *viz.* "That he never saw or heard of any such fruit hereabouts; nor was there any tree to be seen, from whence one might expect such a fruit; and adds, that he believes its very being, as well as its beauty, is a fiction." (Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 85.) The Vulgate renders, *Incerto tempore fructus habentes arbores*, intimating, that the fruit growing here was, on this account, unlike all other fruit, which has a certain and fixed season of being ripe, but this never came to perfection. (See Tirin. in loc.) We find that Homer had a notion of this great truth, that God sometimes exerts his judgments upon guilty cities, by sending a real fire from heaven upon them in a signal and terrible manner. (See Iliad. lib. xxi.) And the fate of these cities suggests a very useful reflection—that though the patience of God bears with the crimes and impenitence of mankind, even for several ages, yet when his justice shews itself at last, it is so destructive and inexorable, that nothing can withstand or avert it. From this destruction of Sodom we may likewise farther see the truth of our author's observation, that the punishment is usually proportioned and adapted to the nature of the crime, for these wretched cities burning with unnatural lust, and impure fires, are, by a correspondent vengeance, overthrown and consumed by fire.

And a standing pillar of salt.] The Vulgate renders, *figmentum salis*, others call it *cumulus*, and some *columna salis;* the last is most agreeable to the Greek, στήλη ἁλός.

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Sulpicius Severus says, "Reflexit oculos, statimque in molem conversa traditur." It has been thought by some authors probable, that the statue retained her own form; so St. Cyprian seems to have imagined,

——"stetit ipsa sepulchrum,
Ipsaque imago sibi, formam sine corpore servans."

This pillar was subsisting in the time of Josephus, who says that it was then standing, and that he himself saw it, ἱστόρηκα δὲ αὐτὴν, ἔτι γὰρ νῦν διαμένει, (Antiq. lib. i. cap. 11.) Later writers attest the same of their times; Benjamin the Jew, who lived in the twelfth century, mentions it in his Itinerary; and some more modern authors speak of it as yet existing, "Suo quasi sale condita," as Bishop Fell jocularly speaks of it. Adricomius quotes three authors that were eye-witnesses of it, and he particularly tells us its situation, that it stands between En-gaddi and the Dead Sea. (Theatrum terræ sanctæ, p. 55.) Mr. Maundrell, on the other side, gives so little credit to the reality of this pillar, that, though he wanted not curiosity, yet he wanted faith to induce him to go see this monument of Lot's metamorphosed wife. (Journey from Aleppo, p. 85.) Various have been the conjectures of learned men about the reality of this pillar of salt; some, with much subtilty, understand *a pillar of salt* to signify only an everlasting pillar, of what matter soever made, in the same sense as they interpret the covenant of salt, Numb. xviii. 19. Others have fancied that this history, like that of Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. 37. is to be understood comparatively, that Lot's wife was *as* a pillar of salt; as Niobe, according to the fable, which most probably took its rise from this history, is said to have been turned, through grief, into a sort of stone: but there is more reason to understand this literally. But it will then perhaps be asked, how it happened that this woman was not destroyed with fire and consumed to nothing, as the Sodomites were, but was converted by the powerful wrath of God into this pillar of salt, a perpetual spectacle for all beholders? To this inquiry I shall return an answer in the words of a polite writer, who explains this accident in the following manner; "That as thunder, or rather lightning, stiffens all animals it strikes in an instant, and leaves them dead in the same posture in which it found them alive, this unhappy woman's body, being prepared by heat, and penetrated and encrusted with salt, which fell down from heaven in great quantities upon this devoted region, might long subsist as a statue of salt, in the very posture in which this judgment from heaven found her. Nor is there much difficulty in conceiving how salt should continue so long undissolved in the open air, since it is well known to naturalists, that rocks of salt are as lasting as any other rocks." (Revelation examined, vol. ii. p. 229.) Pliny mentions a mineral kind of salt, which never melts, and serves for building as well as stone, (lib. xxxi. cap. 7.) The reason which Tertullian assigns for the durableness of this pillar, "Quod perpetuis temporibus reparetur, et si quis advena formam mutilaverit, vulnera ex sese complet," is so surprising and incredible, that it can be considered in no other light, than as a fable or legend, handed down by an imperfect tradition, upon no better foundation than another story relating to this woman, which for decency's sake I forbear to mention.

A monument of an unbelieving soul.] It would be better rendered, *A monument of* the *unbelieving soul.* And so Coverdale's and the ancient English versions render, *A token of remembrance of the unfaithful soul.* The transgression of Lot's wife is greatly aggravated by the following particulars:—1. She was delivered, with her husband and daughters, out of Sodom, and brought forth by the angel's own hands. 2. She was warned that she should not look back, nor abide in all the plain, lest she perished. 3. There was a city very near to them appointed, which she might easily have reached and been in safety. 4. She had her husband and children with her, whom she ought to have accompanied; but she neglects these, and not believing the angels, that Sodom would be so soon destroyed, would indulge a criminal curiosity of looking back; her punishment, therefore, for these reasons, was just. Many useful reflections, for the conduct of others, have been raised from the signal misfortune of this woman. Our Saviour, we may observe, to guard his disciples against any hardness of heart, bids them to *remember Lot's wife,* (Luke xvii. 32.) lest they also should perish through unbelief. St. Austin says, "That God chose this public punishment for the sake of others, to proclaim to them to beware, by her example, not to look back to a wicked Sodom, *i. e.* not to return to their old vices from which they have been called away by some gracious means that God hath afforded them; 'Quo pertinet quod prohibiti sunt, qui liberabantur ab angelis, retro respicere, nisi quia non est animo redeundum ad veterem vitam, qua per gratiam regenerati exuimur?'" (De Civit. Dei, lib. xvi. cap. 30.) The like useful inference St. Cyprian draws from this accident, (epist. 11.) But St. Clement most fully expresses the sense of this and the former verse, and how we should improve by the history of their misfortunes: "By hospitality and godliness was Lot saved out of Sodom, when all the country round about was destroyed by fire and brimstone; the Lord thereby making it manifest, that he will not forsake those that trust in him, but will bring the disobedient to punishment and correction: for his wife, who went out with him, being of a distrustful mind, and not continuing in the same obedience, was for that reason set forth for an example, being turned into a pillar of salt unto this day; that so all men may know, that those that are double-minded, and distrustful of the power of God, are prepared for condemnation." (Clement. epist. 1. cap. 11. See also Cyr. Cathechet. Mystag. i.)

Ver. 8. *So that in the things wherein they offended, they could not so much as be hid.*] This reflection refers not to Lot's wife only, but regards equally the Sodomites, Cain, and his descendants, and the several faulty instances beforementioned; all of whom, through their ignorance of, or disregard for, true wisdom, fell into very grievous transgressions, and are recorded as so many standing monuments of the just judgment of God against such abominable practices, the shame whereof they inherit even at this day. Calmet applies this even to Lot himself, who, slighting the direction of the angels, who ordered him to escape to the mountains, retired into a cave, was overtaken with drunkenness, and committed incest with his daughters; crimes which arose from his neglect of true wisdom, and are a lasting reproach upon this otherwise righteous man.

Ver. 10. *When the righteous fled from his brother's wrath,*

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she guided him in right paths.] *i. e.* When Jacob fled from the wrath of Esau into Mesopotamia, he was delivered from great dangers through wisdom that attended upon him, according to God's promise to him,—*Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.* (Gen. xxviii. 15.) Herein Jacob is an image of all the faithful, whom God separates from the rest of mankind, protects with his favourable kindness, and conducts, as his chosen, in the right way to happiness; which the wicked, through a fatal mistake and irregular wandering out of the true path, cannot arrive at.

Shewed him the kingdom of God.] *i. e.* When he beheld in his dream a ladder, the foot whereof stood upon the earth, and the top reached to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending upon it; at the sight whereof, awaking from his sleep, and being amazed at the glory of the vision, he could not contain himself from crying out, *How dreadful is this place! for the Lord is here, though I knew it not: this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* (Gen. xxviii. 12. 17.) This mystical ladder, according to the sense of the fathers, represents to us the care which the Divine Providence, in all ages, takes of the righteous; that God is present with them in the time of their affliction, and in the place of their exile and pilgrimage; and that in their sad and solitary condition, in a state of desertion as to all outward appearance, they shall not want the assistance and comfort of the holy angels, who are God's ministering spirits, to attend and succour the saints in all their difficulties and necessities whatsoever.

And gave him knowledge of holy things.] This contains something more than the former sentence, for wisdom taught Jacob moreover things relating to the service of God. It is probable, that in this vision he received from God himself, who then appeared to him, (Gen. xxviii. 13.) instruction of this nature, by his erecting a pillar instantly, that very stone upon which he had rested his weariness, and pouring oil upon the top of it, to consecrate it as a monument of God's great mercy to him; by his dedicating the *place* to God's service under the name of Beth-el, or God's house; by his vowing a vow, the first probably of that nature, and promising to restore to God the tenth of all that he should give him.

Made him rich in his travels, and multiplied (the fruit of) *his labours.*] Καὶ ἐπλήθυνε τοὺς πόνους αὐτοῦ. The literal rendering of the place is, *That wisdom multiplied his labours, and made him rich by them:* and so Junius understands it, *Locupletavit eum in ærumnis, quum multiplicaret labores ejus.* All the commentators and ancient versions take it in another sense, *That she prospered the fruits of his labours;* which is apparently the sense of our translators. This blessing Jacob happily experienced, as a reward of his hard and continual labour; for though Laban defrauded him of his wages ten times, when he had served him twenty years faithfully in his house, and through constant and painful watching was *consumed by the drought in the day, and by the frost in the night,* yet God suffered him not to be sent away thus empty, but gave him success and riches equal to his labours: for it was he that gave that extraordinary blessing to the artifice of laying the rods before the cattle, and, as the learned think, (see Bishop Patrick in loc.) directed him by an angel to that invention, and promised to give success to it, (Gen. xxxi. 10—12.) intending to transfer unto Jacob a good share of the wealth of Laban; which was accordingly effected by this contrivance, and Laban's injustice hereby punished, and his policy overruled. And to this agrees the Arabic version of this place, *Sinus ejus implevit opibus eorum qui insultaverant ipsi.* In this sense one cannot help observing the propriety of the word ἐπλήθυνε, which seems to intimate the manner of Jacob's coming by his riches, *viz.* that it was by the multiplying, or surprising fruitfulness, of the cattle.

Ver. 11. *In the covetousness of such as oppressed him, she stood by him, and made him rich.*] Ἐν πλεονεξίᾳ κατισχυόντων αὐτὸν παρέστη. Calmet says, the true reading of the Greek is, αὐτῷ παρέστη, and explains it accordingly, *Elle l'assista contre l'avarice de ceux que vouloient user de violence, ou qui avoient l'avantage.* In the book of Genesis we meet with the several ways and stratagems by which Laban, who had a greater regard to his own interest than to justice, endeavoured to surprise Jacob, and hinder him from receiving the fruits of his labours: for when Laban, to his surprise, found the contract very advantageous to Jacob, and had the mortification to see the cattle bring forth their young directly against his interest, he dissolved his own agreement, and made a new one with Jacob. Coverdale, therefore, very properly renders, *In the deceitfulness of such as defrauded him, she stood by him,* which is more agreeable to what Jacob himself says, (Gen. xxxi. 7.) *Your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times, but God suffered him not to hurt me.* For it was impossible but Jacob must have been greatly injured by a man of that profound subtilty, had not the extraordinary interposition of God wonderfully prevented it, and disappointed the deceiver, which the patriarch very gratefully acknowledges.

Ver. 12. *She defended him from his enemies, and kept him safe from those that lay in wait.*] *i. e.* Either by turning away the wrath of his brother Esau, which, through his prudent conduct and humble submission, was at length mollified and changed into love and tenderness; or by God's threatening Laban in a dream from attempting any thing against Jacob, or seizing upon any of his possessions, when he pursued after him. In Gen. xxxii. we read, that the angels of God met Jacob in his journey, to encourage and comfort him, no doubt, with the assurance that God was with him; and that he called the name of the place *Mahanaim,* i. e. *two hosts* or *camps:* for it is probably supposed, that the angels might appear to him as distinguished into two armies, the better to defend him against his enemies on all sides. (See Wells's Geography of the Old Testament, vol. i. p. 361.)

And in a sore conflict gave him the victory, that he might know that godliness is stronger than all.] This relates to that conflict or wrestling which Jacob had with the angel, over whom he was at last victorious; nor would he quit his hold till he had obtained a blessing. The struggling of an angel with a man may seem *impar congressus,* and the victory of the latter is still more surprising: but many worthy ends were implied in this combat, and several useful reflections may be drawn from it. 1. Jacob having

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such power with God, as to be able to prevail over one of his ministers, was hence reminded not to fear his brother Esau, nor any attempt that he should make against him. 2. God enabled Jacob to prevail over the angel whom he contended with, to shew the great power that those saints have, who put their whole trust and confidence in him. 3. We farther from hence learn, that when God suffers his saints to be exposed to great trials and severe temptations, it is with a design to teach them, by an experience of their own weakness and his might, that it is he alone that makes them victorious; and that he whom they have preferred to the world, is greater than the world, and more powerful than all things and persons in it. The fine observation contained in the conclusion of the verse, *viz. that godliness is stronger than all,* though true in an eminent degree of Jacob, as has been shewn, and is indeed implied in his victory, need not be confined to his single person; there are many other signal instances in the Old Testament to confirm this truth: it was by godliness that Jonathan, with his armour-bearer alone, put a whole garrison to flight; that David, unarmed, overthrew Goliath, and prevailed against the artifices and violence of Saul; that Jehoshaphat, without drawing a sword, triumphed over three confederate nations; that Hezekiah saved Jerusalem, and the kingdom of Judah, against a hundred fourscore and five thousand Assyrians that came against it: it was piety that determined constantly the fate of the Jewish people, and according to their observance of this, was the public happiness and condition of that state. And the same observation will hold with respect to any other nation or people, who will be always found to be successful, or otherwise, according as they regard God, and encourage and promote a true sense of piety. So that the advice of the Psalmist is at all times best to be followed, and will be found, upon trial, to be even the truest policy: *Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.* (Psal. xx. 7.) This power of piety, or truth, as it is called, is finely displayed by the apocryphal Esdras, in that contest before Darius, 1 Esdras iii. iv. where, after the arguments used in favour of wine, women, and kings, at length truth beareth away the victory, as being *stronger than all things, for truth endureth, and is always strong, it liveth and conquereth for evermore; neither in her judgment is any unrighteousness; she is the strength, kingdom, power, and majesty, of all ages. And all the people shouted, and said, Great is truth, and mighty above all things.*

Ver. 13. *When the righteous was sold, she forsook him not.*] Joseph, who is here emphatically called *the righteous,* is another remarkable instance of God's protection and care of his afflicted servants; Joseph was sent to his brethren upon a friendly message, and his coming was even beneficial to them; but the recompence he met with was treachery and violence; it was unnatural to sell their brother, but it was an aggravation of their cruelty to sell him, an innocent and tender youth, to rough barbarians, and by them to be carried away into such a country as Egypt. Ephraim Syrus is very pathetic upon this occasion; he makes the unhappy Joseph to stop at his mother Rachel's monument, as he was going with the merchants into Egypt; his complaint there, and the deep and melting impression it made, even upon his Ishmaelite masters, is very moving and affecting. (De Laud. Jos.) Nor are his eloquence and invention less to be admired upon the other parts of Joseph's sad history. The affliction of Joseph is a common allusion in Scripture, and the standard, as it were, to try others' afflictions by. It is recorded of him, that he was but seventeen years old when his troubles first began; and though the patriarchs that were before him, underwent their respective trials and calamities, yet the Holy Spirit mentions none of their afflictions with the same emphasis as that of Joseph, as if they were to be the badge and characteristic by which he was to be distinguished from the rest: but, through the favour of Providence, and its secret but wonderful economy, his very afflictions were made the means of his advancement. This so remarkable an instance of the guidance of Divine Providence, another father applies to the afflicted and unfortunate, for their comfort and encouragement: "Joseph, a single person, sold a bondsman into Egypt, there destitute, imprisoned, enslaved; at length went forth a multitude from thence, even to the number of six hundred thousand souls, which grew up to be a great and very powerful people." (Greg. Nazian. Orat. 32.)

But delivered him from sin.] This relates to Joseph withstanding the solicitations of his mistress, Potiphar's wife, who, through a criminal love, would have tempted him to adultery; but by a strict regard to chastity, and a religious adherence to his duty, he was deaf to her entreaties, and proof against her amorous violence. The reflection of Rollin upon this part of Joseph's character is so fine, and the advice therein given of such consequence to young and unguarded minds, that I cannot better illustrate this place, or more please well-disposed readers, than by transcribing it: "We find in his (Joseph's) conduct an excellent model of what we should do when we are tempted. Joseph defends himself at first by the remembrance of God and his duty; *How,* says he to that bold and shameless woman, *can I commit such an action, who have God for my witness and my judge? It is in his sight that you and I shall both become criminal: it is he who commands me to disobey you upon this occasion. How can I escape his view, or corrupt his justice, or be covered from his indignation? How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* But when the temptation became so strong, that he had cause to fear his weakness might yield to it, he prudently betakes himself to flight, rather than parley any longer, or continue in such a state of danger or temptation, as might at length incline him to offend against God." (Method of studying Belles Lettres, vol. iii. p. 141.)

She went down with him into the pit.] Joseph's noble resistance provoked his impudent mistress, who wrongfully accused him to her husband, and was the occasion of his being cast into the prison; over whom God was, under this unhappy circumstance, more abundantly watchful. For the Scripture seems to be particularly careful to make us take notice, how God protected this his servant, by informing us, that *the Lord was with Joseph;* or, according to the Chaldee paraphrase of the place, that *the Word of the Lord was with him,* (Gen. xxxix. 21.) This expression, that *the Lord was with Joseph in the prison,* seems to intimate, that when Joseph was thrown into it, and seemingly forsaken of all, God descended with him into the obscure dungeon; and the expression of our author, that *wisdom went*

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down with him into the pit, and left him not in bonds, is to the same purpose, *viz.* that the eternal wisdom became in a manner prisoner with him; *i. e.* according to the same polite writer, " she softened the tediousness of his nights, which were spent in watching and suffering; she was a light in that darkness where the rays of the sun could not penetrate; she took away from the solitude of his confinement, which neither reading nor business could amuse or suspend the disagreeable sense of; and she diffused a calmness and serenity over his mind, which arose from an invisible and inexhaustible spring. In this his miserable confinement she was nearest to Joseph, as she is to every man in adversity that has faith: nor is it said, when Joseph was made a partner in the throne of Pharaoh, that wisdom *ascended* with him *thither,* as it is said, that she *descended* with him into prison, and assisted him in his bonds." (Vol. iii. p. 139.) St. Ambrose has the like reflection upon the same occasion: " Non turbantur innocentes, cùm falsis criminibus impetuntur, et oppressa innocentia detruduntur in carcerem; visitat Deus et in carcere suos, et ibi est plus auxilii, ubi est plus periculi." (De Joseph. cap. 5.)

Ver. 14. *And left him not in bonds, till she brought him the sceptre of the kingdom.*] This is no where mentioned in the books of Moses; it is there only said, that Joseph *was made governor over all the land of Egypt:* Philo says, indeed, speaking of Joseph, that Pharaoh made him his viceroy, or, to speak more truly, says he, king; μᾶλλον δὲ, εἰ χρὴ τ' ἀληθὲς εἰπεῖν, βασιλέα. But we are not to understand our author, as if he meant by the *sceptre of the kingdom,* a truly royal power, a sovereignty strictly so called, *un regne, un empire absolu,* says Calmet; but only, that he was the second person in the kingdom, and had a most extensive power and authority. Some make him to be a partner in the throne with Pharaoh, and think he was invested with this power when Pharaoh took off his ring, which was the royal seal, from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's, *and they cried before him, Bow the knee.* But notwithstanding these ceremonies, and the supreme honours paid him therein, Joseph was still a subject; he was indeed his prime or chief minister, governor over all the country; but as his power came from Pharaoh, so was it subject to him. Grotius says, it was usual with the Hebrews to give the name of king to such as were raised to some very extraordinary honour, and invested with great authority; and refers to ver. 16. of this chapter, which he understands in the like sense. (Comment. in loc.) And thus governors of provinces, and persons of chief note and authority in countries of small extent, are called in Scripture: see Judg. i. 7. where the threescore and ten kings, mentioned to have had their thumbs and their great toes cut off by Adoni-bezek, are not to be understood as real kings and princes, but as so many rulers of cities or small territories, called indeed kings, as having a resemblance of kingly power, by their jurisdiction in such places. Many such petty kings were in Canaan in Joshua's time, who were very numerous: *Tous les seigneurs qui gouvernoient une ville,* (says Calmet in loc.) *s'appelloient du nom de rois:* till at length the greater overcame, and as it were devoured the rest. The like may be said of the thirty and two kings which went up with Ben-hadad the king of Syria to besiege Samaria. (1 Kings xx. 1. Isa. xix. 2.) And some of the ancients have given this name even to Abraham, Moses, and Israel. (See Justin, lib. xxxvi. cap. 2. and Nicol. Damascen. apud Joseph. Antiq. lib. i. cap. 7. and Calmet in loc.) This seems confirmed likewise by the new name which Pharaoh gave him; which he conferred, not only because he was a foreigner, and intended to honour him, but to denote him to be his subject, though ruler of every body else: (see Pat. in loc.) a name which, according to St. Jerome and the Vulgar Latin, signified, *the saviour of the world;* (see Gregory's notes, p. 65.) probably in allusion to the services done by him in the time of the famine. But perhaps this name may mystically include something higher; for some learned men have remarked, that there are few saints of the Old Testament, in whom God has been pleased to express so many circumstances of resemblance with his Son, as in Joseph. (See the particulars of the agreement, and the parallel drawn by Rollin, vol. iii. on the Belles Lettres, p. 155.) This is doing the greatest honour to Joseph, and strictly giving him perpetual glory.

And gave him perpetual glory.] By the term *perpetual,* we may understand, that Joseph's glory did not die with him, but was preserved and handed down to posterity, by some public monument in his favour, or by some symbol representing him. Dr. Spencer contends, that the ark and cherubims were honourable hieroglyphics of Joseph; both of which had a symbolical reference to him, and preserved his memory; " Æquum est opinari, Deum cherubim et arcam, præ aliis omnibus instituisse, eo quod Josephi piissimi et charissimi monimentum extarent. Nam arca non tantum nomine, sed et figura cum Josephi arca, et cherubim cum bove, Josephi nomine et insigni, maxime conveniebant—ut utraque ejus vitam et mortem ab oblivione in æternum vindicarent." (Tom. ii. de Orig. Arcæ et Cherub. p. 878, 9.) But the learned Vossius has made it appear, with more probability, from the testimonies of Ruffin and Suidas, and other authorities and arguments, that the memory of Joseph was preserved under the Egyptian Apis: for he observes, first, that it is highly probable so extraordinary a person, so great a prophet and statesman, and so public a benefactor, as Joseph was, would have his memory consecrated to posterity: that the Egyptians were most likely to do this, by some symbolical representation of the kindness; and that no symbol was more proper for this than the Egyptian Apis, because the famine was prefigured by the *lean kine,* and the time of plenty by the *fat,* the ox being a known symbol of fruitfulness and plenty, which Joseph was in a very great degree the happy occasion of. It is evident likewise from Pharaoh's rewarding Joseph, that the Egyptians were desirous of shewing their gratitude; and it is no less certain, that it was the common practice among them, to perpetuate the memory of benefactors by some symbols, which though at first designed only for civil use, were afterward abused into idolatry and superstition. And, lastly, the very names, *Apis* and *Serapis,* give great light and probability to the conjecture: for Vossius conceives *Apis* to be the sacred name of Joseph among the Egyptians, and answers to the Hebrew אב *ab,* i. e. *father;* and such, indeed, he was to Pharaoh and his people, and Joseph expressly calls himself so, Gen. xlv. 8. The Scripture likewise informs us, that by the order of Pharaoh they cried before him, *Abrech,* which is a compound word, and means, according to the rabbins, both *king* and *father.* Serapis, it is well known,

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had a *bushel* on his head, another very significant symbol of Joseph; and the very name of *Serapis*, is probably derived from שור *sor*, which signifies a *bull*, and *Apis*. So that we seem here to have the sacred story of Joseph visibly traced through all the Egyptian darkness and superstition. (Vossius de Idololat. lib. i. Sulpic. Sever. lib. ii. cap. 21. in notis. Gregory's observations, p. 65. Reeves's Apology, vol. ii. p. 39.)

Ver. 15. *She delivered the righteous people and blameless seed from the nation that oppressed them.*] It has been an objection against this writer, that he represents the Hebrews, when they were in Egypt under the bondage of Pharaoh, as a just and irreproachable people; which is not agreeable to what Ezekiel says of them, and some others of the prophets, who accuse them as given to idolatry, in that place, and at that time, (Ezek. xx. 8. xxiii. 3.) Others think that, as a Jew, he speaks of them in general, according to the notion which they had conceived of themselves; for they were full of spiritual presumption, looked upon all other nations with the utmost contempt, as imagining themselves to be the only righteous and accepted, and thought every thing their due; and, that as God had shewn particular honour and kindness to the Jews, in choosing them to be his people, he would never reject them. In this latter sense the profoundly learned Dr. Jackson understands this place; for he observes of our author, "That though he was a man of an excellent contemplative spirit, as full as the moon in points of high speculation of God's general providence in governing the world; yet, when he comes to discuss the different manner of God's dealing with the righteous (which in his language are the seed of Abraham) and the wicked heathen, he betrays himself, in some measure, to be infected with a disease common unto his countrymen the Jews." The radical disease which was common to the whole Jewish nation at that time, and to this author in particular, he says, was this, "That, because they were the seed of Abraham, they were the only righteous and blameless seed. And however the Lord God of their fathers did often chastise and correct them, yet all his corrections were filial; (xi. 10. xii. 22.) that he would not, or could not, at any time plague them, as he had done the unrighteous heathen, or punish them with the like blindness of mind, or hardness of heart, as he had done the Egyptians. But St. Paul has given a receipt or medicine for curing this disease in his countrymen then living, and for preventing the like in after-ages, whether in Jew or gentile, (Rom. ix. 18.) *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* The extract of which aphorism is this, that the Lord was not so tied by oath or promise unto Abraham, but that he might and would harden the hearts, and blind the eyes, of his seed, after the same manner he had done Pharaoh's and the Egyptians', if at any time they should become as obstinate as Pharaoh and his people had been.—To harden the seed of Abraham, upon the like pride of heart, obstinacy, and contempt of God's forewarnings, could be no prejudice to God's oath to Abraham, no impeachment of his promised loving-kindness to David, but rather a proof to all the world, that the God of Abraham was no *respecter of persons:* but as they who in every nation fear him, and love righteousness, shall be accepted of him; so all those of any nation that despise him, and work unrighteousness, shall be rejected by him." (Tom. iii. 206, 7.) And the history of the Jewish people justifies this observation; for as they grew still more corrupt, wicked, and idolatrous, in the promised land, than they had been in Egypt, notwithstanding the many instructions, invitations, reproofs, and miracles, of their prophets and holy guides to reclaim them, God was at last obliged to send them captive to Nineveh and Babylon; and at length, when neither corrections nor benefits, nor even the coming of their own Messiah, could overcome their obstinacy, God was pleased to reject his once-beloved, and to call and adopt the gentiles that were afar off. But, perhaps, we may explain this passage of our author, which hath been excepted against for the reasons before given, in a good consistent sense, without supposing any prejudice or partiality to his countrymen, as the latter objection does, or that the author maintains any false fact in the instance before us, as is the sense of the former: for, 1. This writer may probably call the Jews a *righteous*, or, as the margin has it, a *holy people*, λαὸν ὅσιον, upon account of their external holiness, as being a peculiar people, a chosen generation, a holy nation, separated more immediately to God's service, and called with a holy calling. 2. The Jews may be here, not improperly, called, a *blameless seed*, σπέρμα ἄμεμπτον, upon account of the imputative righteousness of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, their forefathers: the root therefore being holy, the branches may be considered so in like manner. 3. Though the Jews cannot indeed properly be said to be a righteous and blameless seed, with respect to God, who permitted their disgrace and punishment in Egypt, upon the account of their wickedness; yet, with respect to Pharaoh and the Egyptians, they may be said to be righteous and blameless, just and irreproachable; *Qui n'avoient jamais offensé les Egyptiens*, as having never injured or offended them, though greatly oppressed by them: this is Calmet's exposition. (See Pref. sur le Livre de la Sagesse, et Comment. in loc.)

Ver. 16. *She entered into the soul of the servant of the Lord, and withstood dreadful kings in wonders and signs.*] *i. e.* She entered into the soul of Moses, here called *the servant of the Lord*, by way of eminence, as he is in many places of Scripture. It is observable, that this writer speaks of *dreadful kings*, in the plural number, though he only appeared before Pharaoh; nor is there any reason to imagine more kings than one in Egypt, except we should, with De Muis, include some neighbouring kings, then captive or tributary to Pharaoh. (Comment. in Psal. cv.) But this author, as I have before observed, (see note on ver. 14.) gives the names of kings to great men and nobles. We have an instance of the like plural expression, and upon the same occasion, Psal. cv. 30. *Their land brought forth frogs, yea, even in their kings' chambers.* Ἐν τοῖς ταμείοις τῶν βασιλέων αὐτῶν, LXX. Coverdale's translation refers it to Pharaoh only, *She stood by him in wonders and tokens against the horrible king.* The sense of the whole verse is, that wisdom entered into the soul of Moses, and spake by his mouth, and made him even a God unto Pharaoh, before whom, his royal issue, and his nobles, he wrought so many surprising miracles, as might have convinced them, that God was the sovereign ruler, not only over all the kingdoms of the earth, but even over the elements and universal nature.

Ver. 17. *Rendered to the righteous a reward of their la-*

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bours.] God gave the Israelites, at their departure, the goods of the Egyptians, as the reward of their labour among them, and as their just due for their past services. Many of the ancient fathers, as Irenæus, Tertullian, Epiphanius, &c. understand the case in this light, and look upon the spoiling of the Egyptians, as a piece of justice only due to themselves: for undoubtedly the Israelites ought, both in equity and strict right, to have had some wages or recompence for the labours and hardships they underwent in their service; to which they seem more entitled, considering the great benefits the Egyptians received from them in general, and from Joseph in particular. St. Austin, therefore, well observes, speaking of the Egyptians, "Homines peregrinos labore gratuito injustè et vehementer afflixerant; digni ergo erant et Hebræi quibus talia juberentur, et Ægyptii, qui talia paterentur." (Lib. xxii. cont. Faust.) We may add farther, in vindication of this fact, that it was done by the appointment and command of God himself, who thus punished the Egyptians for their injustice and cruelty to the Israelites. And though it is contrary to the law of nature, as well as positive law, to take away the just goods of another, because no man has a right for that purpose, yet the case is quite altered, when such an action is done by the command of God, who has an unquestionable right in, and power over, all persons and things, as the maker, and giver, and lord of all. There could be therefore no injustice in this particular, as God had an undoubted right to transfer the property of the Egyptians to the Hebrews. Nor does Scripture any where condemn or disapprove this fact; it is rather a confirmation of Scripture, for thus the promise to Abraham was fulfilled, *That nation whom they shall serve will I judge, and afterward shall they come out with great substance.* (Gen. xv. 14.) I shall not enter any farther into this argument; such as desire to see it discussed more at large, may consult Shuckford, Connex. Sacr. et Prof. Hist. vol. ii. p. 495. Waterland's Scripture Vindicated, par. ii. p. 10. Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, and other writers, who justify this fact by a great number of good reasons.

Guided them in a marvellous way, and was unto them for a cover by day.] This refers to the Divine protection exhibited to the Israelites in their journeying through the wilderness, when God led them by a pillar, which stood still when they were to rest, and moved forward when and which way they were to march. This pillar appeared as a cloud in the day, and served for a covering over them, to defend them from the scorching heat of the sun; which the writer of Ecclesiasticus expresses very strongly, when he calls it, σκέπη ἀπὸ καύσωνος, καὶ σκέπη ἀπὸ μεσημβρίας, (xxxiv. 16.) It was a cloud erected towards heaven, like a pillar upwards, but downwards flat and broad, spread over the body of the people, as afterward more eminently over the tabernacle; and, though but one pillar, had two different appearances and uses; of a cloud by day, to defend them from the heat, which, in those parts, was very excessive; and of a fire by night, to direct and illuminate them. Coverdale's and the Geneva Bibles express the first very properly, *On the daytime she was a shadow unto them.* This darkness of the cloud had also another use, *viz.* that it blinded and confounded their enemies, that they might not come near to assault them. Mr. Toland's account for one and the same thing giving both light and darkness to different parties, is very odd and singular, to say no worse of it: he supposes a fire was made by order of the Hebrew general, for a blind to the enemy, that they might be suspected to be where indeed they were not. (See his Hodegus, and note on xix. 7.)

And a light of stars in the night-season.] The Greek reads, εἰς φλόγα ἀστέρων τὴν νύκτα, according to Grabe's and some other editions; but ἄστρων, which the Vatican copy preserves, seems more proper and expressive; for ἄστρον signifies a *constellation*, or a great collection of stars together, according to Didymus, ἀστὴρ δὲ ἄστρου διαφέρει, ὅτι ὁ μὲν ἀστὴρ, ἕν τι ἐστὶ· τὸ δὲ ἄστρον ἐκ πολλῶν συνέστηκεν ἀστέρων, ζῴδιον ὄν, ὃ καὶ ἀστροθέτημα καλεῖται· (In Notis ad Il. Δ. 75.) Many of which constellations, by their joint and united light, might imitate a torch, or a *flame*, as the margin renders. But could the light of common stars, scattered here and there confusedly, assist the Israelites, travelling in a vast and pathless wilderness? or would so feeble a light serve for their direction, and be sufficient for all their purposes? Calmet compares to this light the ὁ ἀστὴρ, or the star which appeared at our Saviour's birth, (Matt. ii. 9.) "which (says he) was a light that moved in the air before the magi, something like the pillar of the cloud in the wilderness, which either stopped, or went forward, in such a manner, as was necessary for the conduct of the wise men to the proper place." This he takes to be an inflamed meteor in the middle region of the air, with miraculous and extraordinary circumstances attending it: as our version, following the Greek, seems to make the real light of the stars to be the guide of the Israelites in the night-season; ἀστέρων, taken in this sense, may be sufficient for their direction. But the Syriac and Arabic versions understand this pillar in a different sense, that it was *as* a light of stars in the night-season; the former reads, *vice splendoris siderei*, and the latter more fully, *noctù verò, vice fulgoris stellarum, splendor.* We may therefore understand this place, either of a number of constellations placed together, shining with a natural but very extraordinary light; or of a collection of meteors, with a preternatural light; or, lastly, comparatively, that this light imitated that of the brightest stars, in the sense of the oriental versions. In the Scripture, this appearance is described in much stronger terms; for the pillar, which appeared in the day like a cloud, is there mentioned to be like a light, or pillar of fire: and thus the Psalmist, *In the day-time he led them with a cloud, and all the night through with a light of fire.* (Psal. lxxviii. 14.) And to this the prophet alludes, when he says, *The Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of flaming fire by night.* (Isa. iv. 5.) Salvian rightly describes this pillar, with its different appearances, when he calls it, "Mobilem columnam, nubilam die, igneam nocte, congruas colorum diversitates pro temporum diversitate sumentem: scilicet ut et diei lucem lutea obscuritate distingueret, et caliginem noctis flammeo splendore claritatis radiaret." (De Gubern. Dei, lib. i.) It seems, after all, best, without aiming at explaining the nature of this appearance, to say, that the glorious Schechinah itself, in this pillar, gave light and comfort to God's own *peculium:* for the regent of this cloudy pillar was he that forms the light and creates darkness; and as *there was the hiding of his power, so his brightness there was as the light,* Habak. iii. 4. where the reading of the LXX. is too particular not to be taken notice of, καὶ ἔθετο ἀγάπησιν

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κραταιὰν ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ; for it intimates the principle upon which the great Goel, or deliverer, proceeded to exert this his might under these different appearances, *viz.* his strong and powerful love towards his people. (See note on xix. 7.) Messieurs du Port-Royal, besides the literal, give us a very useful allegorical sense of this pillar, *viz.* "That, as the cloud, by its overshadowing, sheltered the Hebrews from the extremity of heat, so the assistance of the Holy Spirit defends us against the burnings and flames of concupiscence; and as that light of fire guided them in a marvellous way in the very darkness of the night, so the Holy Spirit illuminates men's minds with its heavenly light, under their sad state of spiritual darkness; and with its holy fire cheers and comforts the saints in their greatest afflictions." (Comment. in loc.) And, indeed, according to the mystical sense of the fathers, the whole people of Israel, and that which befel them, were types or figures of Christ and his church, as the apostle himself makes them, 1 Cor. x.: their bondage in Egypt was a type of the slavery of sin, and their deliverance from thence, of our redemption from Satan: the desert through which they passed, and the difficulties they encountered in it, were a lively figure of the miseries of this life; as Moses, their leader, was of Christ; Canaan, of heaven; the Red Sea, of baptism; and manna, of his heavenly doctrine, which came down from heaven, and nourishes unto eternal life.

Ver. 19. *And cast them up out of the bottom of the deep, therefore the righteous spoiled the ungodly.*] The expression here is ambiguous, and the interpreters are accordingly divided about the true sense of it; the far greater part of them understand it, either of the Israelites' happy escape from the Egyptian bondage, or from the dangers of the Red Sea. This seems to be the sense of all the old English translations, of the oriental versions, and of the Vulgate, which metaphorically renders, *et ab altitudine inferorum eduxit illos*, as if their escape from thence was like a return from the grave. Calmet renders very expressly, *elle a retiré les siens du fond des abysmes;* and, among the sacred critics, Grotius and Badwell are of the same opinion. But there is another, and I think, with submission, a better sense, and more agreeable to the context, which applies these words to the Egyptians, which is favoured by the comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal, which renders, *qui les a rejettez morts du fond des abysmes; i. e.* that after they were drowned, they were cast by the tide, or by God's appointment, from the bottom of the sea to the shore, where the Israelites were encamped; by which means they possessed themselves of their spoils. And to this agrees, in great measure, the account which Josephus gives, "That the winds and the waves forced their arms ashore just at the place where the Hebrews had pitched their tents: which Moses understood to be another providence, in furnishing the people with arms in this manner that they so much wanted, which were gathered together and distributed among the Hebrews." (Antiq. lib. ii. cap. 16.) That the first sense, which applies these words to the Israelites' escape from the dangers of the Red Sea, cannot be the true one, seems manifest from the context, and the following reasons: 1. That the spoiling of the Egyptians, by the borrowing of their valuable goods, is mentioned just before, ver. 17. 2. That the mention of it follows very improperly, after the relation of the drowning of their enemies; for can any thing be more absurd than this reason, that, because they were happily escaped from the Red Sea, therefore they spoiled the Egyptians before they came to it? Διὰ τοῦτο, therefore, (ver. 20.) cannot relate to this first spoiling of the Egyptians. 3. At their departure from Egypt, when they went out laden with the goods of their oppressors, there was no hymn composed on that occasion, nor do we find any recorded in their history. But in the sense which I contend for, all is right and easy; for after the account of the Egyptians being drowned, and that they were cast up from the bottom of the sea to the side where the Israelites were, it follows very naturally, that the dead bodies coming by this means into their power, they therefore spoiled them, Διὰ τοῦτο ἐσκύλευσαν ἀσεβεῖς, *i. e.* stripped them, and took their arms from them, which they most wanted. And what confirms this is, that a hymn was actually composed and sung upon this signal overthrow of their enemies (see note following). 4. Ἀνέβρασεν is not to be taken in the sense of *leaping*, as Grotius seems to understand it, making it synonymous to σκιρτᾶν, and ἐξάλλεσθαι, but is a metaphor, taken from water issuing from its source or fountain; or rather, from the bubbles rising in boiling water. Our translation, therefore, is too flat, when it barely renders, *cast them up;* for the bodies rising in the act of drowning, are here, by a beautiful and expressive allusion, compared to bubbles rising in boiling water: and the true sense is, that he made the bodies of the Egyptians rise up like bubbles from the bottom of the sea. In the sense of our version the reading should be, ἐξέβρασε. (See 2 Maccab. i. 12.)

Ver. 21. *For wisdom opened the mouth of the dumb, and made the tongues of them that cannot speak eloquent.*] The ancient English versions read in the present tense, *Wisdom openeth the mouth of the dumb, maketh the tongues of the babes to speak;* which is the rendering of Coverdale's and the Geneva Bible, and may be considered as a judicious epiphonema, or useful reflection, wherewith the author concludes the chapter, to shew the great power of God, that he *who removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged, who leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools;* (Job xii. 17. 20.) can, with equal ease, make the dumb eloquent, and the mouth of babes and sucklings to chant forth hosanna and praise. But I think this verse relates rather to the foregoing, and concerns the same persons: the sense, according to the original, and the oriental versions, seems to be, that the Israelites, who before were silent through fear of the Egyptians, and were not, by the many former miracles wrought in their favour, induced to bless and praise God for them, upon a sight of the sudden and universal destruction of their enemies, from a sense of the danger which themselves had escaped, and out of gratitude for the unexpected spoils which they were possessed of, sang unto the Lord, upon the occasion, that hymn of thanksgiving, or eucharistical ode, which has been so justly celebrated by all antiquity, which Archbishop Usher styles, "Omnium, quorum uspiam memoria extat, primum et antiquissimum;" *I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea:* which was seconded by Miriam the prophetess, and all the Israelitish women, with timbrels and with dances: (Exod. xv. 1.) and, according to Grotius, the children joined in and completed the harmony. (Comment. in loc.)

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CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

The account of what wisdom did for the Israelites after their departure out of Egypt is continued. God's different dispensations towards the Egyptians and the Israelites in the wilderness are recited, and a parallel or comparison drawn between the plagues with which God smote the former, and the great mercies which he vouchsafed to the latter, even in the same instances. That the Egyptians were deprived of water, by the river and all their springs being turned into blood, by which plague great numbers died through thirst; but the Israelites were supplied with the same element at the same time that they were afflicted, and afterward, in a more extraordinary and miraculous manner, from the rock, which flowed like a stream or river, and even followed them from place to place in their travels through the wilderness.

Ver. 3. *THEY stood against their enemies, and were avenged of their adversaries.*] Such as the Amalekites, who fell upon those of the Israelites who, through weakness or fatigue, could not keep up with the rest of the army, (Deut. xxv. 18.)and endeavoured to oppose their passage, and hinder their settlement in Canaan; the king of Arad, who attacked the Israelites as they passed that way, and took some of them prisoners, without any provocation; (Numb. xxi. 1.) Og the king of Bashan, and Sihon king of the Amorites, who were likewise the aggressors, and opposed their march: for in this sense we are to understand the place, that the Israelites did not act offensively till they were assaulted; and thus the Arabic version takes it, *Bellum contra se gerentibus restiterunt,* and ἀμύνομαι is so used in the best Greek writers.

Ver. 4. *When they were thirsty they called upon thee.*] This happened twice in the wilderness; at Rephidim they first murmured for water, (Exod. xvii. 1.) and then at Kadesh, (Numb. xx.) But though this miraculous supply of water seems mentioned twice in this verse, there is no necessity to suppose, that both these times are referred to. There is the like repetition, Psal. lxxviii. 16. which seems, according to the rendering of the LXX. to relate to the same miracle. (See also Psal. cxiv. 8.) One may often observe in this book, and the like may be said of Ecclesiasticus and the book of Proverbs, that the same sense is frequently expressed in two periods or members of the same verse, with no other difference, but a variation of the phrase. This observation will be found not without its use; but there are two others in this chapter which it may be proper to mention, as being more material, and even necessary, for the right understanding this book, and may indeed be considered as the very keys of it, at least of the remaining part: we have the first in the next verse, *That by what things the Egyptians were punished, by the same the Israelites, in their need, were benefited;* which parallel is almost constantly pursued, and strongly drawn, by way of contrast or opposition, to acquaint us, as it were in one view, with the joint history of those people, and God's respective dealing with each of them: the second is in ver. 16. *viz. wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished;* which aphorism, well weighed and attended to, will be of great service for unravelling and explaining the *ten plagues* in particular, and the reason why God chose to afflict that people with *them,* rather than with any other.

And water was given them out of the flinty rock.] It is not without good reason that water is said to be given to the Israelites from *the rock.* That this miracle is mysterious, is evident from the circumstances related of it; for if there had been no other design but the relieving their necessity, that might have been supplied by rain from heaven; or if only a visible effect of the Divine power was intended to have been displayed, that had been as easily discovered, in causing new springs to rise from the earth; but Israel was not supplied with water from the clouds or the valleys, but from the rock. Hence therefore learned men have drawn a parallel, between the *rock* and Christ: 1. Because a *Rock* is the ordinary title of God in Scripture, and in a special manner it resembles Christ. (Psal. cxviii. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.) 2. It was the Son of God, *the angel of his presence,* the conductor of his people, that then spake to Moses, and stood upon the rock, to signify the relation it had to himself. (Exod. xvii. 6.) 3. The apostle himself so explains it, *They drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ,* 1 Cor. x. 4. (See Bates's Harmony, p. 458.

Ver. 6. *For instead of a fountain of a perpetual running river.*] Ἀντὶ μὲν πηγῆς ἀεννάου ποταμοῦ. Πηγὴ ποταμοῦ is not a very usual expression, and seems to relate, if it be the true reading here, to the source or fountain-head of the Nile, the river here intended: for thus much must be allowed, that the ancients inquired after nothing more than the fountains of the Nile. (See Stephan. Dict. Histor. Geograph. in voce *Nilus.*) And Strabo and other Greek writers constantly use the word πηγὴ in speaking of them, and even whole treatises have been wrote concerning them: and when any streams are corrupted, it is natural to ascribe the fault to the corruption of the fountains whence they flow, though perhaps the accident proceeds from some other cause. There may also be, possibly, an allusion in this expression to the fountain and river in the wilderness; for the place where the water issued from the rock in Horeb, was, in the strictest sense, πηγὴ ποταμοῦ; and indeed the stream flowing thence is expressly called by the LXX. πηγαὶ ὑδάτων, Psal. cxiv. 8. (See also Joseph. Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 1.) And the stream that followed (as St. Paul words it) the Israelites in the desert whereever they went (or as some conjecture the fact, *they* followed the *river* which way soever God directed *its* course, whereby he ordered their journeys as he pleased), was to them ἀένναος ποταμός. In allusion, I say, to this stream in the wilderness, πηγὴ ἀένναος may here perhaps be ascribed to the Nile. The Arabic version applies ἀεννάου to πηγῆς, and renders, *Pro fonte fluminis abundè manante; i. e.* instead of a clear and perpetual running spring, they were troubled with a river foul with blood. But as all the other versions join this epithet to ποταμοῦ, and as the opposition lies not between what the river was in its natural state, and after it was turned into blood, but between the Egyptians being deprived of water, and the Israelites supplied with it, in the same miraculous manner; and, which is of great moment in the present inquiry, *by the very self-*

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same instrument,—I am more inclined to think, that the true reading of this passage is, ἀντὶ μὲν πληγῆς ἀεννάου ποταμοῦ, see Exod. vii. 20. where the text says, that *he* (Moses) *lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, and all the waters that were in the river were turned into blood.* It is no less observable, that the same rod was the immediate instrument in the other miracle, *viz.* in supplying the Israelites with water; for the Scripture is very full and explicit in this point, *And the rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thy hand and go—And thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come out water.* (Exod. xvii. 5, 6.) This conjecture is confirmed likewise by the context, particularly ver. 5. which manifestly alludes to the rod that struck both the Nile and the *rock,* and may be equally applied both to the cause and to the effect. To establish this farther, I shall shew upon what account this river may be styled ἀένναος ποταμός: 1. Ἀένναος is applicable to it, as it is a common epithet of a river. Instances of this may be found in the classic writers; Horace, particularly, thus describes the perpetuity of its course,

> " Rusticus exspectans dum defluit amnis; at ille
> Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum."
> (Epist. lib. i. ep. 2.)

in opposition to brooks that often dry up, and have little or no water in them. Thus Calmet expounds this term, Comment. in loc. Besides this general reason, may not the river Nile in particular be so called, 2dly, as being, in the opinion of many learned men, one of the four rivers of Paradise, originally called Gihon? (Gen. ii. 13.) and as such may be considered, in point of time, as a perpetual running river. 3dly, The Nile may be termed ἀένναος ποταμὸς, as a never-failing river, its fountain being never dry, but its streams continually fed, though in a country where it seldom or never rains: and though its source remained concealed, yet its supplies were constant, and as it were miraculous. Hence the Phœnicians, Canaanites, Syrians, Greeks, and other travellers into Egypt, had a notion that God himself supplied Egypt with these surprising and never-failing waters: and hence Homer probably calls the Nile, Διΐπετὴς ποταμὸς, *Fluvius à Deo missus,* i. e. *a river sent and maintained by God;* Odyss. Δ. 581. Strabo gives it the same title, lib. xvii. And indeed the Egyptians represent this constant miracle by the symbol of a river flowing out of the mouth of the sun, the known and fixed image of God among them. 4thly, The Nile may be called ἀένναος, as being, according to the Egyptian notion, *perpetual à parte ante,* for they esteemed water to be the very origin and principle of all things, and on that account they worshipped it: the Nile in particular is sometimes termed, Ζεὺς Αἰγύπτιος, and therefore God smote it in the first place. And thus Philo, " Primum ab aqua Deus pœnas infligit, propterea quòd, cum aquam supra modum Ægyptii colerent, originem rerum omnium et principium esse statuerent, eam primum æquum esse putavit ad eorum castigationem advocare." (De Vita Mosis.) Lastly, May not this very ancient and celebrated river, by Juvenal called, *the river,* by way of eminence, (Sat. xv.) be considered as ἀένναος, in contradistinction to the occasional water in the wilderness, which then first existed, and at length ceased to flow?

River troubled with foul blood, for a manifest reproof of that commandment whereby the infants were slain.] *i. e.* God changed the waters of the Nile, which before was a clear running stream, into a discoloured and foul water, or rather a sort of stagnating blood, wholly unfit for the Egyptians' use. Our author seems to represent the river as turned into real blood, at once to exemplify and chastise the crime of drowning the Hebrew infants therein. (See Origen and Theodoret in cap. vii. Exod.) The latter expressly says, " Hanc plagam intulit Deus propter pueros Judæorum in aquis immersos; fluvius enim, mutatus in sanguinem, conqueritur de cæde puerorum per eos commissâ:" *i. e. This plague God brought upon them for the children that were drowned, and the river thus turned into blood complained of that slaughter.* Coverdale's version is to the same purpose, *Unto the enemies thou gavest man's blood instead of living water,* which is a literal translation of the Vulgate, *pro fonte sempiterni fluminis humanum sanguinem dedisti injustis.* St. Austin (de Miraculis Scripturæ) and other ancient writers, mention what is equally surprising, that the springs and fountains themselves were likewise so affected and changed, that if an Egyptian dug for fresh water, what issued forth from the earth was like actual blood from a wound. Philo's account is nearly the same; " Unà cum mari cruentantur lacus, fossæ, alvei, rivi, putei, fontes, universa in Ægypto aquæ vis, apertæque humoris venæ velut in profluvio sanguinis, cruoris torrentes emitterent." (De Mose, lib. i.) But others think, that this calamity extended only to that part of the river, or those waters, that were nigh the court of Pharaoh; for if this plague was universal, the magicians could have had no place to practise their skill in, and effect the like. (See Jackson's works.) That such bloody and foul water should breed distempers in the Egyptians, and be even poisonous to them, is no wonder; but Josephus adds, that this was particular to the Egyptians, for the water was wholesome to the Israelites, and with respect to them retained its own nature and usual sweetness. (Antiq. lib. ii. cap. 14.)

Thou gavest them abundance of water by a means which they hoped not for.] God gave the Israelites drink in a barren and uninhabited desert, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; and this he did from a solid and unpromising rock. The Israelites, according to Josephus, (Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 1.) " had conceived a notion, from Moses's mentioning water out of the rock, that, dry and wearied as they were, a way was to be cut by them through the rock for the water, which gave them more uneasiness, than the thoughts of the cooling refreshment gave them pleasure. But when, upon the striking of the rock with the rod of Moses only, a large stream of water forthwith followed, they praised God for giving them σωτηρίαν οὐδ' ἐλπισθεῖσαν." An expression not very unlike our author's. And, to increase the miracle, this crystal stream not only refreshed them for that time in their distress, but even followed them in their journey. The Jewish rabbins are very fond of the conceit, that the rock itself followed them; but others, to soften this prodigy, more wisely assert, that the water from the rock became a river, and flowed after the camp. The reasons for this opinion are, 1. That from the time of this flow of waters from the rock at Horeb, until they came to Kadesh, the Israelites are not said ever to have wanted water, which they must have continually stood in need of, and indeed perished for want of, in their passage through the wilderness, if God had not thus miraculously supplied

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them. 2. Some expressions in the Psalms seem to imply, that a river from the rock attended them from place to place in their journeyings. (Psal. lxxviii. 16, 17. 21. cv. 40.) 3. St. Paul says, that they *drank of the rock which followed them,* (1 Cor. x. 4.) which the best interpreters agree in expounding of the water that flowed from it, and went along with them. (See Pool, Whitby, Hammond in loc. and Usher's Annals ad A. M. 2513.) The rendering of the Syriac version of this passage is very particular and remarkable, *Quibus et aquam dedisti in optima illa vita, quæ non deficit,* alluding probably to that living water, John iv. 14. which our Saviour promises to all the faithful, which *shall be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* In like manner this miracle has been allegorized by the fathers, and is, according to them, a visible representation of the overflowings of grace; for Christ is the true rock from whence issue those waters of life, which quench the thirst of his people, during the weary steps they take in the wilderness of this mortal life.

Ver. 8. *Declaring by that thirst then how thou hadst punished their adversaries.*] A contrast or comparison is carried on here, and in the verse foregoing, between the thirst of the Egyptians, occasioned by their foul and distempered water, and that of the Israelites in the wilderness; the first was the just punishment of obstinacy and wickedness, the second was designed to prove and admonish God's chosen people. The sense of the whole verse is, that the Israelites perceived, by their thirst of a short continuance, the different manner of God's dealing with them and with the Egyptians; the former he treated with mercy and favour, and the latter with the utmost rigour and severity. St. Austin observes, that in this plague "bibentibus erat exitium, non bibentibus pœna ob sitim quam sustinebant," (de Mirac. Script.) *i. e. unto them that drank it was death, and unto them that drank not it was a sore punishment on account of their great thirst.* Philo says yet more expressly, πολὺς καὶ ἀνθρώπων ὄχλος ὑπὸ δίψους διαφθαρεὶς, κ. τ. λ. *hominum siti enectorum magnus numerus acervatim jacebat in triviis, non sufficientibus domesticis ad sepulturæ officia,* (de Vita Mosis, lib. i.) i. e. *a great number of persons, dead with thirst, lay by heaps in the streets, their servants or friends not being able or sufficient to bury them.*

Ver. 9. *They knew how the ungodly were judged in wrath and tormented.*] Ἔγνωσαν πῶς ἐν ὀργῇ κρινόμενοι ἀσεβεῖς ἐβασανίζοντο. I think the rendering of Coverdale's and the ancient English versions far preferable: *When they were nurtured with fatherly mercy, they knowledged how the ungodly were judged, and punished through the wrath of God.* The Geneva Bible is to the same effect, *When they were chastised in mercy, they knew how the ungodly were judged, and punished in wrath,* ἐν ὀργῇ ἐβασανίζοντο, which is the better construction. *Judged in wrath,* as our version has it, seems to carry a reflection upon the equity of God's proceedings. The oriental versions understand it in like manner, and render accordingly.

Thirsting in another manner than the just.] The different effect of their thirst sufficiently appears from the description in ver. 8. that of the Israelites being only troublesome for a time, but the other was dangerous and fatal. The Greek, Vulgate, and all the ancient versions, entirely omit this sentence in this place. Our translators seem to have inserted it here, to illustrate this verse, and specify the torment: it is fetched from ver. 14. in the Vatican copy (the 15th in Grabe's edition), where it certainly is very improperly placed, as having no manner of relation to the context. So that one cannot but wonder how all the copies and versions should conspire, as it were, in this mistake, and our translators alone be so sagacious to find it out, and restore this dislocated passage to its proper place. Though it would not come in amiss at the end of the eighth verse, reading only διψήσαντας, instead of διψήσαντες.

Ver. 10. *For these thou didst admonish and try as a father, but the other as a severe king thou didst condemn and punish.*] When the Israelites were chastised, their trial continued but a short time, and God never entirely withdrew his mercy and loving-kindness from them; even their chastisement was tempered with tenderness. But the Egyptians were loaded with miseries without intermission; for after having harassed them with ten successive plagues, which terminated in the death of their first-born, God at length drowned the whole army of Pharaoh at once in the Red Sea. This distinction, and the different manner of God's acting, is well expressed here, under the respective images of an indulgent father, and an inexorable king: and the opposition is no less beautifully preserved in the terms ἐδοκίμασας and ἐξήτασας. As the former implies kindness and respect, so the latter signifies the extremity of punishment, the putting a man to the rack, and examining him by torture. And thus it is used by this author, chap. i. 9. ii. 19. iv. 6. vi. 4. and in the book of Ecclesiasticus, xvi. 22. xxiii. 10. The comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal has a judicious and useful reflection upon this passage: "That we may hence learn with what patience and thankfulness the just ought to bear the evils which happen to them in this life; for though calamities are common to them with the wicked, yet the reason of sending them is infinitely different: God sends afflictions to good men as a tender father, who chastises his children, because he loves them; but with respect to the wicked, they are to be considered as the just punishment of an abused master, or an enraged king." (Comm. in loc.)

Ver. 11. *Whether they were absent or present, they were vexed alike.*] Some interpreters understand this, that whether the Egyptians were present, or at a distance from the place where Moses was, they were equally tormented; for there was this very remarkable difference between the miracles wrought by Moses, and those of the magicians—that his were permanent, and extended over all the land of Egypt at the same time; Moses no sooner orders frogs or locusts, but they appear at once, and cover the face of the whole country, so that the absent as well as present, are equally incommoded by them: but theirs were but of short continuance, and disappeared almost as soon as produced; and their influence went no farther than the spot where the magicians themselves were. But the context seems rather to require the following sense,—that the Egyptians were equally tormented in the absence and presence of the Israelites, both when they were in Egypt, and after they were delivered from it. When they were in Egypt, they were visited with ten different plagues on their account; and after their departure thence, they were envious and uneasy at the prosperity of a people whom they hated and despised.

Ver. 12. *For a double grief came upon them, and a*

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groaning for the remembrance of things past.] Διπλῆ γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἔλαβε λύπη, καὶ στεναγμὸς μνημῶν τῶν παρελθουσῶν. The true rendering of this place is, *Grief and groaning came upon them doubly* (for διπλῆ seems here to be used adverbially) *upon the remembrance of things past.* Our translation expresses this ambiguously, it seems as if one member of the sentence was wanting; but the ancient English versions quite mistake the sense of the passage; for can any thing be more foreign to it, than the rendering of Coverdale's and the Geneva Bibles? *Their grief was double; namely, mourning and the remembrance of things past.* Or διπλῆ may be understood, not numerally, to signify a precise number, but as a Hebraism, that great grief and concern fell on them, upon the recollection of things past. Junius seems to have translated it not amiss, *Duplex eos occupavit dolor et gemitus, rerum præteritarum recordantes.* And thus Calmet, *Ils trouvoient pour eux un double sujet de peines, et de larmes, en se souvenant du passé.* "Their first grief (says he) was their reflection upon their past plagues, their want of water, the death of their cattle, and that more lamentable one of their first-born. Their second cause of grief and concern was the consideration of the happiness of the Israelites, since their going out of Egypt, and God's merciful dealing with them in the wilderness. The first arose from a shame of being seen in such distressed circumstances by a people whom they despised; and the latter, through a jealousy of the happiness which that people, through God's favour, was possessed of." (Comment. in loc.)

Ver. 13. *When they heard by their own punishments the other to be benefited, they had some feeling of the Lord.*] Our version is somewhat obscure; the meaning is,—When they understood the Israelites to be assisted and refreshed with a supply of such things, as they were punished with the want of, and considered the different conduct of God towards his friends and enemies, they at length acknowledged his power, which before they disregarded, and were obliged to own, that what had happened to them was from the avenging hand of God and the effect of his enraged justice. For the reason of this different procedure, with respect to the same thing or element, was to exemplify to the world in general, and the Egyptians in particular, that God hath power over all his creatures to continue or alter them, to give or take away the use of them, from whom or in what manner he pleases.

Ver. 14. *For whom they rejected with scorn when he was long before thrown out at the casting-forth of the infants, him in the end, when they saw what came to pass, they admired.*] *i. e.* That same Moses, who had been sometimes the subject of their raillery, whom they had treated with scorn and contempt in the execution of his ministry, who had been formerly exposed and thrown into the river by the cruel order of Pharaoh, and from a happy escape thence received his name, in the end commanded their wonder and admiration by the power of his miracles, which declared him to be the favourite of heaven, the ruler of nature, and the *god of Pharaoh.* And it is the opinion of some writers, that even among the Egyptians, Moses was honoured after death with religious veneration. Eusebius, from the authority of Artapanus, says expressly, that he was honoured among that people ἰσοθέου τιμῆς. (Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. Cyril. cont. Jul. lib. i. Tenison on Idolatry.) Our version of this place is obscure; it represents the Egyptians ridiculing Moses when he was flung into the river; which scoffing, though it may well be supposed true in general, yet is not particularly applicable to Moses at that time: it is better therefore, and more agreeable to truth, to understand this of him in his public character, and in his employment, as God's messenger to Pharaoh; ἀπείπον χλευάζοντες, was often true. I think, therefore, the sense would be more determinate and clear, if part of the first sentence was included in a parenthesis, thus, ὃν γὰρ (ἐν ἐκθέσει πάλαι ῥιφθέντα) ἀπείπον χλευάζοντες, ἐπὶ τέλει τῶν ἐκβάσεων ἐθαύμασαν· i. e. *him, whom they rejected with scorn (that same Moses who was long before thrown out with the rest of the children), they in the end admired,* &c. For it was a remarkable instance of providence, as well as matter of great surprise to the Egyptians, that he who was thrown into the river should be the instrument of turning that river into blood, and that the Israelites, seemingly an abandoned and forsaken people, should be so wonderfully succoured and preserved.

Ver. 15. *But for the foolish devices of their wickedness, whereby being deceived they worshipped serpents void of reason.*] God, by way of punishment for the folly and iniquity of the Egyptians, permitted them to fall into the most ridiculous idolatries, to adore even crocodiles and venomous serpents. Jupiter in Lucian says, that the Egyptian gods were αἰσχρὰ καὶ γελαιότερα, *filthy and more ridiculous than the gods of other nations.* (De Concil. Deorum.) And it is observable, that their deities are called not only by the fathers, but by the poets, *Portenta* instead of *Numina.* Thus Juvenal:

> ——"Quis nescit qualia demens
> Ægyptus portenta colat?" (Sat. xvi.)

And Virgil pays them no greater compliment when he calls them

> ——"Omnigenûmque Deûm monstra."
> (Æn. lib. viii. ver. 698.)

Origen has the like charge against the Egyptians, and exposes some of their favourite deities with much pleasantry. "When you approach (says he) their sacred places, they have glorious groves and beautiful chapels, temples with magnificent gates and stately porticoes, and many mysterious and religious ceremonies; but when once you are entered, and got within their temples, you shall see nothing but a cat, an ape, or a crocodile, a goat or a dog, worshipped with the most solemn veneration." (Orig. cont. Cels. lib. iii.) Ælian says, that serpents among the Egyptians τιμῶνται ἰσχυρῶς, *are zealously worshipped,* that they are kept in their houses, and become so tame, that even among their children they are innocent and inoffensive. He describes their *latibula,* diet, and the manner of feeding them, and shews in many instances the great care taken of them, and the particular regard paid to them. (Ælian. lib. xvii. Hist. Animal. cap. 5.) Philo is very express as to the crocodile in particular, Ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ τὸ ἀνθρωποβόρον καὶ θηρίων ἀργαλεώτατον κροκόδειλος, κ. τ. λ. i. e. *The crocodile which devours men, and is the fiercest of animals, is bred in the sacred river Nile, and abounds in those parts where he is worshipped by the natives.* (Fragm. Philon. tom. ii. p. 646.) Juvenal, to expose the superstition of

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the Egyptians, very ludicrously describes a fierce contest between the inhabitants of two neighbouring towns about the superior honour of a serpent or an ape; (Sat. xv.) and Tully, amongst the monstrous objects of their worship, reckons *crocodilos, aspidas, serpentes.* (De Consol. See note on xv. 18.) Herodotus speaks of ἱεροὶ ὄφιες, or *sacred serpents* about Thebes, which, when they were dead, were buried by the superstitious with great pomp in the temple of Jupiter. (Herod. in Euterpe.) It is certain, that in the Egyptian hieroglyphics no symbol was more frequent than that of a serpent. (See Orus Apollo.) Many reasons are assigned by the learned for the particular honour paid to serpents—as, because they can twine and turn themselves into all shapes; hence probably called σκολιοὶ ὄφιες by our author, (xvi. 5.) and because they enjoy, as it were, perpetual youth, by annually casting their skin, and therefore not improperly made the symbols of life and health in Egypt and other countries: but these, however plausible for their being made symbolical representations, are not sufficient reasons for their worship, which more properly owes it original to the subtilty and artifice of the devil; for it is his favourite stratagem, his darling engine, to deceive mankind under this form, encouraged, no doubt, by the fatal success of his first attempt upon Eve in this borrowed shape. Nor is this true only of the Egyptians, but, wherever the devil reigned, the serpent was had in some peculiar veneration. (See Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac. b. iii. cap. 3.)

And wild beasts.] Tully observes of the Egyptians, that they consecrated almost every kind of beasts; "Omne fere genus bestiarum Ægyptii consecrârunt." (De Nat. Deor. lib. iii.) But the sacred animals which they principally regarded were, according to a learned writer, these that follow, *viz.* "the serpent, the beetle, the hawk, the wolf, the lion, the goose, the crocodile, the bull, the cat, the dog, and the baboon. These, as being symbolical of their two principal deities, Osiris and Isis, they accounted sacred, and substituted them in the place of their deities." (Shaw's Travels, p. 397.) At first, as Plutarch thinks, they did not directly worship these, but adored the divinity that was represented in and by them. But though it is certain that the Egyptians chose at first the figures of beasts for the symbols, or hieroglyphical signs, of their gods, yet it is as certain, that at length their worship came to be terminated in them; for as they worshipped their Jupiter Ammon under the figure of a ram, their Anubis under that of a dog, from whence Virgil calls him, *Latrator Anubis,* and their Apis under that of a bull, or ox; so, in time, at least among the vulgar, who considered not sufficiently the intention of these symbols, these representations were esteemed as real and original deities themselves. Lucian's account of the introduction of these animals into their theology is very extraordinary, and even ludicrous, "That in the wars between the gods and the giants, the former for safety fled into Egypt, where they assumed the bodies of beasts and birds, which they ever after retained, and were accordingly worshipped and reverenced in them, εἰσέτι καὶ νῦν φυλάττεσθαι τὰς τότε μορφὰς τοῖς θεοῖς." (De Sacrificiis.) Grotius thinks the original of this practice of worshipping beasts came from hence, *viz.* that the stars were by astronomers cast into the forms and shapes of particular beasts, and great benefits were supposed to be received from their influence. (Explicat. Decal.) And it must be confessed, indeed, that many of the animals, of which the stars bear the name, and to which, by a strong fancy, they were imagined to bear some resemblance, were honoured with a religious veneration by the Egyptians, such as the bull, the ram, the goat, and the dog. The first of these animals, being their favourite Apis, the prophet Jeremiah takes notice of, (xlvi. 15.) and, by a severe sarcasm, according to the version of the LXX. exposes the worship of it; for he represents it as flying from the desolation of Egypt: and the question, Διάτι ἔφυγεν ἀπὸ σοῦ ὁ Ἄπις, ὁ μόσχος ὁ ἐκλεκτός σου; (which is the reading likewise of the Arabic version) shews its inability to assist others in distress, though by the Egyptians esteemed Θεὸς ἐναργέστατος. (See Ælian. de Animal. lib. xi. cap. 10. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. tom. ii. p. 848.) The last, *viz.* the dog, was the peculiar object of worship of a whole Egyptian province, and was an animal reverenced and sacred from one end of Egypt to the other. This Juvenal means, when he says,

"Oppida tota canem venerantur"—— (Sat. xv.)

And in the same manner the other pagan writers make themselves merry with the Egyptian superstitions. (See note on xii. 24. xv. 18.) Nor can we, if more authorities were wanted, have a stronger instance of the very particular regard paid by the Egyptians to dogs, cats, and sheep, than what Prideaux mentions, *viz.* "that Cambyses placed these in the very front of his army, when he took Pelusium, as knowing them to be sacred to, and honoured by, them." (Connex. vol. ii. p. 14. in not.)

Thou didst send a multitude of unreasonable beasts upon them for vengeance.] The author of this book mentions elsewhere, (xvi. 3.) beasts being sent among the Egyptians as instruments of vengeance; though no express mention is made of this in Exodus, or any part of Scripture. Indeed, in Exod. viii. 21. where the text reads, *Behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee,* the margin has it, *a mixture of noisome beasts;* and the Chaldee paraphrase on Psal. xviii. 45. renders more explicitly, *a mixed multitude of wild beasts of the field.* The Jews have a notion, as appears from the author of the Life and Death of Moses, quoted by Bishop Patrick in loc. that God sent lions, wolves, bears, and leopards, and such-like furious beasts, which killed not only their cattle in the field, but their children in their houses; which seems likewise to be the opinion of Josephus, who, among the Egyptian plagues, reckons θηρία παντοῖα καὶ πολύτροπα. (Antiq. lib. ii. cap. 14.) But as Bochart, De Muis, and other good writers, understand these passages of Scripture of swarms of flies only, so it is plain from what follows in our author, that wild beasts are not here to be understood, but rather frogs, locusts, and venomous flies. And thus Calmet renders, *des grenouilles, des mouches, des sauterelles, des poux.* (Com. in loc.) I think therefore here, and in Rev. iv. 6. where there is the like mistake, ζῶα would be better rendered *living creatures* than *beasts;* and so the same word is well translated, Ezek. i. 5. The reflection of Messieurs du Port-Royal upon this occasion is very just, and too fine to be omitted; *L'homme abuse de la creature: i. e.* "Man abused the creature to provoke God, and God made use of the creature to punish man: he shewed his equity at the

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same time in proportioning the punishment to the crime, and his power, in making even the smallest, and otherwise the most despicable creatures, become formidable to man, which he can do with the greatest ease, when he pleases to make use of them as the instruments of his vengeance." (Comm. in loc.)

Ver. 16. *That they might know that wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished.*] In God's government of the world, instances are very frequent where the nature of the sin, and the punishment attending it, have very remarkably answered to each other. It would be almost infinite to transcribe profane history upon this occasion; but it may not be unacceptable to exemplify the truth of this observation in general, from the principal facts of this nature recorded in Scripture, nor improper to illustrate it from a survey of the plagues of Egypt in particular. To begin with the first sin, which, it is melancholy to observe, was almost as early as the very existence of man: Adam eats of the forbidden fruit of the earth, and the curse of the ground was the punishment to him and all his posterity. The overflowing of vice in the old world was miraculously punished with a deluge of waters; and Sodom, that had burned so long with unnatural lust, was at length consumed by fire and brimstone. Nadab and Abihu, for putting strange fire in their censers, were instantly struck dead in the tabernacle, by fire from heaven. Samuel observed the like rule of justice and retaliation in the execution of Agag, pronouncing, *That as his sword had made women childless, so should his mother be childless among women.* The adultery and homicide of David, was revenged by the incests and murders of his children; and, because he gloried in the number of his people, he was punished with the loss of seventy thousand of them by pestilence. And the barbarous Adoni-bezek, who had cruelly dismembered so many captive princes, met himself at last with a suitable requital, and was treated in the same manner. Hezekiah's vanity, in shewing his riches and treasures to the ambassadors of the king of Babylon, was requited with the threat, that all that he had thus proudly shewn, should one day be carried away into Babylon. The like return was made to Saul, Goliath, Ahab, Jezebel, and Jehoiakim. (See also Ezek. xxxv. 15. Isa. xxxiii. 1. Joel iii. 6—8.) But this retribution, called ἀντιπεπονθὸς, or *the punishing like with like*, will be best and most appositely exemplified in the history of the Egyptians in particular, where the connexion between the crime and the punishment, is visibly distinguishable in every one of the plagues. 1. God turned the river into blood, and thereby rendered its water not only useless, but unwholesome, to punish the death of the Hebrew infants thrown into it. 2. The disagreeable croaking of frogs throughout the land of Egypt, represents either the cries of the children, or the shrieks of the oppressed Israelites. 3. The nastiness of lice was not only designed to chastise the effeminacy and luxury of the Egyptians, but, according to the Jews, was intended to punish them for employing the Israelites in dirt and filth. 4. The stings of the venomous flies revenged their oppression by cruel and painful tasks. 5. God destroyed their cattle by a murrain, because they had deprived the Israelites of their cattle, and had used them like beasts of burden. Or, we may suppose this plague to be inflicted for their worship of beasts. 6. The biles on the Egyptians themselves, from head to foot, represented the marks of cruelty upon the flesh of the Israelites by their blows and scourges. 7. God revenged their reproaches, insults, and menacing language, by lightnings, strange hail, and thunders, which the Hebrew and the LXX. style *the voices of God*, and the Chaldee paraphrase very expressly, *Tonitrua Maledictionis.* 8. As they robbed and deprived the Israelites of their wages, the locusts in return ate up all the fruit of their ground. 9. The Egyptians kept the Israelites close prisoners, and God confined them as remarkably by that thick darkness which would not permit them to stir. 10. They evil-entreated God's first-born, his chosen people, for a long time; and God destroyed all their first-born in one moment. In the Jewish writings there are many examples, in which the vengeance of God has discovered itself in a manner and way adapted and suited to the very crimes. (See particularly, 2 Macc. ix. 5, 6. and iv. 24. 32.) Nor is the connexion less visible in the history of the church, and its persecutors.

Ver. 17. *For thy Almighty hand that made the world of matter without form.*] The author seems to intimate by this expression, that God created the world out of pre-existent matter; and possibly he may speak this according to the opinion of the Platonists, who held not any temporal creation of the world, in the strict and proper sense of that word, but the production of its form only from *formless hyle*, which they called ἀκοσμίαν, or *shapelessness.* Plato, speaking of the Almighty δημιουργὸς, says, εἰς τάξιν αὐτὸ ἤγαγεν ἐκ τῆς ἀταξίας· (In Timæo.) But Chalcidius, in his commentaries upon this piece, after a great deal of learned pains taken to search out the true meaning of Plato, concerning the origin of *hyle*, thinks him to mean, not only the bringing of matter into form, but the original production of matter itself. (Chalcid. in Tim. p. 377.) Allowing, therefore, Plato to assert a pre-existence of rude matter before the formation of the world, yet he may be understood in the same sense that we believe a *chaos* to have gone before the bringing the world into the order it is now in. Our author, therefore, though in this sentiment he should transcribe Plato, may, and probably does, mean, that God at first created all matter out of nothing, which, in the beginning, was *tohu ve bohu*, i. e. *without form and void*, as our version has it; but in the Hexaëmeron, *God gave every thing its form, and ranged and placed them in the order we now see them.* And this, the writer to the Hebrews seems to mean, when he says, *That the worlds were made by the word of God, so that things which are seen were made,* ἐκ μὴ φαινομένων, (Heb. xi. 3.) or rather, ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, as the writer of the second book of Maccabees more fully expresses it, vii. 28. For this, as it conveys a higher idea of God's omnipotence, so is it likewise more agreeable to the scope of the argument; for the reasoning in the following verses, we may observe, proceeds *a majori ad minus*, that if God could create the world out of nothing, and stamp beauty upon the rude chaos, he might, with much more ease, make any part of the creation fulfil his vindictive will, or even create new instruments of his wrath on purpose.

Wanted not means to send among them a multitude of bears or fierce lions.] "God did not punish the obstinacy of the Egyptians all at once, but by degrees and intervals, that he might evidence his mercy, even in the pouring forth

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of his wrath and fury, and the desire he hath, that lesser chastisements might prevent greater, and exterminating judgments. It was as easy for God to have sent at first lions to have destroyed them utterly, as to send the flies and frogs by way of a timely warning; but he restrains the course of his wrath, and contents himself at first to inflict a lighter punishment, to the end that men, being affrighted with those timely and more favourable strokes, may judge how intolerable it will be to bear the extremity of his wrath, and to drink the dregs of the cup of his fury. But when he meets with hearts altogether hardened, he makes them pass through all the degrees of his anger; he is forced by their impenitence to proceed to extremity, and to be as firm in his justice, as they are in their obstinacy." (Royaumont's Hist. Bib.) Philo, who often imitates our author, has likewise some useful reflections upon this place: ἴσως τις ἐπιζητήσειε διά τι τοῖς οὕτως ἀφανέσι καὶ ἠμελημένοις ζώοις ἐτιμωρεῖτο τὴν χώραν, παρεὶς ἄρκτους καὶ λέοντας· κ. τ. λ. i. e. *"Perhaps some may inquire, why God punished Egypt with so small and despicable animals, passing by bears and lions?* The answer is, 1. That God designed to correct the inhabitants of that place, rather than quite destroy them; for if he had intended the latter, he never would have made use of such small and seemingly-insignificant creatures, as his instruments, but rather famine, or the pestilence, which are scourges from heaven, and carry a sweeping desolation along with them. 2. The different manner of God's procedure from that of his creatures, is hence discernible; for when men go to war to revenge an injury, they form the strongest alliances, and such as are able to assist them with the most powerful succours, and to strengthen their weakness most effectually: but God, who is the supreme power, and all-sufficient for his own great purposes, if at any time he makes use of instruments of vengeance, does not choose the greatest, or the strongest, being indifferent as to the natural powers of the creatures; but he gives to small, and otherwise feeble things, a superior and uncontrollable force, and by *them* more surprisingly punishes the wicked. For what is more despicable than lice? And yet such was their avenging power, as to subdue the Egyptians, and even extort a confession from the magicians themselves, that this was the finger of God." (Phil. de Mose, vol. ii. edit. Mangey.)

Ver. 18. *Or unknown wild beasts full of rage, newly created.*] This may either mean beasts of an uncommon kind, and of a fierceness hitherto unobserved, or beasts that have unusual venom, or in a greater degree; for so θυμὸς is often used; (see xvi. 5.) and thus Calmet understands it, *des bêtes d'une espece inconnue, pleine d'une fureur toute extraordinaire, ou d'un venin nouveau.* (Com. in loc.) The Vulgate renders, *novi generis irâ plenas ignotas bestias*, which may take in any or all the foregoing senses.

Breathing out either a fiery vapour, or filthy scents of scattered smoke, or shooting horrible sparkles out of their eyes.] Our version follows a copy which read βρώμους, *filthy scents;* but Calmet thinks βρόμου, which other copies retain, the true reading, and understands it of smoke, flung out with great force and much noise, like that which is thrown out from Mount Vesuvius, or that which the poets have feigned to issue from some fabulous animals, who are described by them as throwing fire with a roaring noise out of their mouth and nostrils: but should not the reading then be ἢ βρόμῳ λικμωμένους καπνὸν, or *with a mighty noise puffing out smoke?* The description here of imaginary beasts formed for destruction, which is very poetical, is not unlike that fine one of the leviathan in the book of Job, with this difference only,—that those circumstances of terror which are here given to this or that particular species of beasts, are all united in him *who can open the doors of his face, his teeth are terrible round about, by his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning: out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out: out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething caldron: his breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth: in his neck lodgeth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him.* Where the rendering of the LXX. is observable, and conveys a more lively idea of terror, ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ προτρέχει ἀπώλεια, i. e. *before him marches destruction. Behold, the hope of him is in vain; shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?* (xli. 9. 18—22.) Ovid's description, which has been much admired, comes far short of the inspired writer in the sublimity of the sentiments:—

> "Ecce adamanteis vulcanum naribus efflant
> Æripedes tauri, tactæque vaporibus herbæ
> Ardent"—— (Metam. lib. vii.)

Ver. 20. *Yea, without these might they have fallen down with one blast, being persecuted of vengeance, and scattered abroad through the breath of thy power.*] Λικμηθέντες ὑπὸ πνεύματος δυνάμεώς σου· i. e. *By one pestilential blast of air,* as it is generally understood; or it may be rendered in a higher sense, *by the Spirit of thy power,* or *the powerful* πνεῦμα, *the Spirit of the Almighty.* (See the note on v. 23.) The sentiment, according to the common acceptation, is very grand and magnificent, that God could have created beasts on purpose for vengeance, whose very looks, even without their violence or poison, should have scattered death; and with more ease could he have destroyed the Egyptians by a look, a word, a blast. And thus he destroyed the formidable army of the Assyrians: for when all things seemed desperate, and the enemies of Jerusalem thought themselves just masters of it, God sends his blast, and instantly a *hundred fourscore and five thousand became dead corpses.* (Isa. xxxvii. 7. 36.) The Psalmist has finely expressed this, by *the blasting of the breath of God's displeasure;* (Psal. xviii. 15.) which includes at once what our author has expressed in both these sentences. Job, whom this writer seems often to imitate, expresses himself concerning the desolation of the wicked in like manner: *They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, by the blast of God perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed,* (iv. 8, 9.) By any of these means might the Egyptians have perished, *being persecuted of vengeance,* and pursued by it, which the Vulgate understands, *of the stings of their own consciences,* "persecutionem passi ab ipsis factis suis;" and so Coverdale renders, *being persecuted of their own works.* But though God can use all or any of these extraordinary instruments of vengeance, yet his known and ordinary way of dealing is to follow the impartial rules of justice, and to proportion his punishments to the nature and quality of men's crimes.

But thou hast ordered all things in measure, and number,

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and weight.] This aphorism is very just, when applied to the beauty and harmony of God's natural works; but the context necessarily confines it to the government of the moral world, *viz.* that God's wrath, in his dealings with the children of men, is neither rash nor hasty, inconsiderate nor excessive, fickle nor inconstant, groundless nor unjust, as that of his creatures too generally is; but he exercises his justice with the strictest impartiality, *in measure, number, and weight; i. e.* he considers the nature of the offence, and the heinousness of its aggravations, and proportions the duration and extent of his vengeance accordingly. And as he acts not through passion, resentment, or hatred, his chastisements are always just, suited to the greatness of men's faults, and the demerit of sinners. It was not therefore without good reason that the heathens have painted Jupiter with a pair of scales, in which he weighs and determines men's respective destinies:

> "Jupiter ipse duas æquato examine lances
> Sustinet, et fata imponit diversa duorum," &c.
> (Æn. xii.)

Ver. 22. *For the whole world before thee is as a little grain of the balance.*] As God's justice weighs all actions in an equal balance, so, with respect to his power, the whole world may be considered as the most minute and inconsiderable thing in it. The prophet Isaiah has the very same comparison upon the like occasion, which the LXX. express almost in the same manner, ὡς ῥοπὴ ζυγοῦ, (xl. 15.) and it might as well have been expressed by the *dust of the balance* here, as our version has it in that place. For as the *nothingness of the world,* if I may be allowed the expression, is placed here in a contrast with God's infinite power, the most inconsiderable, the most imperceptible atom is properer to be mentioned, than a little grain, or any, even the least sensible weight, as the margin has it.

Ver. 23. *But thou hast mercy upon all, for thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men, because they should amend.*] Ἐλεεῖς δὲ πάντας ὅτι πάντα δύναται. Ὅτι should not be translated *for,* but *because;* the meaning being here, that almighty power is the cause or foundation of his unbounded clemency, as mercy is always the generous attendant upon real greatness. That this is the true sense, is plain from ver. 26. and xii. 16. This mercy God offers to all, and suspends for a time the execution of his vengeance, to give them time and room for repentance; and when they do repent, for so Calmet farther understands these words, as a tender father, whose arms are always open to receive the penitent and returning prodigal, he is ready to pardon all that truly turn to him. It is a pious reflection of Messieurs du Port-Royal, "Happy are those who rightly understand the infinite goodness of God, and improve the consideration of it to their great advantage; for they who know it only so far as to abuse it, and lose sight of his justice, in the pleasing contemplation of his mercy, and thereby make it the occasion of sin, have great reason to fear, that his patience and forbearance, so often disregarded by them, will at length turn into rigour and severity, according to the account of the true Solomon, Prov. i. 26, 27, &c."

Ver. 24. *For never wouldest thou have made any thing, if thou hadst hated it.*] God did not make the world, or any thing in it, for the mere exercise of his power, much less for the sport of his tyranny; but his goodness was the cause of the production of all things. God is an all-sufficient being, perfectly blessed in himself, nor was his essential felicity capable of any accession from the existence of any creature; it was therefore his free goodness only that moved him to create all things, that he might impart happiness to all his creatures. That notion therefore is certainly not only groundless, but cruel, which represents God from all eternity decreeing some men to endless and unspeakable torments, whom, according to this opinion, he must create with a formed design of making them unhappy, and falling, without any demerit, a sacrifice to his justice. This gloomy tenet of the supralapsarians, as it is called, is inconsistent with Scripture, which represents God not only loving all his creatures, but emphatically as *love itself.* How much juster, and more worthy of the great Creator, is that sentiment of Pherecydes, εἰς ἔρωτα μεταβλῆσθαι τὸν Δία μέλλοντα δημιουργεῖν? i. e. *God transformed himself into love when he made the world?*

Ver. 25. *How could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy will?*] The same tender affection which at first inclined God to create things as they are, and to communicate his extensive goodness to the several orders of beings, moves him to preserve the things made by him, and to continue them in their original condition. For there is nothing which God has created, that is either so distant, so little, or so inconsiderable, which God does not inspect and take care of, and, to speak in the language of a polite writer, which he does not essentially inhabit. And if the great Maker of all things should not be thus graciously disposed towards his creatures, if he should withdraw his overruling providence, there would not only be the greatest confusion, but an end of universal nature. Seneca assigns the true reason of the world's continuance, "manent cuncta, non quia æterna sunt, sed quia defenduntur curâ regentis:" (Epist. 58.) and the Psalmist, the cause of its decay, *When thou hidest thy face they are troubled, when thou takest away their breath they die, and are turned again to their dust.* (Psal. civ. 29.)

Or been preserved if not called by thee.] *i. e.* How could any thing have continued, if thou didst not order it to continue? And thus the Syriac version understands it, *Quomodo conservaretur aliquid, nisi tu præciperes?* And Calmet, *Qui se pût conserver sans vôtre ordre?* (Com. in loc.) To *call,* when applied to God, is the same as to create, ordain, command. And thus St. Paul uses the expression, (Rom. iv. 17.) *God, who quickeneth the dead, calleth those things which be not, as though they were; i. e.* he equally commands the dead and the living. And the Psalmist, (cxlvii. 4.) he *calleth them all by their names; i. e.* he commands them into his presence.

Ver. 26. *Thou sparest all, for they are thine, O Lord, thou lover of souls.*] Φιλόψυχος, or *lover of souls,* is the highest character that can be given of God. To call him φιλεβραῖος or φιλέλλην, *a lover of Jews or Greeks,* is in comparison a low and scanty denomination, as it expresses his care for only a part of the species. (See Barrow's Works, tom. ii. p. 208.) Nay, even φιλάνθρωπος itself, which is the most complex term, and takes in the genus of mankind, is not so amiable and perfect as φιλόψυχος, which includes his love and tenderness for the more valuable part of our

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nature. It is pretty observable, that God is no where in Scripture called φιλάγγελος, though even this character, if it was predicated of God, would not, with respect to us at least, be so adorable. But as God is said here to *spare all*, and to be a *lover of souls*, without distinction, perhaps our author may allude to that command of God to Moses, Exod. xxx. 12—15. that when they took the sum or number of the people, every man so numbered, from twenty years old and upwards, should pay half a shekel to the sanctuary, as a ransom for his soul to God, under the penalty of a plague to ensue the neglect of such a payment; which was a most easy and favourable capitation, inasmuch as, when their lives were the forfeit of their sins to God, God in mercy thus accepted a small ransom for them; and he accepted an equal ransom for the lives of the lowest as well as the highest among them, as they were all of equal value in his sight, who careth for all alike.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

The author mentions fresh instances of favour bestowed by God upon the Israelites, particularly in bringing them to, and settling them in, the land of Canaan, from whence he drove out the old inhabitants for their barbarous and inhuman rites of sacrificing their children, and feasting upon blood, &c. by which the holy land was defiled. But unworthy as the Canaanites were of mercy, God did not exterminate them at once, but his conduct towards them was very gracious. And from God's slowness to take vengeance even of these, he proceeds (ver. 19.) to deduce this useful and comfortable lesson, *viz.* that the intention of God's forbearance is to invite sinners to repentance, who are from hence encouraged to hope, that they shall be accepted through the sincerity of it; but such as slight his gentle corrections, and disregard his kind notices, shall at length experience a judgment worthy of God.

Ver. 1. *FOR thine incorruptible Spirit is in all things.*] This verse seems necessarily connected with the last of the foregoing chapter, though in all the editions it is separate and distinct from it. It contains the reason why God is φιλόψυχος, or *a lover of souls, viz.* because his Spirit dwelleth with or in every man, ἐστὶν ἐν πᾶσι even with the wicked, till they, through their own fault, force it to depart. (See note on i. 5.) This is manifestly the sense of the Syriac translation, which is more explicit than the rest of the versions, beginning this chapter, *Amator es animarum, quia Spiritus tuus bonus habitat in omnibus.* And this it does without any prejudice to its own perfection, for the Spirit contracts no defilement by its inhabitation for a time in a wicked breast; its purity, like that of the sun, remains unsullied, though it shines upon filth and dirt. The Vulgate is particular in reading this place with an epiphonema, or note of admiration, at the goodness of God, "O quàm bonus et suavis est, Domine, Spiritus tuus in omnibus!" *O how benign and full of sweetness is thy Spirit, O Lord, towards all men,* or in all its proceedings! which pious reflection may refer either to God's dealing with the Egyptians in the former chapter, or with the Canaanites mentioned in this, or respect his forbearance towards sinners in general. Grotius understands by *Spirit* here, the soul of man, that it is incorruptible and immortal, and an image of the Divine eternity, and refers to ii. 23. which is not so agreeable to the sense of the context.

Ver. 2. *Therefore chastenest thou them by little and little that offend.*] God does not proceed with haste and eagerness to punish his enemies, as if he was jealous or afraid that they would escape from him, nor does he pour on them all his wrath at once, or on a sudden, as if he could not command his temper or resentment: he punishes not usually with such excess and rigour, as if he purposely sought the destruction and utter extinction of his enemies, but, aiming at the amendment, welfare, and happiness, of those he corrects, he chastises rather as a master, a father, a God. St. Ambrose finely observes, "that what is here mentioned of God's lenity in punishing by little and little, is an excellent maxim for the conduct of life, for that we ought equally to avoid the two contrary extremes, and to observe a medium between a faulty complaisance, or tenderness, that pardons every thing, and a rigid severity, that excuses nothing, which makes no favourable allowance for human frailty, and is not at all softened by any mitigating and alleviating circumstances."

Ver. 3. *For it was thy will to destroy by the hands of our fathers both those old inhabitants of thy holy land.*] The Israelites were raised by God on purpose to be a scourge upon every shocking vice and flagrant villany of the nations around them. This people, eminently distinguished by the Divine favour and protection, God made choice of to chastise the enormities of the Canaanites, Amorites, &c. who were every ways profligate and utterly abandoned, as appears by the context, to drive them out of the holy land by their hands, and to retort in a particular manner their cruelties upon their own heads. As God had purposed utterly to destroy the nations of Canaan, so he did not dispose any of them to accept of peace from the Israelites, in order to their preservation; *it was of the Lord* (as the sacred text expresses it) *to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but be destroyed as the Lord commanded,* Josh. xi. 20. where the exaggeration of the expression is very observable, and is intended to denote the certainty and violence of their destruction. (See also Deut. vii. 1, 2.)

Thy holy land.] The Almighty at first represented himself to the Jews as a gentilitial God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; afterward, as a local Deity, who had preferred Judea to all other countries, and chosen it for his peculiar residence, on which account it is generally characterized in the sacred writings by the name of *his* land, (Levit. xxv. 23. Deut. xi. 12. Psal. x. 16. Isa. xiv. 25.) and here by this writer more fully, *his holy land.* It was called the *holy land,* κατ' ἐξοχὴν, either because it was promised to the patriarchs, and was the habitation of them and the prophets; or because God's chosen people dwelt there; or, lastly, because the true worship of God, under the old testament, chiefly flourished there. Upon account of the singular temperature of the air, the wholesomeness of the climate, the fruitfulness of the soil, and the very great plenty of all kinds of things, it is said in Scripture to flow with milk and honey, and Ezek. xx. 6. to be the glory of all lands, and frequently, upon account of the great

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blessings with which it abounded, it is made a type of heaven, from thence called the heavenly Canaan. No wonder therefore that God should promise this good land to Abraham and his seed for an inheritance, and that he should at length give it to the most worthy colony of his children. See ver. 7. and Adrichomius's Pref. to Theatr. Terræ Sanctæ, where he says, that it was anciently called the land of promise, and by the writers of the Old Testament, and Josephus, the land of Canaan, from Canaan the son of Ham, who lived there with his children. By Ptolemy, and the ancient geographers, it is styled Palestine, but the most common name is the *holy land;* and yet this does not occur in Scripture, nor any where in the Apocryphal writings, but here and 2 Macc. i. 7.

Ver. 4. *Whom thou hatedst for doing most odious works of witchcrafts.*] Canaan, from whom the Canaanites were descended, was the son of Ham, or Cham, and from him the learned derive the original of witchcraft and sorcery: he is thought by some to be the same with Zoroastres, the inventor of magic. Cassian acquaints us from very ancient tradition, that Ham, before he entered into the ark with his father Noah, engraved upon stones and plates of metals, which the waters of the deluge could not spoil, his art of magic and sorcery, that it might more effectually be preserved, which memorials he found when the deluge was over; and, communicating them to his children, propagated that art and wicked superstition among his posterity. (Cassian. Collat. viii. cap. 21.) He adds also, that, besides the elements, the inhabitants of Canaan worshipped a multitude of devils that presided over their τελετὰς ἀνοσίους, or *wicked rites.*

Ver. 5. *And also those merciless murderers of children.*] What is mentioned in this and the following verse about the inhuman murder of children, most undoubtedly relates to the sacrificing of them to Moloch. Thus Selden, whose authority is beyond all commentators, speaking of the rites of Moloch, de Diis Syris, Syntag. i. cap. 6. says, "Hæc sunt sacra, quæ Sapientiæ voluminis autor vocat τεκνοφόνους τελετάς," (cap. 14. com. 23. et cap. 12. com. 5, 6.) The sacrifices that were offered to Moloch were of seven sorts, six of them were the same as some of the Jewish sacrifices instituted by Moses; the seventh was the sacrifice of a son; and he that sacrificed this kissed the idol, which had the face of a calf, and to this the prophet Hosea is thought to allude, xiii. 2. The manner of offering the children to Moloch was this: The image was heated by fire put under it, till it was red hot, and shone again, and then the priests took the victim or child, and placed it in the burning arms of Moloch, which were extended on purpose; and that the parent or relations might not hear the shricks of the child, they danced before the image to the sound of drums, from whence the place was called *Tophet.* (See Fagius in Levit. xviii. 21. Selden de Diis Syris, Syntag. i. cap. 6. and note on xiv. 23.) That parents did sacrifice their own children, is evident from many instances even among the Greeks and Romans; and innumerable testimonies might be produced of it from profane writers, whether founded upon the mistaken instance of Abraham's offering up his son Isaac, I shall not determine. (See Philo de Abrah. Macrob. Saturn. Ovid. Fast. Sharrock de ἀνθρωποθυσίᾳ, p. 496, 7.) And that the worshippers of Moloch, among whom may be reckoned the Canaanites and Phœnicians, whom Grotius supposes to be the same, (in Deut. xviii.) Amorites, Moabites, Carthaginians, Cretans, Ammonites, Syrians, too many and sad instances of human degeneracy! did consent to have their children sacrificed to this monster of cruelty in particular, appears from many passages of Scripture. (Levit. xviii. 21. 2 Kings iii. 27. xxiii. 10. Jer. vii. 31. xix. 4, 5.) To instance in the Syrians only, we read expressly, (2 Kings xvii. 31.) that the Sepharvites burnt their children in honour of Adrammelech and Anammelech, which are said to be the gods of Sepharvaim, but, in reality, were no other than different names for Moloch, as the learned agree. (See Selden in loc. citat.) And the Psalmist observes, (Psal. cvi. 35.) that the Israelites, being mingled with these heathen, learned their works, insomuch that they likewise *offered their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan, and the land was defiled with blood:* ἐν τοῖς αἵμασι, LXX. *in sanguinibus,* Vulg. both in the plural number, to express the great effusion of it. Plutarch, Περὶ δεισιδαιμονίας, mentions what is still more shocking, that the parents even stood by when their children were offered upon such execrable occasions. But, that the parents themselves should be the very executioners, should kill with their own hands their own issue, innocent, harmless souls, destitute to be sure of help when their own parents were their betrayers and murderers, which our author mentions in the following verse, exceeds all instances of cruelty, as it does indeed almost all bounds of faith.

And devourers of man's flesh, and the feasts of blood.] Though one may easily guess at the author's meaning, yet this passage is very perplexed in the original; and, amidst the multitude of various readings, it is difficult to find the true one. The Roman edition reads, σπλαγχνοφάγων ἀνθρωπίνων σαρκῶν δοίναν, καὶ αἵματος. The Complutensian, σπλαγχνοφάγους ἀνθρωπίνων σαρκῶν, καὶ δοίναν αἵματος. Ald. edit. with Vatablus, δοίναν αἵματος ἐκ μυσοῦ. Our version manifestly follows the second reading, which seems countenanced by all the versions, which render in like manner. If we may suppose μισήσας to be here understood, or to be brought forward from the preceding verse, it will, perhaps, help the difficulty, and give some light and clearness to this intricate passage; *i. e. Thou hatedst both those old inhabitants of thy holy land, as being guilty of witchcrafts and abominable rites, and also the eaters of the bowels of men, comestores viscerum hominum,* as the Vulgate has it, or *the devourers of human flesh, and their feasts of blood,* &c. for so ἀνθρωπίνων σαρκῶν, I think, may be better rendered, as including the flesh of children, rather than man's flesh, as our version has it; for it seems to be this author's opinion, that they did eat the flesh of the children that were sacrificed; and from thence they may be here called σπλαγχνοφάγοι. Calmet differs from this writer, and says, "That though there are too many instances of their sacrificing both men and children to Saturn, or Baal (which are names likewise of Moloch), yet it is not sufficiently clear, either from Scripture or profane history, that they ate the entrails of the unhappy victims." (Comment. in loc.) We meet with σπλαγχνισμὸς, indeed, 2 Macc. vi. 7. and παράνομος σπλαγχνισμὸς, ver. 21. in the description of the feasts of Bacchus. But the entrails of beasts seem there only meant.

Feasts of blood.] The eating of blood was practised among the heathens in their sacrifices, treaties, feasts, ma-

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gical rites, and as a ceremony of initiation into their mysteries, and the worship of their demons. This the Psalmist alludes to, Psal. xvi. 5. which Aquila translates σπονδὰς αὐτῶν ἐξ αἱμάτων· and in this sense Spencer understands the place. (De Leg. Hebræor. vol. i. p. 30.) Maimonides observes of the heathens, that though they looked upon the eating of blood as an instance of impurity and uncleanness, yet it was practised by them, through a fond conceit that it was the food of their demons, and that, by eating of it, they should ingratiate and recommend themselves to them, and have a freer communication with them, and larger discoveries of future events made to them. Lucian's account, in his tract De Sacrificiis, of the revels of the demons at their feasts of blood, however witty or pleasant it may have been represented, yet, instead of inspiring us with any agreeable sentiments, cannot but appear shocking to all who have any bowels left, and are not themselves divested of the tenderness of human nature, which, far from being entertained with such unnatural repast, startles and shudders, as it were by sympathy, at the sad relation.

Ver. 6. *With their priests out of the midst of their idolatrous crue* (leg. *crew*).] There are, I think, as many readings of this place in the original, as there are editions, which have either no sense at all, or a meaning widely different. The Vatican edition reads, ἐκ μέσου μυσταθείας σου, which seems a manifest corruption; for what does μυσταθεία mean, or in what other author does it occur? The Complut. ἐκ μέσου μύστας θείας σου, which is no less unintelligible. The Vulgate, rendering *a medio sacramento tuo*, seems to have followed a copy which read μυστηρίου σου. But this reading of the passage is absurd; for how can the Canaanites, which knew not the true God, be said to feast upon blood in the midst of his mysteries, or indeed to act contrary to them, which they knew nothing of? Vatablus reads, μύστας θειασμοῦ, and Grotius more fully, ἐκ μυσοῦ μύστας θειασμοῦ. The Alexandrian MS. has ἐκ μέσου μύστας διάσου, joining the two words θείας σου in the second reading together, which seems in good measure to remove the difficulty; but I think the whole would be more correct and better connected, if the reading was, ἐκ μέσου μυστάς τε θιάσου, which Ald. edit. retains; i. e. *And also those priests of Moloch whom thou principally hatedst, and directedst thy vengeance against, and didst determine* ἐκ μέσου ἀπολέσαι, *to take out of the way;* or rather (because ἐκ μέσου may be thought at too great a distance from its adjunct ἀπολέσαι), *Thou wast determined to destroy those priests particularly amidst all the crew of idolaters,* which is the sense of our version, ἐκ μέσου διάσου, *ex medio Tripudiantium choro vel cœtu;* for so θίασος is understood by the lexicographers: and next to these, the inhuman parents, who either themselves killed their own children, or gave them willingly to be sacrificed. *Priests* may relate indifferently either to those of Moloch, or those of the old inhabitants of the holy land; but αὐθέντας γονεῖς relate only to the worshippers of Moloch. The version then of this and the three foregoing verses (plainer in construction, and more agreeable to the Greek, without the transposition that is made in our translation) lies thus: *For thou, hating both those old inhabitants of thy holy land for their odious works of witchcrafts,* &c. *and also (hating) those merciless murderers of children, and devourers of human flesh, and their feasts of blood, didst determine to destroy, by the hands of our fathers, the priests from amidst their idolatrous congregations, and the parents that were guilty of destroying helpless souls,* viz. *their children.* If it be asked, why any distinction is made between the old inhabitants dealing in witchcrafts, and the worshippers of Moloch, which our version retains, the reason probably is, because Moloch was an idol originally of the Ammonites, and the rites of sacrificing children were likewise Ammonitish, and came only by degrees into Canaan. (See Selden de Diis Syris Syntag. i. cap. 6.) Or if it should be farther inquired, How did God destroy the worshippers of Moloch, *that his holy land might receive a worthy colony of children?* I answer, in the vengeance taken on account of Baal-Peor, when all the Midianites were utterly destroyed, the priests ἐκ μέσου διάσου, from Balaam down to the meanest, and also all the women, (Numb. xxxi.) which must include αὐθέντας γονεῖς. In confirmation of this opinion, see Lightfoot, vol. i. p. 783. who understands the matter of Baal-Peor, to be the sacrificing of their children to Moloch; answerable to which, he interprets Psal. cvi. 28. *They ate the sacrifices of the dead.* And this being the first idolatry they fell into after their coming out of the wilderness, and just before their getting possession of the holy land, he tells us, that St. Stephen upbraided them with it in the words of the prophet, that after their neglects of sacrificing to God forty years in the wilderness, they yet could presently take up *the tabernacle of Moloch.* In confirmation of this opinion, see Selden, also, de Diis Syris, who says, that all the Baals (however distinguished) of Syria, of which Baal-Peor is the first mentioned, were only other names for Moloch. (See also Jer. xix. 5.) And to confirm what Lightfoot and Selden say, we may add the authority of J. Jer. Vossius, who contends learnedly for the same opinion about Moloch and Baal. (Theol. Gentil. vol. vi. p. 123, 124. 720. edit. fol.) Thus we have a ready solution of the history to which this passage refers, and thus may it be interpreted consistently with little or no alteration in the Greek. To what I before mentioned about the manner of these unnatural and inhuman sacrifices, (see note on ver. 5.) we may add, that at first they made the children only to pass between two great fires lighted before Moloch, as a sort of imaginary purification; but afterward, confounding the worship of this idol with that paid to Saturn, the worship of Moloch became equally barbarous and bloody. Such as thought they had too many children, burnt them in honour of him, and consecrated them to their tutelar god, for the greater good of the family, as they supposed: and often, on important occasions, and in times of imminent danger, it was the eldest, the most beloved child, whom they devoted to Moloch. This abominable practice lasted long among the Canaanites in a place called anciently Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom; it was also called Tophet, for the reason given above.

Ver. 8. *Nevertheless, even those thou sparedst as men, and didst send wasps, forerunners of thine host, to destroy them by little and little.*] The meaning is not that God absolutely spared them; for this is not consistent either with the context or sacred history; the sense must be, that to these as men, and his creatures, though the greatest sinners, God shewed some marks of tenderness, and did not treat them with all that rigour which they deserved. The

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Psalmist has a thought which very much resembles this, Psal. lxxviii. 39, 40. *Many a time turned he his wrath away, and would not suffer his whole displeasure to arise; for he considered that they were but flesh, and that they were even a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.* By *wasps, forerunners of God's host,* we may understand, either that God, before the Israelites came into those parts, sent hornets, a sort of wasps of all others the most deadly and pernicious, which so infested the Canaanites, that many of them were forced to leave their country, or that, when the Israelites came to give them battle, these hornets made such assaults upon them, as facilitated the victory. Some rabbins say they flew in the eyes of the Canaanites, and made them so blind that they could not see to fight; and such as fled away they pursued, and killed in their lurking-holes. Joshua confirms the sending of these hornets, xxiv. 12. which God had before threatened to send, Deut. vii. 20. and says in general (for we have no where in Scripture any more particular account of them), that the Amorites were not driven out by the sword and bow of the Israelites, but by the stings of these venomous creatures. Philo says of the Canaanites, that they were unworthy, many of them, to be conquered by men, ἐνίους τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἀναξίους; and therefore God sent troops of hornets to fight for his holy ones, and to destroy them by a most shameful overthrow. (De Præmiis et Pœnis.) To shew the probability of this, Bochart instances in whole people who have been forced by them to forsake their country. (Hierozoic. lib. iv. p. 2.) Herodotus, Appian, Strabo, and Calmet, confirm the same. Many writers, it must be confessed, have understood the wasps or hornets mentioned here, and in the books of Moses and Joshua, metaphorically; St. Austin in particular supposes their fear to have had the same effect upon them as being pursued by hornets. But, 1. The literal sense, which our author favours, is maintained by Theodoret, Procopius, and Bochart, vol. iii. p. 538. 2. The fear which God threatened to send upon the enemies of his people, is mentioned as distinct from these hornets, Exod. xxiii. 27, 28. And, lastly, the Scripture speaks of them as real animals, Deut. vii. 20. Josh. xxiv. 12.

Ver. 9. *Not that thou wast unable—to destroy them at once with cruel beasts, or with one rough word.*] Of God's extraordinary manner of punishing by wild beasts, there are very many examples in Holy Scripture. As, the Samaritans, that were slain by them because they feared not the Lord; (2 Kings xvii. 25, 26.) the children that mocked the prophet Elisha; (2 Kings ii. 23, 24.) the disobedient prophet, (1 Kings xiii. 24.) This was agreeable to what God threatened the wicked, Lev. xxvi. 22. *That he would send wild beasts among them to rob them of their children, and destroy their cattle, to make them few in number, and their highways desolate.* (See also Isa. xv. 9. Jer. v. 6. viii. 17. xv. 3. Ezek. xiv. 15. 21.) The instance which is next mentioned by this writer, *viz.* that God can destroy guilty nations by one harsh word, finely displays his power. David, in his book of Psalms, seems to have had the same thought, that one word from the mouth of God was sufficient to blast and confound his enemies. See particularly, Psal. lxxxiii. 1. which some learned men have understood in this sense. Or if by a metaphor we explain this of thunder, which is often God's voice of vengeance, (see Psal. xviii. 13, 14. xlvi. 6.) the thought strikes us more forcibly. But if we suppose this to be meant of the Word of the Lord, or the Λόγος, personally, as Calmet seems to take it, (Com. in loc.) enraged and exasperated at the proceedings of the wicked, and executing the Almighty's orders upon them, as he is represented, xviii. 15, 16. and often under the Old Testament, the idea rises still higher, is more magnificent and terrible.

Ver. 10. *But executing thy judgments upon them by little and little.*] Though the history of the wars against the Canaanites be briefly summed up in Scripture, yet they lasted a long time; (Josh. xi. 18.) seven years, according to the opinion of many learned men: and such a length of time God was pleased the war should continue, partly in respect to the old inhabitants themselves, who, being chastened by little and little, had place of repentance given them, and also to exercise the faith and patience of his own people, and that the difficulty of the conquest might make them the more sensible of God's power and goodness. To these may be added the following reasons, which are to be met with in Scripture: first, God did not drive out these nations hastily by the victorious hand of Joshua, that he might thereby prove Israel, whether they would keep the way of the Lord, to walk therein; for, if none of them had been left, there would have been no temptation to worship their gods. (Judg. ii. 22, 23.) Another reason for driving out these nations by little and little was, lest the land should become desolate and uncultivated; (Exod. xxiii. 29.) for the Israelites were not yet numerous enough to people the whole country, had these nations been destroyed all at once. And a third reason occurs in the same verse, that a great part being thus left without inhabitants, it would be possessed and overrun by wild beasts, which would have been very dangerous to the Israelites in the other neighbouring parts where they were settled.

Not being ignorant that they were a naughty generation, and that their malice was bred in them, and their cogitation would never be changed.] The expression here is not unlike that mentioned Gen. vi. 5. *God saw that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually,* and his dealing was in like manner; for though he saw them unalterably bent upon wickedness, yet he allowed the men of the old world time for repentance, and the prevention of their ruin. And thus God knew that Pharaoh would not let his people go, and that his mind would not be altered, (Exod. iii. 19.) and yet he tries him by different methods, he executes his judgments upon him by little and little, and gives all possible warnings to reclaim him. He foretells the plagues, before he sends them, to admonish him; he performs signs and wonders before him, to soften him; he inflicts worse and worse judgments upon him to affrighten him, but all without effect; for it appears that Pharaoh six times hardened his own heart, before God hardened it once. But it may be asked, to what purpose God gave the Canaanites place for repentance, and visited them with admonitory chastisements, if he knew that their cogitations, or wicked intentions, would never be altered? To this I answer, that though God certainly foreknew that they would not make a right use of his forbearance, yet his prescience no way determined their acting; still they were at liberty to have changed their cogitations or designs, and to have altered their vicious course of life; for there is a great difference between God's fore-

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knowledge and his decrees; a distinction never to be forgotten. God always knows when men are wickedly disposed, and their sinful habits become, as it were, natural to them; but he does not therefore decree their sinning, nor take away all possibility of their conversion, nor does he unconditionally predetermine their punishment; for then all motives to repentance would indeed be useless and ineffectual, and their doom irreversible: his knowing therefore that the Canaanites would never change their sinful inclinations, no more inferred any necessity of their sinning, than God's knowing that Adam would fall, was the occasion of his fall. Nor were all the seed of Cham any more necessarily vessels of wrath, because of their innate and natural propensity to evil, than all the seed of Abraham were necessarily vessels of mercy. (See Jackson's Works, tom. iii. cap. 41.)

Ver. 11. *For it was a cursed seed from the beginning.*] It has been generally supposed that Cham, or Ham, was the person whom Noah cursed for discovering his nakedness; but there are stronger and better reasons to induce us to think that Canaan was cursed rather than Ham. 1. It has been a received tradition, that Canaan first saw his grandfather's nakedness, and made sport with it to his father. 2. Several expressions in Scripture seem to fix this upon Canaan; when Noah awoke, it is said *he knew what his younger son had done unto him,* (Gen. ix. 24.) which could not be true of Ham, who was the middlemost; but Canaan may very well be called his younger or little son, nothing being more common than to call grandchildren sons; and Canaan was indeed the youngest of them. 3. The most correct editions of the LXX. agree in pointing out Canaan particularly; for they read ἐπικατάρατος Χαναὰν παῖς: which reading both St. Austin and St. Chrysostom follow. And indeed this particularity seems purposely inserted to prevent any mistake with respect to his father. 4. That if Canaan himself is not meant, then by Canaan we must understand his father Ham, which is a forced interpretation. 5. This is probably the reason why Ham is always mentioned as the father of Canaan, as he resembled his father most, and was concerned with him in the same wicked crime. Lastly, If Ham was cursed, it would have affected his other children and their posterity; but it is observable, that the curse affects Canaan only.

Neither didst thou for fear of any man give them pardon for those things wherein they sinned.] The meaning is not, that God really pardoned them, as our version seems to imply, for the Canaanites are mentioned all along as devoted to destruction; but God deferred their punishment, indulged them in a seeming security, and gave them ἄδειαν, *i. e.* impunity for a time, which was rather a respite than a pardon. And thus the Syriac and Arabic interpreters understand it, rendering the Greek word very justly by *prorogatio.* Calmet observes very beautifully, "That God, whether he punishes or pardons, has no selfish or partial views, is not influenced by any motives of hatred, fear, or interest, which men are generally actuated by: he loves without excess, is jealous without uneasiness, repents without grief, is angry without disturbance, and punishes without resentment." (Com. in loc.) Herein he has happily transcribed St. Austin: "Amas, nec æstuas; zelas, et securus es; pœnitet te, et non doles; irasceris, et tranquillus es." (Confess. lib. i. cap. 4.)

Ver. 12. *Or who shall accuse thee for the nations that perish, whom thou hast made?*] Τίς δὲ ἐγκαλέσει σοι κατὰ ἐθνων ἀπολωλότων, ἃ σὺ ἐποίησας. Our version probably is faulty here; the true rendering seems to be, *Who shall object to thee,* or *call thee to account for, the things which thou hast done to,* or *against, the nations which are destroyed?* This is the sense of ποιεῖν in the beginning of this verse, and in very many passages of Scripture. The Greek would be better pointed thus, τίς δὲ ἐγκαλέσει σοι, κατὰ ἐθνων ἀπολωλότων ἃ σὺ ἐποίησας.

Or who shall come to stand against thee, to be revenged for the unrighteous men?] Ἢ τις εἰς κατάστασίν σοι ἐλεύσεται ἔκδικος κατὰ ἀδίκων ἀνθρώπων; Our translators seem to understand κατάστασις in a military sense, *Who will come to a set,* or *pitched, battle with thee, to avenge the cause of the wicked?* Καθίστημι sometimes is so used in good writers. But there is likewise another sense of this place: *Who will appear before thee, to undertake the defence and vindication of the unrighteous?* for ἔκδικος signifies *an advocate* as well as *an avenger.* And thus Messieurs du Port-Royal render, *Qui paroitra devant vous pour prendre la defense des hommes injustes?* And so the Arabic version, *Quis se constituat apud te ad intercessionem auxiliarem pro hominibus iniquis?* But in either sense ἔκδικος κατὰ ἀδίκων ἀνθρώπων, as the present reading of the Greek is, seems not right. If we join κατὰ and ἀδίκων together, which seem to have been separated through the fault of the transcribers, and make it καταδίκων; i. e. *judicio damnatorum,* the harshness of the construction will be avoided, and a sense rather more agreeable to the context will take place: *Who shall dare to stand against thee in battle to revenge,* or *who shall appear before thee to undertake, the cause of those thou hast condemned to death?* There is the like expostulation in the book of Job, (xxxvi. 22, 23.) according to the LXX. version, which comprises the sentiments in this and the following verse: τίς γάρ ἐστι κατ' αὐτὸν δυνάστης; τίς δέ ἐστιν ὁ ἐτάζων αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα; ἢ τίς ὁ εἰπών, Ἔπραξεν ἄδικα;

Ver. 14. *Neither shall king nor tyrant be able to set his face against thee.*] The Vulgate, which renders, *Neque rex neque tyrannus in conspectu tuo inquirent de his quos perdidisti,* and the ancient English versions, fall short of the spirit of the original; the word ἀντοφθαλμῆσαι is remarkably strong and elegant; it is a vigorous compound word, which singly contains all the particulars before enumerated; (ver. 12.) nor is our translation less to be admired for preserving the beauty and boldness of the expression here, which Junius renders but imperfectly by *oculum obfirmare,* and the Arabic still more faintly, *oculos attollere;* both of which, by being too literal, express not sufficiently the force and spirit of the metaphor. (See Blackwall's Sac. Class. vol. i. p. 10.)

Ver. 15. *Thinking it not agreeable with thy power to condemn him that hath not deserved to be punished.*] If δίκαιος, in the beginning of this verse, be taken to signify strictly *just,* the sense then is, that the infinite greatness of God's majesty cannot sway his most holy will from the exact observance of the rules of justice; that though he is almighty, he acts as if injustice was out of his power, as being contrary to his will and the perfection of his nature, and therefore will never punish any of his creatures that do not deserve to be punished, merely to display an act of power. This sentiment, that God will not punish those

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that do not deserve to be punished, seems to me to convey no very high idea of the Deity. For is it any commendation of the God of Israel not to do a flagrant act of injustice? or would this be an excellency to be boasted of even in a heathen Jupiter? How much properer, and more agreeable to the nature of the God of the Old Testament, to say of him, that the greatness of his majesty does not prompt him to cruelty, to sudden and immediate revenge, or to exceed in the degree of punishment; but, all-powerful as he is, that he is forbearing and merciful, *even to such as do indeed deserve to be punished,* either passing by their transgressions, or punishing them less than they deserved. And in this sense of good, benign, merciful, I rather am inclined to understand δίκαιος, which is a known signification of the word, and will furnish a sublimer and more agreeable sense. From hence then I am induced to offer another explanation of this passage, and to attempt a small alteration in the reading of the Greek, which perhaps would be more perfect, if, instead of αὐτὸν τὸν μὴ ὀφείλοντα κολασθῆναι, we read αὐτὸν τὸν μὲν ὀφείλοντα, or (which I should still like better, if it may be allowed) αὐτὸν μὲν τὸν ὀφείλοντα κολασθῆναι καταδικάσαι ἀλλότριον ἡγούμενος τῆς σῆς δυνάμεως, *illum quidem* (or *illum ipsum quidem*) *qui debet puniri, morte statim multare alienum putas a tua potestate—Thou thinkest thy power does not extend so far as instantly to condemn to death him that deserves to be punished.* For the whole scope of the chapter seems to be to display the mercy of God; but there is no mercy shewed, nor justice properly, in not punishing the innocent. Coverdale's version in this place is very faulty; *Thou punishest even him that hath not deserved to be punished;* which corrupt reading in some ancient copies, and particularly St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, manifestly charging God with injustice, and reflecting in the strongest manner upon his goodness, the Vulgate has corrected to the sense of our version.

Ver. 16. *For thy power is the beginning of righteousness; and because thou art the Lord of all, it maketh thee to be gracious unto all.*] *i. e.* Thy power is the foundation or basis of justice and equity, which are inseparable from it. The power of men is frequently the source and motive of their injustice; and tyrants oftenest shew their power by acts of cruelty and oppression, as if their maxim was that of the wicked ones, in ii. 11. *Let our strength be the law of justice.* But God displays his omnipotence most chiefly in shewing mercy and pity; and though he spares many guilty nations in the universe, yet he is the same absolute sovereign of the world; as the power of a king is no less visible, and always more amiable in reprieves and acts of mercy, than in the horrible pomp and bloodshed of executions: nay, according to what follows in the next words, he is therefore graciously disposed towards all, because he is Lord of all; and though he may exert his absolute power how and when he pleases, yet he is the more favourable and indulgent to his creatures upon account of his dominion over them, and relation to them. We cannot have a finer or more lively instance of this, than what we meet with in Jonah iv. 11. where God is introduced arguing with great tenderness in favour of Nineveh, devoted to ruin and destruction: *Shall not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons?* From the compassionate concern for the united misery of so many of his creatures, which prevailed with him no less than their repentance at length to avert the impending evil, we see that God is love, and that love is his very essence as creator.

Ver. 17. *For when men will not believe that thou art of a full power, thou shewest thy strength; and among them that know it, thou makest their boldness manifest.*] Ἰσχὺν γὰρ ἐνδείκνυσαι ἀπιστούμενος ἐπὶ δυνάμεως τελειότητι, καὶ ἐν τοῖς εἰδόσι τὸ θράσος ἐξελέγχεις. The Arabic renders, *Declaras robur tuum his, qui plenitudinem potentiæ tuæ minime credunt; inter eos autem qui norunt illam, audaciam eorum coarguis.* Exactly as our version, the translators of which seem to have read ἀπιστουμένοις, in the sense of ἀπιστοῦσιν, against use, and without authority. But I take the true and exact rendering of the Greek to be, *When thou art suspected or questioned with respect to the plenitude of thy power, thou displayest it, or givest them a specimen of it; and as to such as know thy power (ceux qui connoissent vostre toute puissance,* according to the comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal), *and yet act in defiance of it, thou convincest them of thy boldness.* And thus Grotius and Junius understand ἀπιστούμενος in this place, and the Vulgate, which renders *virtutem ostendis tu, qui non crederis esse in virtute consummatus—et horum qui te nesciunt, audaciam traducis;* from a copy which read οὐκ εἰδόσι. This latter clause of the Vulgate, though the least perfect, is followed by Coverdale's version; and from this authority Dr. Grabe seems to have inserted σε in his edition, though it is not in the Alexandrian MS. nor in the other Greek copies, nor indeed necessarily wanted.

Ver. 18. *But thou, mastering thy power, judgest with equity, and orderest us with great favour.*] The sense of this place in our version is,—that God, out of regard to mankind, waves and overrules his power for the more pleasing work of mercy; and though the frequent instances of his goodness and loving-kindness are usually requited on man's part with baseness and ingratitude, yet does not the greatness of his majesty urge him to sudden revenge, nor the sense of his injured prerogative prompt him to an immediate resentment. Accordingly, punishments are called by the prophet his *strange work,* Isa. xxviii. 21. *i. e.* they are what God is not inclined to inflict, they are disagreeable to the benignity of his nature, and such acts as men's sins constrain him, as it were, to exercise. The following reflection of the very learned Dr. Jackson, upon this passage of our author, is so judicious, that it needs no other light. "To derogate from God's power is dangerous, and to compare the prerogatives of the most absolute princes with his is more odious; yet this comparison may safely be made, that God doth not more infinitely exceed the most impotent wretch on earth, in power and greatness, than he doth the greatest monarch the world hath, or ever had, in mercy, justice, and loving-kindness——Nor is his will the rule of goodness, because the designs thereof are backed by infinite power; but because his holiness doth so rule his power, and moderate his will, that the one cannot enjoin, or the other exact, any thing but what is most consonant to the strictest rules of equity——Bad therefore was the doctrine, and worse the application or use which Anaxarchus would have gathered from that hieroglyphical device of antiquity, wherein Justice was painted as Jupiter's assessor. It did not mean, as that sophister inter-

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preted it to Alexander, that the decrees of great monarchs are always to be reputed oracles of justice, and that their practices are never unjust; nor that omnipotent sovereignty alone would justify the equity of all his decrees, who was subject to rage and passion; but that Justice was always ready to mitigate and temper his wrath with equity. The true Jehovah, as he needs no sweet tongue to moderate his anger, so hath he need of no such sophistry to justify the equity of his decrees." (Tom. ii. p. 66.) I shall only add, that δεσπόζων ἰσχύος, in the original, which our translators and those of the Geneva Bible render *mastering thy power*, hath been considered by others as a title only, the same as *Lord of might*, or *Lord of power*, as Coverdale and all the other ancient versions understand it; and Calmet renders in like manner, *O Dominateur Souverain*. St. Austin's sense is the most elevated, *Dominus virtutum*, as if it was the same with *Lord of hosts*, or Κύριος Σαβαὼθ; or perhaps he may mean *Dominus omnipotentissimus*, as he elsewhere expresses himself, (Confess. lib. i. cap. 4.) a superlative which seems to carry its own confutation with it; but should rather be ascribed to his zeal than inaccuracy, as if he could never carry his thoughts or expressions high enough in describing the infinity of God's attributes.

For thou mayest use power when thou wilt.] This expression falls vastly short of the sense and majesty of all the other versions. The reading of Fulgentius here, who almost transcribes the Vulgate, is infinitely more magnificent, and worthy of God, "Subest enim tibi, cum voles, posse," *i. e. Thou only willest a thing, and it is done.* Nor is the Syriac much inferior, *Si velis, præsto est potentia.* The expression is not much unlike that of the Psalmist, *Whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that does he in heaven and in earth, in the sea and in all deep places.* (Psal. cxxxv. 6.) Where the true reading, as well as the more sublime, is, *Whatsoever the Lord wills, that he does,* πάντα ὅσα ἠθέλησεν ὁ Κύριος, ἐποίησεν, LXX. This instantaneousness of the effect upon the act of his will, is finely expressed by St. Matthew, Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι, *I will, be thou clean,* (viii. 3.) Nor are the words of our author in the original without their beauty, πάρεστί σοι, ὅταν θέλῃς, τὸ δύνασθαι. We have the very same thought, and even expression, Constit. Apost. lib. vii. cap. 35. σὺ γὰρ εἶ ὁ χρηστὸς ἐν εὐεργεσίαις, καὶ φιλόδωρος ἐν οἰκτιρμοῖς, ὁ μόνος παντοκράτωρ· ὅτε γὰρ θέλεις, πάρεστί σοι τὸ δύνασθαι· κ. τ. λ. Calmet seems to understand the passage in the sense of our version, *viz.* "Thou hastest not, having all times and seasons at thy command, to suppress the insolence of the wicked, and to punish the sinner, because thou knowest they cannot escape thee, and that thou hast it always in thy power to cite them before thee, and to deal with them according to their works. God loses nothing by waiting for the repentance of the wicked, and the wicked are no gainers by the impunity of a few years. The sovereign Judge will at length sufficiently compensate for the slowness of his proceeding by a heavier degree of punishment."

Ver. 19. *But by such works thou hast taught thy people that the just men should be merciful.*] Ὅτι δεῖ τὸν δίκαιον εἶναι φιλάνθρωπον, i. e. *Thou temperest all thy judgments with mercy and equity, and by that mixture of mercy with justice thou teachest thy people to shew the same temper to one another.* St. Austin's observation upon the sinners of the old world is very pertinent; "God foreknew they would abuse the reprieve allowed them, yet he was so gracious to vouchsafe it to them; teaching us by this example, how much it is our duty to bear with those whom we know to be bad men at present, but uncertain how long they may continue so: that we should not be too hasty or rigorous in condemning or punishing them, since God himself is so merciful as to allot even to such sinners as he foreknows will make an ill use of his forbearance, so long a space for repentance." (De Catechiz. Rudib.) As these two virtues are so intimately united, and have such a strict relation to each other, we may perhaps not improperly consider them in the following view, as resembling Jacob's two wives. Stern judgment is deformed as Leah, but smiling mercy is as beautiful as Rachel; justice may claim the privilege of being the first-born, but mercy is always the best-beloved. Like sisters should they lovingly go together, and be married to the same man; what the barrenness of the one wants, the fruitfulness of the other will supply.

And hast made thy children to be of a good hope, that thou givest repentance for sins.] It should rather be, *that thou givest room for repentance for sins,—en leur donnant lieu de faire penitence,* says Calmet; *for God does not give, but accept repentance;* and so the Vulgate reads, *Judicans das locum in peccatis pœnitentiæ,* which Coverdale follows in his version. Our translators seem not thoroughly to have considered the force of the Greek word; for δίδως has another signification, and more agreeable to this place; *i. e. thou allowest, permittest repentance.* See Acts ii. 27, Οὐδὲ δώσεις τὸν ὅσιόν σου ἰδεῖν διαφθοράν· *Thou wilt not allow,* or *permit, thine Holy One to see corruption.* The Syriac seems to understand it in like manner, *Filiis tuis spem fecisti: et concedis* (leg. *bonam spem fecisti, ut concedis*) *pœnitentiam delictorum.* The sense of the passage is,—that men may, from the experience or observation of God's forbearance to punish, and the continuance of his long-suffering to sinners, presume that God is placable and forgiving, and will not be rigorous in his proceedings with them; may hopefully promise themselves, that God will favourably accept their sincere repentance, and the compensations of unfeigned sorrow and contrition, which they offer in lieu of the exact performance of their duty, and that at length their guilt will be atoned by the truest sin-offering they can present. This consideration carries a pleasing and encouraging hope with it. If God, indeed, judged his creatures with the utmost rigour of his justice, how should even his own children presume to hope for pardon, or to be justified before him? But when he sheweth such clemency towards his enemies, what may *they* not then hope for, from a God so full of goodness and mercy? And can the faithful have any greater encouragement to have confidence towards God, and assure their hearts before him?

Ver. 21. *With how great circumspection didst thou judge thine own sons, unto whose fathers thou hast sworn, and made covenants of good promises?*] The sense seems necessarily to require, that this should be read in the future tense, *With how great circumspection wilt thou judge* or *punish thine own children?* &c. which is the rendering of the Geneva Bible. This is confirmed by the Arabic version, which reads *sane* (leg. *sine*) *omni rigore et profundissima penetratione judicabis filios tuos.* Hence it seems

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probable, that the true reading of the Greek is, μετὰ πόσης ἀκριβείας ἔκρινες τοὺς υἱούς σου, and not ἔκρινας, as the printed copies in general now read. The sense of this and the foregoing verse is, "That, if thou didst shew so much patience towards the Canaanites, ὀφειλομένους θανάτῳ, *who through sins were worthy to die*, as Coverdale renders, and had forfeited not only their land, but their lives, to thy justice; with how much more wariness and caution wilt thou punish thine own people the Jews, with whose fathers thou enteredst into covenant, and made to them therein goodly and precious promises?" for so I choose with the ancient versions to render *covenants of good promises*, in the latter part of ver. 21. (See the like expression, Ephes. ii. 12.)

Ver. 22. *To the intent that, when we judge, we should carefully think of thy goodness, and when we ourselves are judged, we should look for mercy.*] *i. e.* When we reflect upon the difference thou hast made between us and our enemies, it should teach us to remember the example of thy goodness and long-suffering, when we judge or punish others, and to imitate it by treating them in the same tender and compassionate manner. This is the sense of the Arabic version, which reads, *ut, cum judicamus, de tua simus bonitate solliciti, eamque imitemur.* And when we ourselves are punished, we are taught and encouraged, by happy experience, to put our trust in thy mercy (so Coverdale renders), and to expect a gracious deliverance from our troubles.

Ver. 23. *Wherefore, whereas men have lived dissolutely and unrighteously, thou hast tormented them with their own abominations.*] Such therefore of thy enemies as lived unrighteously, ἀδίκως and not ἀδίκους, as most copies have it, *in a foolish senseless way of life*, ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ ζωῆς (which our version expresses but indifferently by *dissoluteness*, and Coverdale's by *ignorance*), *having their foolish hearts darkened*, as St. Paul, speaking of such idolaters, (Rom. i. 21.) expresses it, *them didst thou torment with their own abominations.* The word βδέλυγμα sometimes signifies the false object of worship, and sometimes those abominable sins and filthy practices which were notorious and customary in the mysteries of the idol-worship; so that these words may refer, in a larger sense, to the enormities and detestable sins practised in the heathen τελεταὶ, and hidden mysteries; (see xiv. 24—26. 2 Macc. vi. 4.) and that God, as a just punishment for such wickedness, tormented them with their own abominations, *i. e.* gave them up to a reprobate mind and vile affections. (See Bishop Fell on Rom. i. 26.) But if *abominations* be taken in the first sense, as signifying false objects of worship, it will be proper to inquire, what they were, and who were guilty of such worship. The worship referred to in this place, is that of vile beasts and senseless animals; and the guilty persons must be either the Canaanites mentioned in the foregoing part of the chapter, or the Egyptians. Those who apply this passage to the Canaanites, understand it of their being tormented by hornets, (ver. 8.) as a just punishment, and perhaps too εἰς ἐμπαιγμὸν, for their ridiculous worship. For the Philistines, and, in all appearance, (says Calmet in loc.) the Canaanites too, worshipped flies, the god Baal-zebub, particularly the people of Ekron, or Accaron. (See 2 Kings i. 2. where the LXX. read Μυῖαν Θεὸν Ἀκκαρών.) Josephus and Greg. Nazianzen confirm the same; see also Selden, (de Diis Syris, Syntag. ii. cap. 6.) who says, the name of this god was Baal-zebub, Θεὸς Μυῖα, *Deus musca;* and afterward called Βεελζεβοὺλ, *Deus stercoreus*, by way of derision. (See Piscator and Drusius in Matt. x. 25. and Leigh's Critica Sacra, p. 60.) That religious rites were paid to flies in the temple of Apollo Actius, see Elian. de Animalibus, lib. ii. Grotius and Spencer think the author returns here to the Egyptians and their abominations, mentioned xi. 15, 16. And indeed it must be confessed, that this and the following verses, to the end of the chapter, resemble the argument there very much, and would come in better in that place, if that was any authority for such a transposition: for the mixing and confounding the Canaanites with the Egyptians together in different parts of the chapter, without any certain mark of discrimination, renders it obscure, and, without great care, scarce intelligible. As applied to the Egyptians, the sense is,—that as they worshipped beasts, God punished them by a variety of living creatures.

Ver. 24. *And held them for gods, which even among the beasts of their enemies were despised.*] Θεοὺς ὑπολαμβάνοντες τὰ καὶ ἐν ζώοις τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἄτιμα, *i. e.* according to the common acceptation of this place, they worshipped such beasts as were despised and laughed at by their enemies, the Hebrews, who in their sacrifices offered some of those very beasts which they worshipped as gods; which, in the opinion of some learned men, was purposely ordered and appointed to guard the Israelites against this idolatry. (See Spencer de Legg. Hebr. tom. i. p. 298.) But probably our translation here is wrong, and ἄτιμα τῶν ἐχθρῶν should be neither rendered, *such beasts of their enemies as were despised*, nor *such beasts as were despised by their enemies*, as Grotius, not without some violence, expounds the Greek; but, *they held for gods despicable and mischievous beasts*, such as dogs, cats, wolves, serpents, crocodiles, hippopotami, and other the most odious creatures, which the poet justly calls *portenta*, (see note on xi. 15.) as fit only to inspire horror. There is the like general charge, xv. 18. and τὰ ζῶα τὰ ἔχθιστα are mentioned as the objects of their worship. The manner of expression indeed by two adjectives may seem particular; but this construction is not unusual in the Greek language, and is equivalent to ἄτιμα καὶ ἐχθρά. Nor am I singular in this interpretation; Calmet understands the words in the same manner, *c'est à dire, les animaux les plus vils, les plus meprisables, et les plus ennemis de l'homme.* (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 25. *Therefore unto them, as to children without the use of reason, thou didst send a judgment to mock them.*] Calmet understands this of the Canaanites, that as they fell into the most childish and ridiculous errors, by transferring that honour, which is due to God only, to despicable animals, such as are described Ezek. viii. 10. which the Israelites are supposed to have taken from the Phœnicians or Canaanites, God sent upon them in like manner chastisements seemingly as ridiculous, even an army of wasps, to attack, pursue, and destroy them. And the like may be observed of the Egyptians, that God treated them as children, whom they resembled so much in their folly; for as they pursued flies and little insects, so these went after κνώδαλα εὐτελῆ, and were chastised with a suitable punishment. At first he played with them, as it were, sending a company or swarms of inconsiderable flies, (Exod. viii. 21.) dallying with them by mock judgments, in comparison; for so I understand τὴν κρίσιν εἰς ἐμπαιγμόν· and the au-

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thor seems to exemplify this play by a paronomasia, or a correspondent allusion in the original words, διὰ τοῦτο ὡς παισὶν τὴν κρίσιν εἰς ἐμπαιγμὸν ἔπεμψας. But Philo calls such idolaters by a more odious name than children, *bestias obambulantes sub humana specie.* This judgment is by the LXX. styled κυνόμυιαν, (Exod. viii. 21. Psal. lxxviii. 45.) as if a particular species of tormenting flies was meant; but this, in both places, is a corrupt reading; the true one is indisputably κοινομυῖαν. St. Jerome accordingly reads *Cœnomyiam*, and explains it by, *omne genus muscarum*, and so do the other Latin versions. Aquila, in both places, renders it παμμυῖαν, and so the learned Usher understands it, calling this plague *muscarum et aliorum insectorum colluvies*, ad A. M. 2513. (See also De Muis on Psal. lxxviii. 45.)

Ver. 26. *But they that would not be reformed by that correction wherein he dallied with them, shall feel a judgment worthy of God.*] This verse may be understood, either as a moral reflection with respect to sinners in general in the future tense,—that such as will not be reformed by those gentle methods wherein God may be said only to dally with them, shall afterward feel a heavier and much sorer vengeance: and this is the sense of the Greek, and of the Syriac and Arabic versions: or it may respect the persons mentioned in the foregoing verses, that they, having slighted God's milder punishments, at length experienced a judgment worthy of God. *Dignum Dei* [leg. *Deo*] *judicium experti sunt*, says the Vulgate, which Coverdale servilely follows even in this mistake, *they felt the worthy punishment of God.* Grotius says, that πειράζουσιν, which is the reading of some copies, is the true one, and that the *present tense* is used for the *præteritum.* In this latter sense the observation holds true with respect to the Canaanites; for such of them as were not affected, nor brought to a right sense by the plague and persecution of hornets, suffered much sorer calamities afterward in the wars which Joshua waged against them, and by their final extermination. As applied to the Egyptians, the remark is as just; at first God visited them with plagues, that were rather noisome than destructive to them (for we do not read of the death of any useful creatures, except fishes, till the plague of the murrain), but these had little or no effect upon them; for Pharaoh, as Dr. Jackson expresses it, (tom. iii. p. 204.) behaved himself under them like a proud and wanton humourist, and was still for experiencing a greater variety of them; God therefore visited him with more and more grievous plagues, and at length terribly completed his vengeance, and filled up the measure of their punishment, by those two unparalleled judgments, the death of their first-born, and the destruction of Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea.

Ver. 27. *For look for what things they grudged when they were punished,* (that is) *for them whom they thought to be gods;* (now) *being punished in them, when they saw it, they acknowledged him to be the true God, whom before they denied to know, and therefore came extreme damnation upon them.*] Our translation here is so confused and so clogged with parentheses, that it is very difficult to come at the true sense of this place; and as no light is afforded us either from the old translations, oriental versions, or commentators, we must have recourse to the Greek text itself, and from thence, obscure as it is, endeavour to find out the author's meaning. The present reading of the Greek, according to all the copies, is, ἐφ' οἷς γὰρ αὐτοὶ πάσχοντες ἠγανάκτουν, ἐπὶ τούτοις νῦς ἐδόκουν Θεοὺς, ἐν αὐτοῖς κολαζόμενοι, ἰδόντες ὃν πάλαι ἠρνοῦντο εἰδέναι, Θεὸν ἐπέγνωσαν ἀληθῆ· διὸ καὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς καταδίκης ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἐπῆλθε. The Vulgate renders, *In quibus enim patientes indignabantur, per hæc quos putabant Deos, in ipsis cum exterminarentur, videntes illum quem olim negabant se nosse, verum Deum agnoverunt,* &c. This is very obscure: Junius is still more unintelligible, *Nam de quibus illi, quum perpeterentur mala, cum indignatione erant solliciti, de iis, inquam, quos putabant Deos, quum se iisdem puniri viderunt, verum agnoverunt Deum,* &c. Vatablus renders much more clearly, "Iis ipsis rebus, quas passi sunt indignabundi Chananæi, cum per ea, quæ ut Deos colebant, punirentur, tandem suo malo agnoverunt verum Deum esse, quem ante negabant se nosse:" *i.e. The Canaanites being displeased and angry at what they suffered, when they were punished by those animals whom they thought to be gods, at length, being made sensible by their misfortunes, acknowledged there was a true God,* &c. This is very intelligible, and comes near the true sense: but I cannot help observing, that Vatablus omits ἐν αὐτοῖς, and ἰδόντες, which immediately follow, and are the very words which occasion all the obscurity in the original and the other versions, as they now stand. I have therefore been tempted to suspect that there is some mistake in them, and that the true reading probably is, ἑαυτοὺς κολαζομένους ἰδόντες, or ἐν αὐτοῖς κολαζομένους ἰδόντες; and my reasons are as follow:—1. The Bishops' and Geneva Bibles both render, *when they saw themselves punished by them.* 2. Junius, who in the other part of the verse follows the Greek literally, renders, *quum se iisdem puniri viderunt.* 3. Calmet, and the Port-Royal comment, explain it in this manner, *se voyant avec douleur tourmentez et exterminez,* &c. The sense then of the first part of the verse I take to be this: "For whereas when corrected only they were displeased and angry, seeing themselves yet more severely dealt with, and punished in good earnest by, or upon account of, those whom they thought to be gods, they acknowledged the true God, whom before they denied to know," &c. The next difficulty lies in rendering τὸ τέρμα τῆς καταδίκης by *extreme damnation;* it might have been better translated, *the utmost extent of judgment,* or *the severest temporal judgment* or *punishment* (though St. Austin on Psal. ix. quoting this passage, understands it strictly); but I take it to be no more than ἄξια Θεοῦ κρίσις in the verse before, as opposed to παίγνια ἐπιτιμήσεως, *slight corrections,* which they were displeased with: but when it came properly to punishment, when they saw themselves κολαζομένους, then they were awakened to an acknowledgment of the true God, who had thus punished them; and therefore it was, that this last and most effectual method was taken with them; διὸ καὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς καταδίκης ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἐπῆλθε, i. e. *when the dallyings of correction would not do, punishment in full measure was given, which had the effect.* This Divine vengeance, when it fell so severely upon them, made them open their eyes; when they saw and felt it, then, and not before, they acknowledged him to be the true God, whom before they denied to know; and therefore, or for this end and purpose, that they might acknowledge him, were they thus severely visited; not only anathematized and exterminated, but *internecione deleti,* as Grotius renders, *cut off with an utter and final destruction.* (Com. in

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loc.) This is spoken in vindication of the justice of God, who does not punish particular persons or nations, without weighty reasons, and previous notices of their danger. This extreme severity, therefore, was at length necessary, that those who had continued in wilful blindness and incorrigible obstinacy, and so were without excuse, might be convinced and made thoroughly sensible that they had brought this damnation upon themselves, for not discovering all the while the true God, when they had such awakening means afforded them for that purpose. And thus I think a pretty good and consistent sense may be fetched from this verse, which has none at all, or a very obscure one, according to our version. Calmet understands this of the Canaanites; "That, seeing themselves persecuted, afflicted, tormented by hornets, which they regarded as deities, and from whom they expected favour and protection, they were at length forced to acknowledge the God of the Hebrews for the only true God." Not that they actually, on this account, turned from their idolatry; but, notwithstanding the force of inveterate prejudice, were obliged to own the superiority of the God of Israel, and, by consequence, that the little animals they worshipped were contemptible, less than nothing, and their religion gross superstition. Junius, and many others, apply it to Pharaoh and the Egyptians, who could insolently say, when the hand of God lay not very heavy upon him, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.* (Exod. v. 2.) But when he and his people were visited by a succession of plagues and judgments, and the land was corrupted by the grievous swarms of flies, he as remarkably relents, and gives them leave to go and offer sacrifice to the Lord their God. (Exod. viii. 25.) But as there is no authority in history, that the Egyptians worshipped the very insects, or animals, that God plagued them with; and as this author particularly mentions their being *tormented with their own abominations*, διὰ τῶν ἰδίων βδελυγμάτων; I am inclined to think with Calmet, that the Canaanites are rather here meant, and that they are spoken of through this whole chapter.

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

From the mention of the barbarous and idolatrous rites of the Canaanites, expressed in the former chapter, the author takes occasion to treat of idolatry in general, its introduction and origin; of the vanity, folly, impotence, or rather nothingness, of idols, and the mischievous effects attending such a worship. He distinguishes idolatry into three sorts,—that of the heavenly bodies; images of deceased princes, heroes, and benefactors; and living brute animals. The first sort he treats of in the beginning of this chapter to ver. 10. and from thence, to the end of the fifteenth chapter, he considers the two other. Nor is this a digression or deviation from his principal and main design, which is to exalt wisdom, piety, and true religion, and to excite a love and regard for them in all, especially princes and great men. And can this be done more effectually, than by shewing the folly and illusion of superstition, exposing the false objects of worship, and pointing out the mischiefs and unhappy consequences, which a forgetfulness or ignorance of the true God leads men to?

Ver. 1. *SURELY vain are all men by nature who are ignorant of God.*] Μάταιοι μὲν γὰρ πάντες ἄνθρωποι φύσει, οἷς παρῆν Θεοῦ ἀγνωσία That idolaters are called vain persons in Scripture is beyond dispute: (see 2 Kings xvii. 15. Rom. i. 21.) but how are we to understand *vain by nature?* I think, if this be the true reading, it either means, that such men are naturally weak and senseless who are ignorant of God, or that they are foolish who cannot by the light of nature make a discovery of him. But perhaps φύσει may be a mistake here, for neither the Vulgate nor oriental versions, nor Coverdale's translation, take any notice of it; possibly the original word was εἰσὶ, which they all agree in, and retain. And the true reading of the whole sentence in the Greek may be, μάταιοι μὲν γὰρ πάντες ἄνθρωποί εἰσι, οἵσπερ ἦν Θεοῦ ἀγνωσία. Calmet seems to understand by μάταιοι, *insignificant, unprofitable,* in the sense that vanity is used by Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes. His reflection upon this place, (Com. in loc.) is too just and useful to be omitted: "Without the knowledge of God, which is the first principle of wisdom, truth, and religion, all men, even the greatest, are vanity and nothing, all science is but darkness, all philosophy error and delusion. Hence St. Paul renounced all other knowledge, and determined to know nothing but Jesus and him crucified. (1 Cor. ii. 2.) It was the superior excellency of Divine knowledge, which best discovers the nature of God, that induced Justin Martyr, after having tried all the sects of philosophers, and entered into all sorts of human learning, to relinquish them as unsatisfactory: he was at length convinced, that there is no wisdom, science, or philosophy, complete and perfect, without the discovery, knowledge, and worship, of God." (Dial. cum Tryph. in init.)

And could not out of the good things that are seen know him that is.] Τὸν ὄντα, i. e. *The sovereign Being, the only Being,* or *Being itself.* In the first revelation which God makes of his own being, he entitles himself, *I am that I am;* by which name the great Creator does in a manner exclude every thing else from a real existence, and distinguishes himself from his creatures, as the only Being, which truly and really exists. The ancient Platonic notion agrees with this revelation which God has made of himself; for there is nothing, according to that, which in reality exists, whose existence, as we call it, is pieced, or made up of past, present, and to come. He only properly exists, whose existence is entirely present. Hence Plato calls God τὸ ὂν (in Timæo), which probably he borrowed from Moses; (Exod. iii. 14.) and Justin Martyr, who once embraced that philosophy, has often the same expression. By knowing God, is not barely meant that there is a God; but the discovery likewise of the excellence and beauty of his perfections, his goodness, wisdom, and other attributes, which the visible world every where proclaims; for in all creatures there are such lively marks and tokens of them, that from thence we may form some, though imperfect, idea of the inexpressible and infinite perfections that are in God. For the whole extent of that which may be known of God, the τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, as St. Paul calls it, Rom. i. 19, 20. is manifest in the creatures, and the invisible things of God; even his eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen in them. St. Basil therefore very justly calls the world, Θεογνωσίας παιδευτήριον, *the very*

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school where the knowledge of God is to be learnt. And Clemens Alexandrinus, "the book in which we read God," using the same expressive metaphor, (Strom. 6.) This knowledge of the Deity from the works of nature, is what some call natural theology, and others, the ascent of the soul to God by the scale of the creatures. Nor would any injury be done to the sense, if, instead of τὸν ὄντα, we read τὸν δόντα, i. e. *and from the good things they saw could not trace out the God that gave them;* for thus ἀγαθῶν and δόντα answer to one another, as ἔργοις and τεχνίτην do in the following line.

Neither, by considering the works, did they acknowledge the Workmaster.] The knowledge of God was no difficult discovery, and therefore ignorance of him was not only surprising, but inexcusable; for a man need only lift up his eyes to heaven, and view the beautiful order and regular motions of the celestial bodies, to be convinced that there is a wise Author of nature, who at first created, and still preserves, this system of things. St. Cyprian therefore very justly observes, "hæc est summa delicti nolle agnoscere, quem ignorare non possis." (De Idol. vanit.) But that of St. Chrysostom comes nearest this writer, ἐποίησεν οὐρανὸν ὁ Θεὸς, ἵνα θαυμάσας τὸ ἔργον προσκυνήσῃς τὸν δεσπότην, κ. τ. λ. *Cœlum condidit Deus ut opus admirans dominum adorares: at alii, conditore relicto, cœlum ipsum adorarunt, id vero propter eorum ignaviam et insipientiam accidit.* (Hom. 25. De diabolo tentatore.) Thus Cicero expresses the natural sense of mankind on this head: "Cum videmus speciem primum candoremque cœli, deinde conversionis celeritatem, tum vicissitudines dierum atque noctium, commutationesque temporum quadripartitas, eorumque omnium moderatorem solem, lunamque, et stellas eosdem cursus constantissime servantes; hæc cum cernimus, possumusne dubitare quin his præsit aliquis effector?" (Tuscul. Quæst. lib. i.) But it would be almost endless to transcribe the many passages that occur in his works upon this subject, particularly in his book, de Nat. Deorum.

Ver. 2. *But deemed either fire.*] It is certain there were some among the heathen who worshipped universal nature, or the system of the material world, as an entire object, and made God and nature to be the same; (see Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 7.) and others, who worshipped particular visible and useful parts of it, which was the more general, the chief of which are enumerated by this writer: and the first is the element of fire. That this was the prevailing worship in the eastern countries, among the Persians and Chaldeans, see Pocock's Spec. hist. Arab. Hyde de Relig. vet. Pers. Strabo, lib. xv. Selden observes: "Tametsi multi Persarum Dii, tamen ante omnes ignis ab eis cultus, et in omni sacrificio eum imprimis invocabant." (Syntag. ii. cap. 8.) And a little after, to shew the very ancient worship of fire among the Chaldeans, he says, that the rabbins, by *Ur of the Chaldees,* (Gen. xi. 31.) understand their god *Fire;* and that, according to Maimonides, it means, *terra deserviens igni.* This he takes to be the *God of Nahor,* (Gen. xxxi. 53.) and the chief among the strange gods worshipped in Chaldea during Abraham's abode there. (Josh. xxiv. 2.) We read also of horses and chariots consecrated to the sun by some of the kings of Judah, (2 Kings xxiii.) and of twenty-five apostates, *that worshipped the rising sun towards the east, even in the temple of the Lord.* (Ezek. viii. 16.) The eastern nations worshipped fire as the cause of light, and the sun in particular, as being, in their opinion, the perfectest fire, and causing the perfectest light. For this reason, in all their temples, they had fire continually burning upon altars erected in them for that purpose, and before these sacred fires they offered up all their public devotions, as likewise they did their private ones before fires in their own houses. (Prid. Connex. par. i. b. iii.) As fire among these nations was a symbol of the sun, so the sun itself probably was a symbol of God, as being thought the most perfect emblem of his divinity, and to convey the most lively idea of the power, beauty, purity, and eternity of God; but at length this expressive and noble symbol was misunderstood and abused, and the worship transferred to the sign itself from the Being represented by it. Vulcan and Vesta, in the pagan theology, originally meant nothing but fire. Thus Ovid:

"Nec tu aliud Vestam, nisi vivam intellige flammam."

And the name itself the learned have derived from אש *Ignis.* At length it was made one of the *Dii Penates,* and uncommon honours decreed to it by the appointment of Numa Pompilius.

Or wind.] The four principal winds were esteemed as gods by many people, by others particular winds were acknowledged as such. The Gauls worshipped the wind Circius; and, according to Seneca, Augustus when in Gaul dedicated a temple to it. (Nat. Quæst. lib. v. cap. 17.) The Egyptians adored the symbols of the Etesian and southern winds, which were most beneficial to them, and of the utmost consequence with respect to the overflowing of the Nile. The worship paid to the winds seems in general to have sprung from an ancient tradition, that the winds were governed by angels set over them, and ruling in them. From what Virgil says of Æolus's presiding over the winds, (Æneid. lib. i.) it appears that this notion is very ancient; so that it is no wonder that in the symbolical learning and theology of the eastern nations, intelligent beings or angels should be introduced as commanding and directing them. The Targum on 1 Kings xix. 11. as quoted by Lightfoot, expressly mentions the angels of the winds.

The wind, or the swift air.] Ἡ πνεῦμα, ἢ ταχινὸν ἀέρα. Grotius understands this quite contrary to our version; by πνεῦμα he understands *the air,* and by ταχινὸν ἀέρα, *the swift wind;* where it is observable, that he applies the epithet to the wind, rather than the air. The Arabic version in like manner, *sed ignem, aut rapidos ventos, aërem, aut astrorum orbem,* &c. as if the original reading was ἢ πνεῦμα ταχνικὸν, ἢ ἀέρα. And indeed swiftness is the known epithet of the wind; hence we meet with the *wings of the wind* in Scripture, to denote their rapidity. Hence, probably, the Egyptians made birds the symbols of the winds, as esteeming them the most natural emblems, on account of the swiftness with which they cross the air. But swiftness does not seem always to belong to the air, as such, the state of which varies according to its qualities. If, indeed, we understand by the air the ether, or that fine, fluid, agitated, and most subtile part, which permeates the pores of all bodies, and is supposed to be the cause of all motion and fermentation, which anciently the heathens called Ζεὺς or *Jupiter,* ταχινὸν, in this sense, will not be improper. But

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it is generally taken here to signify *the clouds;* and this *Juno* (for so the ancients called the grosser air) was not without her adorers and votaries. Even Socrates is accused in the poet for worshipping the clouds; (Aristoph. in Nub.) and Juvenal charges the Jews with the same folly:

"Nil præter nubes, et cœli numen adorant."
(Sat. xiv.)

Coverdale's version makes the *wind,* or the *swift air,* to be the same; *Some took the fire, some the wind or air—for gods.*

Or the circle of the stars.] *i. e.* The constellations, according to Calmet and Grotius; by which some understand the pleiades, others the constellations in the zodiac, called here, from the asterisms in it, and its glorious figure, the starry circle; many of which are known to have been worshipped, particularly by the Egyptians. Selden seems to have been of this opinion, "Ægyptiis priscis dodecatemoria signiferi θεοὶ βουλαῖοι, seu Dii consiliarii, planetæ vero lictores, qui ascensi solis consistorio adstent, censebantur. Teste vetere ad Apollonii Rhodii Argonauticon IV. scholiaste." (Seld. de cult. extran. primord. cap. 3.) But as the article is wanting before κύκλον, it may as well mean some other group of stars. This was a very ancient idolatry, and spread farther than most other superstitions. The Israelites are in Scripture often charged with paying their adoration to the host of heaven, *i. e.* to the stars, of whom the sun and moon were esteemed the leaders, which they seem to have fallen into by the infection of the neighbouring nations. This worship sprang from an early notion, that the stars were tabernacles or habitations of intelligences, which animated those orbs in the same manner as the soul of man animates his body, and were the causes of all their motions. But the planets being nearest to the earth, and generally looked upon to have the greatest influence on this world, the heathens made choice of these, in the first place, for their gods. Hence we find Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Mercury, Venus, and Diana, to be first ranked in the polytheism of the ancients, as being their first and principal deities. (See Prid. Connex. par. i. b. iii. p. 140. fol. edit.)

Or the violent water.] The heathens had likewise a multitude of sea and river gods, as Oceanus, Neptune, Thetis, Triton, Nereus, &c. Homer speaks of the rivers of Troy, Simois and Scamander, as two deities. It is certain that the Egyptians esteemed the Nile as their god, calling it ὁ ἱερώτατος Νεῖλος, and that they worshipped the water, above the other elements, as being, in their opinion, the principle of all things. Hence, says Philo, God first smote their water, and turned it into blood, (de Vit. Mos. lib. i.) Suidas humorously tells the story of a famous contest between the Chaldeans and Egyptians about the strength and power of their respective deities, fire and water, (in voce Κάνωπος· see also Shaw's Travels, where it is related; and Gregory's notes, p. 222.) Tully has in few words comprised the several objects of false worship, "Erat persuasum etiam solem, lunam, stellas omnes, terram, mare, Deos esse."

Or the lights of heaven to be the gods which govern the world.] The sun and moon were worshipped in different places by very different names. (See Vossius de Orig. Idol. lib. ii. cap. 5.) It was the sun whom one country worshipped under the name of Baal, another of Chemosh, and others of Mithras and Osiris, which last was the name given to it by the Egyptians, among whom the sun was worshipped in the famous city of Heliopolis, which probably took its name from thence. (Macrob. Saturn. lib. i.) The moon was likewise worshipped under different names, as Hecate and Diana; the same was most probably the Egyptian Isis, the Assyrian Astarte, or Ashtaroth, and the Greek Ilithyia. Egypt was early infected with idolatry, especially of the sun and moon, as appears from Diodorus Siculus, and Lucian, de Dea Syria. Though it is more probable that Babylon was the mother of this kind of idolatry, and from thence the contagion spread through Egypt, Assyria, Phœnicia, and other parts of the world. The sun was the most glorious object that ravished the eye, and it shewed itself no where more gloriously than the plains of Chaldea. Some learned men think that the tower of Babel was consecrated by the builders to the sun, as the most probable cause of drying up the mighty waters, Tenison on Idol. cap. 4. who acquaints us, from Julius Firmicus, that the Egyptians expressed their devotions to the sun in this form: "Sol. Opt. Max. mens mundi, dux omnium princepsque."

Ver. 3. *With whose beauty, if they being delighted took them to be gods, let them know how much better the Lord of them is; for the first Author of beauty hath created them.*] Coverdale's version of this place seems preferable, *Though they had such pleasure in their beauty, that they thought them to have been gods; yet should they have known, how much more fairer he is that made them, for the Maker of beauty hath ordained all these things,* γενεσιάρχης, the Original, the Founder, the Parent of beauty, hath created them, *ipsamet naturæ pulchritudinis origo,* says the Vulgate; nor does St. Austin express this word amiss by *Pulchritudo pulchrorum omnium.* (Confess. lib. iii. cap. 6.) Plato, who himself calls these glorious luminaries μέγαλοι Θεοὶ, says, that the Greeks formed the word Θεὸς from the verb θέειν; (in Cratyl.) for, looking up to heaven, and considering the brightness and glory of the celestial bodies, *running* their several courses with the most wonderful harmony and order, they entertained in their minds so very high and exalted notions of them, that they were tempted even to an idolatrous worship of them. And other learned men observe, that they gave the name of κόσμος to the world, from observing the *beauty* and ornaments of it. (St. Jerome Comm. in Jon. i.) Cæsar assigns this as the reason of the Germans worshipping the host of heaven, "Germani deorum numero eos solos ducunt, quos cernunt, et quorum aperte opibus juvantur, Solem, et Vulcanum, et Lunam." (Lib. vi. de Bello Gal.) It is generally agreed, that the worship of these luminaries was the first idolatry; it is certain that the only kind of idolatry mentioned in the book of Job (and therefore we may presume of all others the most ancient) is the worship of the sun and moon; *If I beheld the sun when it shined* (says that holy writer), *or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand,* (in token of adoration, and from whence indeed the very term itself is derived; see Selden, de cult. extran. primord. cap. 3.) *this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for then I should have denied the God that is above,* (xxxi. 26—28.) This idolatrous practice of his time he opposes, by asserting God to be the maker of these very bodies, and that *by his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens,* xxvi. 13. (see Vos-

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sius de Idol. lib. ii. cap. 5. Sharrock, p. 326.) The inference of this writer is very just—that, instead of worshipping the heavenly bodies, which, like those of the intellectual world, were all created by God, and for him, they should rather have concluded that there was a first cause, the Author and Fountain of that perfection and glory, which are displayed in any or all the creatures. (See note on the latter part of the next verse.)

Ver. 4. *But if they were astonished at their power and virtue.*] It was a very ancient opinion, and a received tradition of paganism, that the gods had their mansions in the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, or *the celestial bodies*, and that the luminaries of heaven were all alive and instinct with a glorious and divine spirit. For the adoration they paid to the sun and moon, they paid it not to them as mere inanimate bodies, but as intelligences, or the supposed habitations of such beings; which seems evident from this verse, addressed to the sun:

Ἡέλιός θ' ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ, καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούει.

We have an intimation likewise of this notion in Virgil, (Æneid. vi.)

"Spiritus intus agit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet."

From this notion they inferred, that it would be a thing pleasing to the supreme God, to address themselves to him by the mediation of these glorious intelligences, which they thought so much nearer to him than themselves, and to have the greatest influence upon the world. This conceit, seconded with pretended revelations and miracles, said to be done by the στοιχεῖα, or *heavenly bodies*, in time brought forth sacrifices to them, and images of them, by means whereof great blessings, they thought, might be procured to them through their power and influence. (Maimon. de Idol. Thorndike's Epilogue, p. 287.)

Let them understand by them, how much mightier he is that made them.] Coverdale's version is here again preferable, *Or if they marvelled at the power and works of them, they should have perceived thereby, that he which made these things is mightier than they.* For, notwithstanding the regular courses of these heavenly bodies, and their dispensing life and heat, health and vigour, to all the parts and products of the earth, yet they should not so entirely have depended upon their sight, nor have been so far led by their own imaginations, as to offer an idolatrous worship to beings, which a little philosophy and the assistance of improved reason might have informed them, had themselves been made, and, consequently, were by nature no gods. How much rather ought they, from the origin and the effects of these heavenly bodies, to have concluded and adored the infinite power and most transcendent perfections of the great Creator of them, the Father and Fountain of these lights, from whom they received all that is glorious or beneficial in them, and must therefore be infinitely more excellent? St. Austin has some beautiful sentiments upon this head, "Si placent corpora, Deum ex illis lauda, et in artificem eorum retorque amorem, ne in his quæ tibi placent, tu displiceas:—Hunc amemus, hunc amemus; ipse fecit hæc, et non est longe." (Confess. lib. iv. cap. 11, 12.) And in another place, from the gifts discernible in the creatures, he deduces the perfection of the Giver, "Tu, Domine, fecisti ea; qui pulcher es, pulchra sunt enim; qui bonus es, bona sunt enim; qui es, sunt enim. At nec ita pulchra sunt, nec ita bona sunt, nec ita sunt sicut tu conditor eorum: cui comparata, nec pulchra sunt, nec bona sunt, nec sunt. Scimus hæc; gratias tibi. Et scientia nostra, scientiæ tuæ comparata, ignorantia est." (Confess. lib. xi. cap. 4.)

Ver. 5. *For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the Maker of them is seen.*] The Greek copies vary here; the Complut. reads, ἐκ γὰρ μεγέθους, καὶ κάλλους, καὶ κτισμάτων ἀναλόγως, κ. τ. λ. which Junius follows, *Nam ex magnitudine, et specie, ac creatis rebus convenienter*, &c. and our version, with a little alteration. The Vatican edition has ἐκ γὰρ μεγέθους καλλονῆς κτισμάτων ἀναλόγως, κ. τ. λ. and thus the Syriac renders; *i. e.* by the greatness of the beauty of the creatures, the Maker of them is seen proportionably, or by analogy, by comparing the creature with the Creator, the effect with the cause, as far as the difference is capable of being known, *cognoscibiliter*, according to the Vulgate, and as the natures of the beings compared will admit; which probably is what Junius means by *convenienter*, and as the ratio between finite and infinite, if any such could be, will allow. St. Chrysostom quotes this passage of our author, and has the following just reflection upon it: εἶδες τὸ μέγεθος, θαύμασον τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ποιήσαντος· εἶδες τὸ κάλλος, ἐκπλάγηθι τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ κοσμήσαντος.

Ver. 6. *But yet for this they are the less to be blamed, for they peradventure err seeking God, and desirous to find him.*] Coverdale's version is clearer; *Notwithstanding, they are the less to be blamed that seek God, and would find him, and yet miss.* But that of the Geneva Bible is preferable here; *But yet the blame is less in those that seek God, and would find him, and yet peradventure do err.* A comparison is here made between the worship of the heavenly bodies, and that of statues and images. The former has most to be said in its defence, though far from excusable, because these luminaries are glorious and magnificent, have a visible and apparent beauty, and sensible virtue, power, and benefit, issuing from them, and therefore are worshipped for their own sakes, and the advantages which the world receives from them. But what merit of any sort is in an image, or what pleasure or profit can be drawn from it? which at best is a representation only, and, perhaps, of some thing or person in itself worthless or disgraceful. If the worship, therefore, of the former is not to be excused, as it follows, ver. 8. the worship of the latter is much more to be condemned, because nothing is a greater dishonour to God, than to suppose him like the image of a corruptible creature, or the product of man's art or invention. There is this farther to be alleged in mitigation of their error who worshipped the heavenly bodies, that the creatures which they worshipped they looked upon to be eminent representations of the most glorious attributes of the Deity: they worshipped the host of heaven, because they are visible representations of his glory and eternity; and the elements, because they represented his benign, sustaining, and ubiquitary presence. Philo compares the adoration of the sun, moon, and stars, with other instances, and particularly with the worship of statues and images, and has the very same sentiments with this writer, "Peccant proculdubio (speaking of the former) dum, posthabito principe, venerantur subditos; minus tamen a recto declinant, quam qui

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ligna, lapides, argentum, aurum, similesque materias vertunt in statuas et simulacra," &c.

Ver. 8. *Howbeit, neither are they to be pardoned.*] Though there are these mitigating circumstances, in some measure to lessen the guilt of the worshippers of the heavenly host, yet is their offence very grievous. For, to instance in the sun himself, which undoubtedly is the most glorious and perfect, what property has he of Divinity? He is neither self-existent, nor sufficient to continue his own being. And though he may warm and cherish the earth, yet can neither of the luminaries, nor both jointly, of themselves, produce either corn, grass, or fruit. It is therefore wisely conjectured by some learned men, that one reason why Moses, in the history of the creation, particularly mentions that the fruits of the earth and the trees yielding fruit were produced on the third day of the creation, (Gen. i. 11.) and the sun and the moon not until the fourth day, (ver. 14.) was, to guard against the worship of them; that men might not think the influence of those celestial bodies to be the cause of the growing of these fruits, but the power and providence of God. (See St. Ambr. Hex. lib. iv. and Philo, Περὶ κόσμου.) For this was a sensible argument to the Jews and others, that these heavenly bodies, which the heathens paid their devotions to, were only secondary and instrumental causes in the hand of God, and that he could have supplied mankind with all the produce of the earth without them. Nor is it without a weighty reason, that the sun, in the Hebrew language, is called *Shemesh*, i. e. *a minister* or *servant*, (Deut. iv. 19. Isa. lx. 20. Joel ii. 10.) which very name alone should have kept all that understood its meaning from worshipping that luminary; and yet even some Jews seem to have fallen into this idolatry, from what Ezekiel says, viii. 16. who are there reproved for turning their faces to the east for this very purpose.

Ver. 9. *For if they were able to know so much, that they could aim at the world.*] Ἵνα δύνωνται στοχάσασθαι τὸν αἰῶνα. The sense which is most common and received of στοχάσασθαι τὸν αἰῶνα is, that if they could give so good a guess at the world, the beauty of the heavenly bodies, and the effect and influence which they have upon the earth; could dive into the secrets of nature, as, the cause of winds, flux of the sea, violence of earthquakes, nature of animals, &c. might they not have discovered, by the same search of reason and happy conjecture, the Lord and Maker of the universe? For there seems less study and meditation required to know that the beautiful frame of things which we see was not by chance, or self-produced, but the work of an Almighty Creator, than is necessary to penetrate into the mysteries of the natural world, and unravel the causes of such surprising events. But probably στοχάσασθαι τὸν αἰῶνα is a mistake, for στοχάζομαι has generally, if not always, in this sense, a genitive case in the most approved writers; and therefore τὸν αἰῶνα seems wrong in this respect, as well as in regard to τούτων, which follows. The true reading seems to be τῶν ἄνω. Besides, this expression answers very well to the things mentioned in the second verse, which belong to the upper regions. Whereas αἰὼν signifies principally duration. Perhaps the transcribers might mistake ἄνω for αἰῶνα contracted, such abbreviations being usual in manuscripts.

Ver. 10. *And in dead things is their hope.*] *i. e.* In idols, which have no life, no knowledge, no sensation. It is worth observing, that the original word for an idol signifies vanity, a mere nothing, that which has no existence. The primitive Christians accordingly looked upon the heathen temples as charnel-houses, esteeming their gods as dead men, according to that of Tertullian, "Mortui et Dii unum sunt." (De Spectac. cap. 13.) And thus some learned men explain ἐπερώτων τοὺς νεκροὺς, (Deut. xviii. 11.) according to the LXX. not of a mere necromancer, who consulted familiar spirits, but of one that inquires of the dead idols, which the heathens had set up in the nations round about the Israelites, in opposition to the living God. (Shuckford's Connex. vol. ii. p. 398.) There may be also another interpretation given of this place, which is countenanced by the Vulgate, Coverdale's, and the other ancient English versions, *viz.* that their hope is vain, fruitless, desperate, without any prospect of help or remedy, like that of dead men, *inter mortuos spes illorum est*, according to the Vulgate. *Ils sont* (says Calmet) *comme des gens reduits au tombeau, sans secours, sans esperance.* As the hope of good men, or such as serve the true God after an acceptable manner, is, on the contrary, a sure and certain hope, a joyful confident assurance, a hope full of immortality, (iii. 4.)

Gold and silver to shew art in.] Χρυσὸν καὶ ἄργυρον τέχνης ἐμμελέτημα, i. e. *Some device* or *invention of art.* Coverdale's and the old English versions put the comma after silver, and understand τέχνης ἐμμελέτημα, as a distinct particular from gold and silver beforementioned, and render, *Gold, silver, and the thing that is found out by cunning.* The Vulgate takes it in the same manner, and so does the Syriac version, and Calmet. I cannot help observing here, the very great resemblance which there is between this passage and that of the Acts, xvii. 29. οὐκ ὀφείλομεν νομίζειν χρυσῷ ἢ ἀργύρῳ ἢ λίθῳ, χαράγματι τέχνης καὶ ἐνθυμήσεως ἀνθρώπου, τὸ θεῖον εἶναι ὅμοιον.

Or a stone good for nothing, the work of an ancient hand.] The antiquity of the idol was thought of great importance; its venerable rust added not a little to its divinity: hence "adoranda rubigo" in the poet, applied to such things as time itself had in a manner consecrated. (Juvenal, Sat. xiii.) Even a stone badly cut has had a veneration paid to it, merely because it was ancient. Whole nations, says Calmet, have adored, for a succession of ages, an ancient block of marble, badly finished, or a figure in wood rotten and worm-eaten. But supposing the most complete piece of work, and that the hand of a Praxiteles or a Phidias stood plainly confessed, yet cannot time, though it may and does add a value to busts and medals, confer divinity, nor excuse the adoration paid to a piece of senseless matter, though beautified by art, dignified by a celebrated name, and recommended by the prescription and authority of many ages. It may not be unacceptable, perhaps, nor foreign to the occasion, to transcribe part of an epistle wrote by St. Austin to the principal inhabitants of a city in Africa, who had murdered a great number of Christians, because some of them were suspected to have taken away their god Hercules. That learned father expostulates with them upon this accident in these strong and pathetic terms: "The barbarous treatment which ye have offered to so many innocent persons, calls for vengeance from heaven and earth. But as ye urge the affront and damage, which ye have received against the massacre we complain

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of, let us state, in a few words, the injuries on both sides. You object, that your god Hercules is taken away; we are willing to make you satisfaction; we have money, stones, and workmen ready to set about the work; they shall instantly cut you out another deity, and paint it too in like manner, and finish such a Hercules in its stead, as you shall have no reason to complain of the difference. It is thus we restore your idol, it is thus we repair your loss: give us now back, in return, the souls of those many innocents you have murdered, and only to revenge the injured honour of a sorry, lifeless piece of stone." (Aug. Epist. 267. ad Princip. Colon. Suffet.) This instance shews the great veneration paid by the heathen to their statues, and how far superstition or a blind devotion will hurry men, even to sanctify murder.

Ver. 11—13.] The author in this and the following verses, exposes with great smartness of argument the absurdity of image-worship, by shewing their original, and the vileness of the materials of which they are made: "That an ordinary carpenter (whom he purposely fixes upon, to shew the clumsiness and inelegance of the work), having taken from a tree cut down what was best and most valuable, and fittest to be employed in some necessary piece of work; among the refuse, or rather the refuse of the refuse, for so τὸ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπόβλημα signifies, fixes upon a knotty and coarse piece of stuff, such as he could otherwise make no use of; and this he thinks good enough to make a god of." Horace, in like manner, makes himself merry with a workman, who deliberated whether he should make a bench or a god of an offal piece of wood, and at length determined it for a god: "Maluit esse Deum." (Serm. lib. i. Sat. viii.) The chief part of this description is borrowed from Isa. xliv. Jer. x. Baruch vi. and Lowth's paraphrase upon those passages in the prophets is equally applicable here: "What an absurdity is it for a man to dress his meat and make his god with the same stick of wood? or to think that a piece of timber hath any more divinity in it, than it had before, because it is fashioned and carved into the figure of a man?" To give an account of the original of images, how and whence made, is alone sufficient to expose the folly of worshipping them. This argument the ancient apologists for Christianity often insist upon, to shew the absurdity of the heathen idolatry; but none of them more happily than Minucius Felix in the following words, and almost upon the like occasion, allowing only for the difference in the materials: "Quando igitur hic (deus) nascitur? Ecce funditur, fabricatur, scalpitur: nondum deus est. Ecce plumbatur, construitur, erigitur: nec adhuc deus est. Ecce ornatur, consecratur, oratur: tunc postremo deus est, cum homo illum voluit et dedicavit;" which in Mr. Reeves's most excellent translation runs thus: *But when, pray, does it commence divine? Behold, it is cast, fashioned, and filed: well, it is no god yet. Behold, it is soldered, put together, and set upon its legs: well, it is no god yet. Behold, it is bedecked, consecrated, prayed to: then, then at last behold a complete god, after man hath vouchsafed to make and dedicate him.* Thus Arnobius, (lib. vi.) who was himself once a pagan idolater, and had, as he confesses, often asked blessings, "nihil sentiente de ligno," at length makes this just reflection upon such senseless conduct: "At quæ dementia deum credere quem tute ipse formâris, supplicare tremebundum fabricatæ abs te rei?" This sort of idolatry, besides its wickedness, hath something in it too very preposterous; for should not the idol rather worship the maker, than the maker the image, since, in some sort, he may be considered as the creator of it? Philo has, I think, the like observation; "Certe si error placuit, pictores et statuarii magis merebantur ut divinos honores acciperent; nunc, ipsis contemptis, ac si nihil egregium præstitissent, pro diis habentur eorum opera."

Ver. 13. *When he had nothing else to do.*] *i. e.* Postponing it to all other work, as thinking it of no great consequence, and then only taking it in hand when nothing better offered. Our version follows a copy which read ἐν ἐπιμελείᾳ ἀργίας αὐτοῦ, which some Latin translations render, *diligentiâ otii sui;* and others, *accurato otio:* other editions have ἐν ἐπιμελείᾳ ἐργασίας αὐτοῦ, which is likewise the reading of the Alexandrian manuscript; and this the oriental versions seem most to favour.

Ver. 14. *Or made it like some vile beast, laying it over with vermilion and with paint, colouring it red, and covering every spot therein.*] That it was usual thus to paint and set off their images, see Ezek. xxiii. 14. Arnob. lib. vi. And no wonder that the Lares, or little household deities, for such this writer seems here to mean, were so adorned, when Pliny acquaints us, that the face of the image of Jupiter was usually painted with vermilion upon festival days, and other grand occasions among the Romans; "Jovemque a censoribus miniandum locari," that the censors hired artists for that purpose; that Camillus and other generals, to whom the honour of a public triumph was decreed, were painted in the like manner; and that among the Ethiopians, "totos eo tingi proceres, hunecque deorum simulacris esse colorem." (Plin. lib. xxxiii. cap. 6. and Calmet in loc.)

Ver. 15. *And when he had made a convenient room for it, set it in a wall, and made it fast with iron.*] This *convenient room* we may understand to be a shrine, which was a sort of little chapel, representing the form of a temple, with an image in it, which being set upon an altar, or fastened in a wall, or to some other place, the idol, when the doors were opened, was represented to the worshippers as standing or sitting in state. Coverdale's and some other ancient versions call this a tabernacle, following herein the Vulgate, which renders *faciens ei ædiculam illo dignam,* the very word used by Minucius Felix to express one of these shrines by. And in this sense, probably, we may understand the *tabernacle of Moloch,* Acts vii. 43. for the σκηνὴ mentioned there was a kind of little cabinet, wherein the image of the false god was kept. And such I imagine those silver shrines to be, ναοὺς ἀργυροῦς, which Demetrius made for Diana; (Acts xix. 24.) Isaiah, likewise, mentions the silver chains by which these idols were fastened to walls or pillars, (xl. 19.)

Ver. 18. *Humbly beseecheth that which hath least means to help.*] Τὸν ἀπειρότατον, *i. e.* that which hath no experience at all, as our margin has it. Nannius reads, ἀπορώτατον, *egentissimum;* our version seems to follow a copy which read either ἀχρειότατον, or ἀναπηρότατον· any of which are more properly opposed to ἐπικουρίας than ἀπειρότατον.

Ver. 19. *Asketh ability to do of him that is most unable to do any thing.*] Our version here manifestly follows the Vulgate, which reads, *et de omnium rerum eventu petit ab eo qui in omnibus est inutilis;* which Calmet thinks has

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been corrupted, and that the ancient reading there was, *de manuum eventu petit ab eo qui manibus est inutilis.* And indeed the Greek, τὸ ἀδρανέστατον ταῖς χερσὶν, favours this conjecture. I should not do justice to this writer, if I passed by the beautiful turns unobserved which close this chapter, which cannot but strike every judicious reader. I am sensible that Arnobius, Lactantius, Minucius Felix, and many of the primitive writers, have been very large in exposing the folly of idol-worship; yet I know no occasional remarks, nor even any whole treatise purposely wrote on the subject, where this is more happily executed than in the compass of these two last verses, which alone may serve as a specimen of this writer's skill and judgment, where the contrast is so beautiful, and the contraries so happily and justly placed to illustrate each other, that a person of taste cannot but immediately discern and admire the justness and elegance of the piece. It is inferior only to some instances of the same kind in the inspired writings, particularly that well-judged opposition, which we meet with in the following words of St. Paul: *As deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well-known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.* (2 Cor. vi. 8—10. see also iv. 8, 9.) I shall conclude this chapter with a just reflection of St. Austin upon another species of idolatry, which, though less perceived, is no less fatal: "Besides the senseless sort of idolatry which consists in worshipping brutes and images, which may easily be avoided, there is a more common and dangerous way of worshipping the work of a man's own hands (continues he), by a secret and subtle idolatry, which consecrates our own favourite wills and passions, deifying the desires of our own hearts, and giving them the preference before the will of God, and is, in other words, the adoration of our own-selves; an idolatry, which is so much the more dangerous, as it is within our own breasts, and we constantly carry the favourite image about with us."

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

The insufficiency of idols farther shewn from their inability to preserve their worshippers in a voyage at sea; from hence the author takes occasion to mention the first invention of a ship, the form of which probably was taken from the model of the ark; that God rules the boisterous element, and his providence steers men's course, which can save them from accidents without the use of artificial means. The original of idolatry is inquired into, ver. 14. and some conjectures in the verses following, from whence probably it might take its rise. The chapter concludes with the abominable rites attending upon it, and the scandalous vices introduced by it.

Ver. 3. *BUT thy providence, O Father, governeth it.*] As men had likewise their tutelar deities and favourite idols, which were thought to preside over the sea, and able to assist them in their voyages, the author shews the absurdity of idol-worship in this particular also,—that neither the strongest ship, built by the most skilful workman, nor the rotten images that are sometimes in it, or carved upon it, probably of Neptune, Castor, and Pollux, &c. are sufficient to procure a man a safe voyage, but the overruling providence of the true God only, ἡ δὲ σὴ, πάτερ, διακυβερνᾷ πρόνοια· which is a proper technical sea term, and means that God's providence steers and guides the ship. That particular deities were supposed to superintend sea affairs, appears from an old inscription upon the Pharos, built by Sostratus, mentioned by Pliny, (Nat. Hist. xxxvi. 12. and Strabo, lib. xvii.) which is preserved in Dr. Hody, (de Bib. Text. orig. p. 87.) and is as follows:—

ΘΕΟΙC CΩΤΗΡCΙ
ΥΠΕΡ ΤΩΝ ΠΛΩΙΖΟΜΕΝΩΝ.
DIIS SERVATORIBVS
PRO NAVIGANTIBVS.

That the sailors in their distress in a tempest, used to cry for help to their false gods, and even implore the mercy of the sea itself, appears from Erasmus's Naufragium, where they cry out in their fright, "O clementissimum mare, O generosissimum mare, O formosissimum mare, mitesce, serva;" where the epithets made use of, are too soft for that boisterous element, but are intended as compliments to bespeak its favour. But a more remarkable instance, and which I shall, for its greater authority, choose more particularly to mention, is what occurs in the prophet Jonah, chap. i. where we read, that the *Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in it, so that the ship was like to be broken; then the mariners were afraid, and cried every one unto his* (false) *god,* (ver. 5.) But, notwithstanding their prayer to these pretended deities, and their rowing hard to bring the ship to land, the text acquaints us, that they found no help, the sea continuing tempestuous against them, till they cried unto the Lord Jehovah, the God of heaven, the only true God; and then the sea, at his command, ceased from her raging. This unexpected escape so affected the mariners, that from thenceforth *they feared the Lord exceedingly,* (ver. 16.) being convinced of his power and greatness, which appeared both in raising the storm, and so suddenly laying it. But the Divine power over that unruly element never appeared more signally, than when our Saviour said to it, *Peace, be still; and immediately there was a great calm.* (Mark iv. 39.)

For thou hast made a way in the sea, and a safe path in the waves.] This may either mean, in general, that God giveth a safe and secure passage over the sea to the faithful that depend upon and cry unto him; or it may mean, that God made a safe way for his favourite people, the Israelites, to go through the Red Sea on foot; which seems the most probable interpretation, because this sentence seems borrowed from Psal. lxxvii. 19. where the words are almost the same, *Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters;* which the best interpreters refer to the same occasion.

Ver. 4. *Shewing that thou canst save from all danger: yea, though a man went to sea without art.*] Ἵνα κἂν ἄνευ τέχνης τις ἐπιβῇ. Ἐπιβῇ seems to require something after it; and πλοῖον (ver. 3.) is too far off: I think the true reading of the Greek is either νῆα κἂν ἄνευ τέχνης τις ἐπιβῇ, and thus the Arabic interpreters translate, *ut quispiam sine ulla arte lignum objectum conscendat,* or ἄλα κἂν ἄνευ τέχνης τις ἐπιβῇ; and thus Calmet takes it, *vous pouvez sauver de tout peril quand on s'engageroit même sur mer, sans le secours*

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d'aucun art: (Com. in loc.) and the Vulgate itself so understands it, *etiamsi sine arte aliquis adeat mare;* but the sense is the same in both emendations, *viz.* that art or skill is not always successful, nor indeed always necessary on shipboard, or at sea; not always successful, as appears from the instance of the mariners in Jonah, and because there are many shipwrecks, notwithstanding the skill of the best pilots; nor always necessary, because God can save without the use and assistance of secondary means, as in the Israelites' safe passage through the sea; or contrary to the known laws of nature, as when St. Peter, at Christ's command, walked upon the sea. And though the pilot should have little or no skill, or, like Palinurus, should by some accident fall overboard, yet God's power can preserve from danger, when the ordinary and usual means fail. Or, should the violence of a tempest render all art and management ineffectual, and at length force the ship upon rocks, so that nothing but instant death is apprehended, God can, even in this extremity, unexpectedly succour the miserable, by an unforeseen interposition of his Providence; as he has done upon many occasions, well attested in history. One cannot read the description of St. Paul's voyage, and of that sad tempest, Acts xxvii. when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, when they were forced *with their own hands to cast out the tackling of the ship, so that all hope of safety was then taken away;* nor reflect upon the ensuing shipwreck of him and his companions, and their very surprising and happy escape to land, *some on boards, and some on pieces of the ship,* without discerning the hand of God in their wonderful preservation, which then is most visible and distinguished, when hope is desperate, and art ceases.

Ver. 5. *Nevertheless thou wouldest not that the works of thy wisdom should be idle.*] These words may either mean, that God not only displays his power at sea, but also his wisdom is visible there, particularly in the make of a ship, and in the art of navigation; for God may very properly be said to have taught men *these,* as he first gave the model of a ship, when he instructed Noah to build the ark after such a particular form; and from thence, or by that pattern, men first attempted to build ships, and to sail in them on the surface of the waters. The heathens indeed have given the honour of this invention to different persons; some to Jason, and the Argonauts, that sailed to Colchis to fetch the Golden Fleece, some to Neptune, others to Atlas, or Minerva, some to the people of Crete, and others to the Phœnicians. But hence, or from the plan communicated to Noah, we may with most certainty derive it; and here we should fix the epoch, or first original of navigation. Or the meaning may be, that God would have a commerce and correspondence carried on even amongst the most distant nations, by a traffic and exchange of their several produces and commodities; that the abundance of some might be a supply for the others' want, that so none of the good things which God has so liberally provided for the comfort and conveniency of life, might be idle, *i. e.* useless and superfluous; and therefore, or for this purpose of a mutual intercourse, men undertook long and dangerous voyages, encompassing both sea and land to establish commerce, and to circulate what might be necessary or wanting. We meet with the like observation among the fragments of Philo, ἄξιον θαύμασαι θάλασσαν, δι' ἧς, κ. τ. λ. *Beneficio maris, terræ regiones sibi invicem commutationes bonorum pendunt, atque tum ea, quibus carent, accipiunt; tum ea, quibus abundant, remittunt.*

And therefore, men commit their lives to a small piece of wood.] Seneca has the like expression:—

> "Audax nimium, qui freta primus
> Rate tam fragili perfida rupit,
> Dubioque secans æquora cursu
> Potuit tenui fidere ligno."

And indeed the poets in general are full of beautiful sentiments on the occasion, but none so jocular as Juvenal:—

> "I nunc, et ventis animam committe, dolato
> Confisus ligno, digitis a morte remotus
> Quatuor, aut septem, si sit latissima tæda." (Sat. xiv.)

Which Ovid has as fully and more seriously described in the following short verse:—

> "Tam prope nam lethum, quam prope cernit aquam."
> (De Ponto, lib. ii.)

No wonder, therefore, that persons of the greatest courage have trembled at the nearness of the danger; and that the great hero Æneas himself was in such a panic, in the violent storm mentioned in the first Æneid, especially as the heathens had a notion that the soul was fire, and might possibly be extinguished by the waters. But the description of the inspired poet exceeds all others in majesty and terror, *They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep; their soul melteth away because of the trouble.* (Psal. cvii. 26.) This is exactly in the strain of Virgil:—

> "Tollimur in cœlum curvato gurgite, et idem
> Subducta ad manes imos descendimus unda."
> (Æneid. lib. iii.)

Ver. 6. *For in the old time when the proud giants perished.*] Καὶ ἀρχῆς γὰρ ἀπολλυμένων, κ. τ. λ. I think this, which is the present reading of all the Greek copies, a mistake; probably καταρχὰς γὰρ ἀπολλυμένων, κ. τ. λ. is the true reading. *Ab initio cum perirent superbi gigantes,* &c. as the Vulgate has it; *i. e.* when the old world, through excess of wickedness, perished by water. But why are the *giants* particularly mentioned, when the text in Gen. vi. 12. says, *that all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth?* the answer is, that, by a known figure of speech, a part here is put for the whole; and those giants are principally mentioned, as being the ringleaders, and the most flagrant examples of wickedness. For by the word *giants* we are to understand, not only men of uncommon stature, but violent and bloody men, who filled the world with rapine and murders. Hence some of the ancients explain the word γίγαντες by βίαιοι, *violent men;* and some by ἀσεβεῖς, *wicked men.* They are here called ὑπερήφανοι, which may mean, not only their being proud upon account of their size, but, which is a general consequence, their being overbearing by reason of their great strength. We may likewise understand by *perished,* their perishing by an everlasting destruction: for the ancient name for *hell* among the Jews was, *cœtus gigantum,* and there are many texts of Scripture that seem to lead to this sense. (Job xxvi. 5, 6. in the Hebrew and Vulgate; Prov. xxi. 16. See also Mr. Mede's 7th disc.)

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The hope of the world governed by thy hand escaped in a weak vessel.] Coverdale's and the other ancient English versions apply these words to the ship, and not to the persons in it, rendering, *He, in whom the hope was left to increase the world, went into the ship, which was governed through thy hand:* and so the Vulgate understands it, and the Arabic. Our version follows the Greek.

And left to all ages a seed of generation.] When the earth was purged from a deluge of sin by a deluge of water,—that there might be some living witnesses of the world's being thus destroyed; and that the memory of such an instance of God's justice, power, and hatred of sin might be preserved to succeeding ages,—Noah and his family, upon whose safety likewise the future increase and peopling of the world again depended, and therefore here properly called the *hope* of it, were preserved in the ark from perishing by the water, and by God's command he preserved some few individuals of every species, to repair the almost universal loss, and by a new progeny renew the face of the earth, which is the *seed of generation* here meant. According to the ancients, only Deucalion and Pyrrha survived the flood, and in these they placed the growing hopes of the world: thus Ovid,—

"Nunc genus in nobis restat mortale duobus."

Plato and Lucian call those few persons who remained alive Ζώπυρα, i.e. *live coals*, who were to rekindle the vital flame, and continue the human race. When Noah went out of the ark, God blessed him and his sons, *i. e.* he renewed the blessing bestowed before upon Adam, saying, as after a new creation, *Increase and multiply;* nay, it is very observable, that God repeats this blessing twice, (Gen. ix. 1. 7.) to denote as well its greater certainty as universality. "Noah (says Theodoret) was now the seed of mankind, the new root of human nature, and, as it were, a second Adam: accordingly God confers upon him the same benediction, as upon the father of the former world." (Quæst. in Gen. 53.) As Noah stood thus as it were in the place of Adam, so St. Chrysostom observes of Noah, that he repaired the loss of dignity sustained by Adam's fall, and obtained from the Divine goodness some external privileges Adam had lost; and, as an instance of this, he alleges the return of the savage world in the ark, to that submission, which, according to the Divine appointment, they paid to the first man before the fall. (Hom. 25. in Gen.)

Ver. 7. *For blessed is the wood whereby righteousness cometh.*] *i. e.* Blessed is the wood which serveth for good and righteous purposes, and blessed is the ark in particular, which preserved so good a man as Noah was (for blessedness in Scripture is applied to things as well as persons that contribute to any good work), for he was a great instance of the righteousness which is by faith, and as such is numbered among the heroes in the eleventh to the Hebrews: he was also a remarkable preacher of righteousness to the old world, warning them for a hundred and twenty years, to escape the general danger and destruction that threatened them; and in his family the true religion was preserved, particularly in Shem, who was the root of the Divine peculium, in the postdiluvian, as Seth was in the antediluvian world. But I cannot think that these words are spoken prophetically of the cross, or that they any ways allude to it: that they may be applied to it by way of accommodation, and have actually been so applied by several of the fathers, particularly St. Cyprian, Justin Martyr, Ambrose, Austin, Chrysostom, Clemens Alexandrinus, &c. I readily grant, and indeed such a comparison seems easy and natural: for, referring this passage to the ark spoken of in the foregoing verse, to which undoubtedly it originally and primarily relates, this ark of wood may in a secondary sense be considered as a type of the church, and of that salvation, which true believers shall, in all ages, obtain by faith in a crucified Saviour, who in the Old Testament is called *The Lord our righteousness.* (Jer. xxiii. 6.) Some have understood this passage of our author of the punishment of notorious offenders; that the wood upon which such sinners suffer, and which is the adjudged instrument of justice and vengeance, is blessed, as doing service to the public, by the exemplary dispatch of such as are not fit to live. But this interpretation seems forced.

Ver. 8. *But that which is made with hands is cursed.*] Something is here omitted or must necessarily be understood; for it is not true, that every thing that is made with hands is cursed, for then the ark itself would be cursed: I conceive, therefore, that *graven images* should be supplied; *Cursed is the graven image which is made with hands.* But this likewise must be understood with some limitation, for the bare making of an image is not in all cases to be condemned: for, besides that Moses calls this art one of the gifts of God, that act of God in giving orders for the brazen serpent to be made and set up, and the cherubim to be placed over the mercy-seat, shews, that the bare making of images is not unlawful. Accordingly, the writers of the decalogue do not understand the second commandment, as if it forbade the making of images in general, but the making them with a design to represent the Divine Majesty, or to worship and kneel before them. The sense therefore of this passage seems to be, that the image, which is made with an intent to be worshipped, and by which cometh unrighteousness, is accursed. And the reason of its being accursed is, from the great, I should say infinite, disproportion that there is between an image and the Divine nature; and that being corruptible it should be accounted God. If the insensible wood, or image, then, is cursed, no wonder that the maker of it should be so in an equal or greater degree, as it follows in the next words.

As well it, as he that made it.] This is agreeable to Scripture, which says, *Cursed is the man which maketh any graven or molten image, and putteth it in a secret place; i.e.* privately worships it; for it is upon account of its being worshipped, that it is there called *an abomination unto the Lord.* (Deut. xxvii. 15.) Nor is it particular to the Scripture only, to denounce and execute vengeance upon the idol-maker; even the poets, when they give us an account of Prometheus's vanity, tell us, at the same time, how their Jupiter vindicated his honour, by the severe punishment inflicted upon the insolent offender. I think this verse and the context would be more perfect, if the worshipper, who is the principal, if not the only offender, had been inserted. For the idol itself is senseless and inanimate, or, as St. Paul in one word well expresses it, is *nothing*, and therefore, as such, cannot be the object of punishment; but the person who sins by it, which is Capellus's objection against this place: and as to the statuary that makes the idols, how far he is faulty, the following lines of Martial will inform us:—

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"Qui fingit sacros auro vel marmore vultus,
Non facit ille Deos; qui colit, ille facit."

So that as he alone turns images or pictures into idols or false gods who worships them, he should have been chiefly taken notice of as most obnoxious to the Divine displeasure. As it is the worship therefore that makes properly the idol, possibly the idolater may be included in the maker, and is the ὁ ἀσεβῶν in the next verse: and thus Calmet says it may be understood, *le faux Dieu, avec celui qui lui rend un culte sacrilege.* (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 11. *Therefore even upon the idols of the gentiles shall there be a visitation.*] This may be taken in two senses, according as we understand the term idol, which may either mean the material image, or the false god represented by it. But it may be asked, how a visitation or punishment can properly come upon the idol which is inanimate? The Chaldee paraphrase upon Exod. xii. 12. will explain this, where the judgments threatened upon the gods of the Egyptians are expressed in the four following instances: "Idola fusilia liquefient, idola lapidea resecabuntur, idola testacea fient minuta frusta, idola lignea fient cinis." And that the images of their god Apis, and their other deities, were thrown down by an earthquake when their firstborn were slain, St. Jerome asserts, ad Fabiol. from Jewish tradition, and Artapanus in Euseb. lib. ix. de Præpar. The like example was made of Dagon, by the virtue of the Divine Majesty appearing on the ark, for he fell before it, and laid on the ground, a headless idol, and a senseless trunk. Or it may mean, that the demons and evil spirits which inhabited these idols, and from thence gave their delusive oracles, shall be detected and dispersed. St. Cyprian speaks of them in aftertimes as thus visited, "Hi adjurati per deum verum a nobis, statim cedunt, et de obsessis corporibus exire coguntur:—videas illos nostra voce et operatione majestatis occultæ, flagris cædi, igne torreri, incremento pœnæ propagantis extendi, ejulare, gemere, deprecari." (De Idol. vanit.) The prophets, in many parts of their writings, foretell that there shall be a final period put to idolatry, Isa. ii. 11. Zech. xiii. 2. Jer. x. 15. where the prophet, speaking of idols, says, according to the LXX. ἐν καιρῷ ἐπισκοπῆς αὐτῶν ἀπολοῦνται, an expression which has a near resemblance with that of this writer; and in ver. 11. he has the same threatening, but in the Chaldee language, as the learned observe, (see Witsii Exercit. in Symb. Apostol. p. 125. Poli Synop. in loc.) that the Jews, being thus prepared against the attempts of the idolatrous Babylonians, might be better able to answer them in their own language.

Because in the creature of God they are become an abomination.] The sense seems to be, that idols are an abomination by the abuse of some of God's creatures; for whatever be the matter of their idols, whether gold, silver, stone, or wood, things otherwise harmless and useful are perverted by this misapplication of them to idolatrous purposes; and, on this account, God will shew his displeasure and resentment even against such insensible things.

Ver. 12. *For the devising of idols was the beginning of (spiritual) fornication.*] In the language of Scripture, idolatry is represented as a sort of fornication or adultery; and the worship of false gods is called, *The going a whoring after them.* (Lev. xvii. 7. Ezek. xxiii. 30. Hos. iv. 12. ix. 1.) Hence the idolatry of the Jews is expressly called *uncleanness*, because it was an alienation of the hearts and bodies of them from the God of Israel, who had chosen that church as his spouse. And when the Jews were at length brought off from this sin, they represented the idolatry of others under the name of fornication. (John viii. 41.) Our version, it is plain, takes it in this sense, by calling it here *spiritual fornication*, though none of the other versions so confine the sense, or take any notice of the word *spiritual*. And indeed the observation is equally true of fornication strictly so called; for the heathen idolaters were likewise the most infamous fornicators, and their hidden mysteries were little else than acts of uncleanness, a melancholy detail of which follows in the conclusion of this chapter. Tertullian's words are very observable, who joins these vices as if they were inseparable. "Quis immundis spiritibus operatus, non conspurcatus, et constupratus incedit?" (De Idol. cap. 1.) And St. Peter, describing the vicious customs of the gentiles, says, *that they walked in lasciviousness and lusts, and abominable idolatries.* (1 Pet. iv. 3.) To these impurities they were led by the traditional accounts of the lewd amours of their false gods; and when once men began as it were to consecrate crimes by the authority of their gods, there was nothing which they did not commit without scruple and without shame, under the shelter of their example. "Ego Homuncio non facerem?" (Eunuch. act. iii. sc. 5.) was therefore but a natural conclusion, when the great thunderer was known to have committed a rape, and authorized the same villany.

And the invention of them the corruption of life.] As the practice of idolatry was attended with impurities of all sorts, and particularly with unnatural and shameless uncleanness, it is very properly here called φθορὰ ζωῆς, *the corruption of life.* That φθορὰ signifies corruption through lust, is evident from many places of Scripture where it is so used, particularly in the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter; it is so taken by Ignatius, and other ancient ecclesiastical writers, and by Philo, who ranks it with fornication and adultery; and, as a branch of great uncleanness, ranks it among other instances of transgression, which are a breach of the seventh commandment. (Phil. de Spec. Leg.)

Ver. 13. *For neither were they from the beginning, neither shall they be for ever.*] The most ancient idolatry was undoubtedly the worship of the heavenly bodies; but, as ancient as this was, we read nothing of it certain, and which may be absolutely depended on, before the deluge; nor are learned men in general agreed, that it was one of those pollutions which defiled the old world. And indeed there were many causes which might prevent the sin of idolatry so early,—as, the infancy of the world from the creation, the memory of which must be still fresh; the longevity of the antediluvians, of Adam, Seth, and the rest of the holy line, who could, and did most probably, inculcate and deliver to their families, what themselves were so abundantly assured of with respect to Almighty God's being and oneness. Add to this, likewise, the appearance of the Λόγος, or Son of God, to Adam and others. (See Tenison on Idol. p. 39.) The worship of images came in much later; the earliest account we have of them is probably that of Laban's teraphim, Gen. xxxi. or his Penates, as they are thought. (See Selden, de cult. extran. primord. cap. 3.) It appears from Varro, that the Romans had sub-

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sisted above a hundred and seventy years before they had any images, but they were idolaters long before that time. Tarquinius Priscus is first thought to have introduced them from the Greeks. (See Aust. de Civ. Dei, lib. iv. 31. Thorndike, of the Laws of the Church, p. 289.) Our author intimates, that the custom of worshipping dead men for gods contributed to it, (ver. 15.) the date of which may be fetched from history. And as to polytheism in general, one knows from thence the epoch and original of all the false gods, when Jupiter, Hercules, Neptune, &c. first commenced deities, and on what account; so that idolatry may be looked upon as of late date, compared to the most ancient and true religion, which has always subsisted, and will always continue in the world. And as God hath already blotted out the very names of many of the heathen idols, it may be looked upon as an earnest of the utter destruction of the rest.

Ver. 14. *For by the vain-glory of men they entered into the world, and therefore shall they come shortly to an end.*] Vain and proud men, not content with common honours, aspired after Divine, and affected to be called gods; and, from a principle of vanity and self-love, would have their images erected and adored, proposing immortality to themselves from hence; but their expectations have been frustrated, and their images of no long continuance. Our translators render it in the future tense, as prophetical of what should happen hereafter; but the original expresses it by the time past, διὰ τοῦτο σύντομον αὐτῶν τέλος ἐπενοήθη. The Arabic assigns here the same reason for such ambitious attempts, " eumque propterea finis illorum sit brevis, hinc idola excogitarunt;" *that idols were invented as a sort of artifice to prolong the shortness of their lives.* The Vulgate takes κενοδοξία in the nominative case, and renders *supervacuitas hominum advenit in orbem terrarum, et ideo brevis illorum finis est inventus;* understanding it probably of the sin of our first parents: but Dr. Grabe, who has θάνατος in a parenthesis, is more explicit; *viz.* that death entered at first into the world through man's ambition, and on that account they lost their intended immortality, and a period was fixed to human life. This indeed appears to be the sentiment of our author in several places, (i. 16. ii. 23.) but that sense does not seem so agreeable to the context.

Ver. 15. *For a father afflicted with untimely mourning, when he hath made an image of his child soon taken away, now honoured him as a god, which was then a dead man.*] The author here points out the beginning or source of a particular species of idolatry; *viz.* that a father having lost, by an untimely death, a dear son, causes the image of him to be made to perpetuate his memory, which is adored by himself and domestics. At first this was intended only to solace grief, by an imaginary, or representative presence of him that was dead; but that tender respect which parents bear to their children increasing after their death, and a certain impotent desire joined thereto of still enjoying their companies whom they so dearly loved, together with a fond persuasion that the dead were in a capacity of knowing and accepting such ceremonious instances of love and respect, put them upon procuring sacrifices, and other acknowledgments of Divine honour, to be publicly assigned them after death; and at length a civil respect terminated in superstition and idolatry. Thus St. Cyprian: " Inde illis instituta templa; inde ad defunctorum vultus per imaginem detinendos expressa simulacra, quibus et immolabant hostias, et dies festos dando honores celebrabant. Inde posteris facta sunt sacra, quæ primis fuerant assumpta solatia." (De Idol. vanit.) Cicero is a celebrated instance of the very fond affection of a parent for a deceased child. He had a mind to perpetuate the memory, and consecrate the virtue, of his favourite daughter Tullia by a temple, the most ancient way of doing honour to the dead that had deserved well. We have her apotheosis in the following words: " Te omnium optimam doctissimamque, approbantibus diis immortalibus ipsis, in eorum cœtu locatam, ad opinionem omnium mortalium consecrabo." (De Consol. see also Lactantius, de falsa Rel. lib. i. 15. and the writer of his Life, vol. ii. p. 378.) Not unlike our author's account is what Diophantus the Lacedemonian mentions of Syrophanes the Egyptian, whose grief was so excessive for the death of his only son, the designed heir of his immense fortunes, that he ordered an image to be made of him, as a sort of relief and comfort to him under his distress; that his servants and dependants, to flatter their master, used to crown the image with flowers, to burn incense to it, and to fly to it as their deliverer, " quasi salutis certissimo collatori," after the commission of any great fault: Fulgent. Mythol. lib. i. and, according to him and the etymologists, εἴδωλον is so called, *quasi* εἰδοδύνη, i. e. *doloris species.* And that in Scripture idols and sorrows are expressed by the same word in the Hebrew, see Selden, De cult. extran. primord. cap. 3. So that our author's account is not quite singular, nor so much to be condemned as Calvin (Instit. lib. i. cap. 11.) and Capellus have represented it. (Strict. in lib. Sap.) For the design of this writer was not to set down all the sorts of idolatry, nor the original and order of each in point of time; he did not mean this as the only or the first source of all idolatry; nor does he exclude, or deny, that there are others more ancient, which he himself mentions in some of the foregoing chapters. His design here is only to shew the ridiculousness of idolatry and the folly of idolaters; and this he has sufficiently done, by shewing the rise of some of them, in some very remarkable instances. (See Calmet's Diction. in voce *Idolatry,* and his Dissertation sur l'Origine de l'Idolatrie.)

Ver. 16. *And graven images were worshipped by the commandments of kings,*] Or *tyrants,* as the marginal reading is. And thus Coverdale renders, *Tyrants compelled men by violence to honour images;* which seems preferable, as it suits better with the character of the latter; for a good king will rather labour to establish virtue, which is his best image, a stamp more honourable than any upon the most valuable coin, or even than art itself can reach. We cannot have a fuller proof of the vain-glory of a tyrant, than in that worship which Nebuchadnezzar ordered, upon pain of death, to be paid to the golden image, which, in the province of Babylon, he had set up. (Dan. iii.) Nor had Darius's decree less vanity in it, *That whosoever should ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, but of him only, should be cast into the den of lions.* (Dan. vi.) The like observation may be made upon many of the Roman emperors, whose ambition carried them to have their statues erected, and Divine honours paid to them.

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Ninus also introduced the same superstition, for he set up the image of his father Belus, to be publicly honoured by his people; and, that great resort might be made, and respect paid to it, he pardoned all offenders, how great soever their crimes were, that fled unto that image; which encouragement, together with the authority and command of the king himself, multiplied the number of its worshippers.

Ver. 17. *Whom men could not honour in presence, because they dwelt far off, they took the counterfeit of his visage from far, that they might flatter him that was absent, as if he were present.*] The author here considers the original of the worship and deification of kings; that at first an image, picture, or statue, was made of them, as an instance of civil respect to them, and fondness for them; who being far distant from many parts of their dominions, and often absent from them in foreign wars, their subjects by this device supplied the loss of their personal residence among them. But this afterward was the occasion of great superstition and idolatry; for in time, and especially after the deaths of their favourite kings, which was a loss irrecoverable, and an absence the most regretted, they proceeded even to adoration of them. The heathens were induced probably to this worship of their kings, either out of a compliment to their vanity, which was oftenest the case; or from an opinion that, being the representatives of God's power on earth, worship was really due to them; or upon account of their extraordinary virtues; or from a sense of gratitude for benefits received from them: but there was something of policy in the worship of their dead kings; for by thus paying homage to departed merit, they hoped hereby to induce their successors to the like endeavour of governing well. Nor was their apotheosis without a mixture of flattery too of their successors' vanity, who were pleased to be thought of Divine extraction, and to be descended from so high an original; which notion itself contributed not a little to the establishment of this error. (See Lactantius, de falsa Relig. lib. i. 15.) The same observation upon the original of this worship is made by Minucius Felix: "Dum reges suos colunt religiosè; dum defunctos eos desiderant in imaginibus videre; dum gestiunt eorum memorias in statuis detinere; sacra facta sunt, quæ fuerant assumpta solatia," (p. 375. Cypr. de Idol. van.)

Ver. 18. *Also the singular diligence of the artificer did help to set forward the ignorant to more superstition.*] *i. e.* To lead the ignorant into more superstition. Coverdale's version of the place is clearer, and better expressed, *The singular cunning of the craftsman gave the ignorant also a great occasion to worship images.* At first the figures or images of the deities seemed to have been made of earth, clay, stone, wood, in a rude and imperfect manner. (See Principes de la Sculpture, liv. ii. cap. 1.) Clemens Alexandrinus observes, that before the art of carving was invented, the ancients erected pillars, and paid their worship to them, as to statues of their gods. (Strom. lib. i.) Pausanias, in his excellent survey of Greece, says, that in early times men worshipped rude stones, sharpened only at the top, for their gods; which Scaliger shews was the custom of the Phœnicians in particular. (See Append. ad lib. de emend. Temp.) But when sculpture and picture, and other ways of imagery, were brought to perfection, idolatry in proportion advanced; for images, as appears both from the Greek and Roman history, being the means to increase it, the more art and skill that were used to recommend and set these off, the more danger there was of men's being pleased with and seduced by them; for the unskilful multitude, seeing the sacred image of their prince, or some favourite benefactor, carved into all the members and organs of life so artificially, that to the sight it seemed to be a real and living person, were easily drawn, through the weakness of their understanding, and the finished beauty of the piece, to imagine that it was really animated, and to adore it as a living and powerful deity, such as was able to do them good or hurt, according to its own pleasure. Hence, says Philo, Moses with great prudence banished ζωγραφίαν καὶ ἀνδριαντοποιΐαν from the Hebrew commonwealth, as fearing the dangerous consequences which such artful resemblances of nature might have upon a gross people, inclined to idolatry, (lib. de Gigantib.) The like observation may be made upon other images of the ancients, many of which were so contrived, as to help forward superstition, and to lead the ignorant into a higher opinion of the supposed deity. Of this sort were those, whose mechanism was so curious, that they seemed to hold immediate converse with heaven: thus in the image of Serapis at Alexandria, a little window was so framed by art, that the sun shone on the eyes, lips, and mouth of it; insomuch, that the people believed it to hold communication with that deity, and to be inspired by it. No less artful was that device which Pliny mentions of an iron image, which was sustained with magnets, that the people might behold it with more veneration, and imagine it supported in the air by nothing but miracles. Dædalus, who brought sculpture to great perfection, and after his return from Egypt instructed the Grecian artificers to imitate in their statues the attitude of a person in action, or motion, contrived himself a Venus, which moved so naturally, that it was thought to have real life and sensation; but all the wonder lay in the quicksilver, or mercury, which that cunning artist put within the figure, to make it play; and so the good people were persuaded of the presence of the divinity, by the surprising motion of the figure. Nor was the singular diligence of the artificer employed about the image itself only, to give it the appearance of life and sense, but as much care was taken to make the idol-temple beautiful; for the more superb and magnificent this was, the greater and better did the god seem to the multitude, more easily allured through the beauty of the work. Thus Alexander, to solace the excess of grief for his Hephæstion, not only decreed him a temple, but promised uncommon rewards to Cleomenes, the overseer of his works, to finish it with the utmost nicety and exactness. (Arrian. de exped. Alex. lib. vii.)

Ver. 20. *Took him now for a god, which a little before was but honoured as a man.*] Σέβασμα ἐλογίσαντο. Σέβασμα is more generally taken for *worship;* but sometimes it signifies the *thing*, or *being*, that is *worshipped.* Thus we find it used, Acts xvii. 23. ἀναθεωρῶν τὰ σεβάσματα ὑμῶν, which our translation renders, *beholding your devotions;* but the reading would be much better, *beholding your idols;* or, as the margin has it, beholding the *gods* you worship. Theophylact accordingly expounds it by Δαίμονες, which Athens was notorious for worshipping.

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Ver. 21. *For men, serving either calamity or tyranny, did ascribe unto stones and stocks,* &c.] This is a short, but somewhat obscure rehearsal of the causes of idolatry, mentioned at large in the seven foregoing verses; that, concurrently with other reasons, it arose either from grief for the loss of some favourite person, whose memory, by an instance of mistaken tenderness, was endeavoured to be preserved; or from the uncontrollable will and authority of tyrants, appointing worship and adoration to be paid to insensible statues; which was complied with generally out of a servile fear: but to good princes they voluntarily erected them, not as mere compliments to their vanity, but as testimonies of their love and respect. St. Chrysostom's observation on the beginning of idolatry is very just: οὕτω εἰδωλολατρεία τῶν ἀνθρωπων εἰσῆλθεν, ὑπὲρ μέτρων τιμωμένων τῶν ζώντων, καὶ τῶν ἀποθανόντων· οὕτω ξόανα προσεκυνήθη, οὕτω πορνεία ἐκράτησε. Hom. 87. in Matt. where πορνεία seems to be used in the sense of our author, (ver. 12.)

Did ascribe unto stocks and stones the incommunicable name.] *i. e.* Of God, as the margin rightly supplies; which title eminently, and by way of distinction from all other gods, belonged to the God of Israel, the one, absolute, and only true Being. The Hebrews accordingly call God *Hashem,* i. e. *the name;* and from hence, no doubt, *Ashima,* an appellation of God, is derived. The critics likewise observe, that wherever *the name,* or *the holy name,* is found by itself, or put absolutely, in the Mosaical writings, or elsewhere, it means God himself, or the *incommunicable name.* And indeed the name of God cannot properly be communicated, or be common to him and some other being. For though names proper are given, we know, to the individuals of the same species, to distinguish them from each other; yet, God being singular in his kind, his name is as incommunicable as his essence. And thus St. Cyprian: "Nec nomen Dei quæras; Deus nomen est illi. Illic vocabulis opus est, ubi propriis appellationum insignibus multitudo dirimenda est: Deo qui solus est, Deus vocabulum totum est." (De Idol. vanit.) And, therefore, when Moses earnestly inquired after his name, he took the name of *I am;* implying, that he was the only one of his species, that there is none but God that truly is, and that all others were false gods, pretending to what they were not, and assuming a name which did not belong to them. Hence therefore we see the reason and peculiar sanctity of the *Tetragrammaton;* for other names of God being applicable to other things or persons, as *Elohim* to princes, &c. the name *Jehovah,* or *Jave,* or *Jai,* was not communicated to, or participated by, any other thing or being; wherefore God challenges this as his own peculiar name: (Exod. iii. 14.) and thus the ancient English translations, and the oriental versions, seem to understand it. But there is another sense likewise of the *incommunicable name; viz.* that great ineffable name which must not be communicated or mentioned. Josephus calls it, προσηγορίαν περὶ ἧς οὔ μοι θέμις εἰπεῖν, i. e. *a name which it is not lawful to speak of.* This the Jews were so tender of, and paid such a religious regard to, that the name Jehovah was among them ἀνεκφώνητον, never to be uttered, unless once in a year by the high-priest, on the great day of expiation; and hence he was said to be *a God without a name:* and thus he is described by some early writers, particularly by Justin Martyr, who calls him Θεὸς ὁ ἄῤῥητος. (Apol. secunda.) And in this sense we may understand ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, 2 Cor. xii. 4. which are not so properly *unspeakable words,* as our translation renders, as *words which ought not to be spoke;* and so ἄῤῥητον is used by Philo, de Somniis; or rather, to avoid the tautology in what follows, *words which God alone can utter;* and thus a learned writer explains them: "Verba tantæ majestatis, ut homine majora, Deum autorem et prolocutorem arguerent." (Witsii Miscell. sac. p. 25.)

Ver. 22. *Whereas they lived in the great war of ignorance, those so great plagues called they peace.*] Μεγάλῳ ζῶντες ἀγνοίας πολέμῳ. Ἄγνοια here plainly refers to the words before, πλανᾶσθαι περὶ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ γνῶσιν, *ignorance of the true God and his worship;* which being attended with slaughter of children, obscene rites, adultery, murder, and other great evils and mischiefs, of which there is a long and black catalogue in the following verses, may in some sense be called the mother of war as well as superstition: and yet, as shocking as these vices were, these they called peace; *i. e.* they were pleased with them, and thought themselves happy in the most miserable condition, and under the greatest evils: "Ils sont assez insensibles, pour regarder cet etat comme un bonheur," says Calmet, Com. in loc. And their ignorance was as fatal, and their case as deplorable, as those who should esteem the calamities of a war a blessing. The expression in this verse is very singular, but Tacitus has one which very much resembles it, Jul. Agric. vit. cap. 30. where, speaking of the Romans, he says, that when they have destroyed all before them with fire and sword, they pretend to call all the injuries they have done by the false name of peace, "ubi solitudinem fecerunt, pacem appellant."

Ver. 23. *For whilst they slew their children in sacrifices.*] Some of the vices mentioned in this and the following verses, were the very sacred rites of the heathen worship itself, as that inhuman and impious custom of offering their children in sacrifice to Moloch. Grotius says, that it was a custom among the Phœnicians for their kings, in times of great calamity, to sacrifice one of their sons, him especially whom they loved best. (Annot. in Deut. xviii.) Silius Italicus confirms the same:

> "Mos fuit in populis, quos convenit advena Dido,
> Poscere cæde Deos veniam, ac flagrantibus aris
> (Infandum dictu) parvos imponere natos."

Philo mentions the same custom, ἔθος ἦ τοῖς παλαιοῖς τὸν ἠγαπημένον τῶν τέκνων εἰς σφαγὴν ἐπιδιδόναι, λύτρον τοῖς τιμωροῖς δαίμοσι· (See Lactant. lib. i. cap. 31. Plutarch. de Superstit. Minut. in Octav.) Nor was this unnatural rite of sacrificing their own children peculiar to barbarous nations; we likewise meet with instances of this cruelty among the Grecks and Romans, and even, by the Psalmist's account, among God's own people, Psal. cvi. 39. (See note on xii. 5, 6. where this subject is handled more at large.)

Or used secret ceremonies.] Κρύφια μυστήρια. They were also called ἀπόῤῥητα σύμβολα, ἱερὰ ἄῤῥητα, τελεταὶ μυστικαὶ, and *opertanea sacra,* which the οἱ μεμυημένοι were acquainted with only, and were concealed from all others: hence, in such writers as make mention of these rites, as Herodotus, Diodorus, Apuleius, all is mystery and dark-

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ness; such were the sacrifices of Ceres, Isis, Cybele, Proserpina, Venus, Priapus, Bacchus, and other impure deities, which were usually celebrated in the night, in groves, caverns, and secret places; and to such mysteries of iniquities practised among the heathen, St. Paul may be thought to allude, when he says, *That it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.* (Ephes. v. 12.) It appears, also, that they were initiated into the service of their idols by lewd and indecent ceremonies; the LXX. therefore very properly, in Hosea iv. 14. where these rites are referred to, call these idolaters by the sacrifical term, τετελεσμένοι, which the Chaldee paraphrase upon the place thus renders, *Ipsi cum meretricibus societate se jungunt, et cum scorto comessantur et potant.* Nay, which is still more shocking, there are instances, both in profane and sacred writings, of prostitutions even in the very temples themselves: thus Juvenal,

—— "Ad quas non Clodius aras?" (Sat. vi.)

And in a following satire there is the like charge,

—— "Quo non prostat fœmina templo?" (Sat. ix.)

The like may be inferred from the history of Paulina, who was debauched by Decius in the temple of Isis, under the notion, and with the pleasing thought, of her lying with the god Anubis there. (See Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 4. see also Amos ii. 8. which is by many understood in the like sense.) But the account in 2 Macc. vi. 4. *That the temple was filled with riot and revelling by the gentiles, who dallied with harlots, and had to do with women within the circuit of the holy places,* is so full, that no farther proof seems necessary.

Or made revellings of strange rites.] Ἐμμανεῖς ἐξάλλων θεσμῶν κώμους. The Geneva Bible renders, *Or raging dissoluteness by strange rites.* The passage seems to be wrong printed in our version; it should be, *used secret ceremonies, or mad revellings of strange rites,* i. e. Bacchanalian rites, such as Theodoret calls τὰ τῆς ἀσεβείας ὄργια; and Lactantius, more closely, works of madness, "Quid de iis dicam, qui abominandam, non libidinem, sed insaniam exercent." (Instit. lib. vi. cap. 23.) Κῶμος here is used in an impure sense, and means amorous revels, or unlawful gratifications; by means of which, as it follows in the next verse, they grieved others with adultery: and so, where mention is made, 2 Macc. vi. 4. before quoted, that the temple was filled, ἀσωτίας καὶ κώμων, it is explained after, by *dallying with harlots.* In the same sense κῶμος is used, Rom. xiii. 13. Gal. v. 21. 1 Pet. iv. 3. and by Theocritus, and the scholiasts on that poet, an impure person is styled κωμαστής; which is agreeable to the character of the god Comus, who, according to the ancients, is described to be "Dæmon amorum impudicorum incentor." (See Philostrat. lib. i. de Imagin. Suidas in voce Κῶμος. Spencer, de Leg. Hebr. tom. i. p. 618.) Instead of ἐξάλλων θεσμῶν, Dr. Mangey reads ἀλλοκότων θεσμῶν here, which seems indeed more expressive and proper. (See his notes on Philo, vol. ii. de Abrahamo.)

Ver. 25. *So that there reigned in all men, without exception, blood, manslaughter.*] Our translation manifestly follows a copy which read πάντας, probably the Vatican; but the expression must be confined, though a very general one, to the idolaters only: for to fix such black crimes upon all men, without exception, is too extensive and unjust a charge; and, if it be considered thus universally, carries with it a false and unwarrantable imputation: it must, therefore, have the same limited sense as πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, Acts xiv. 16. which should not be rendered *all nations,* as our translation has it; but the meaning is, and the rendering should be, *That in times past God suffered all the heathen, as distinguished from others, to walk in their own ways:* and so πάντες here must imply only the heathen idolaters, who were the persons guilty of these detestable vices. But the Alexandrian manuscript has another and better reading, πάντα δ' ἐπιμὶξ ἔχει, αἷμα καὶ φόνος, *all things, or rather crimes, are confounded;* i. e. all sorts of sins are promiscuously committed by these idolaters, which are the sad consequences of idol-worship. This is the sense of Junius and Calmet, and is confirmed by the Vulgate and all the ancient versions, and is indeed to be preferred, as it stands clear of the former objection.

Blood, manslaughter.] Αἷμα καὶ φόνος. I think our translation should rather have rendered αἷμα by *manslaughter* than φόνος, which undoubtedly means *murder,* and ought so to have been expressed. Αἷμα, in the sense of *manslaughter,* is used Deut. xvii. 8. where mention is made of a matter in dispute between blood and blood, ἀναμέσον αἵματος· where one of them must mean casual murder, and both together answer to αἷμα καὶ φόνος here, and to דָּם *dam,* and דָּמִים *damim* in the Hebrew, i. e. *blood and bloods,* or *bloodshed and murder*; that דָּם in the singular number, takes in all manslaughter, in battle, tumults, casualties, &c. and דָּמִים *treacherous, wilful, and insidious murders,* and so implies the strongest expression of guilt (see Pagninus's Thesaurus, and Kircher's Concordance, in voce דָּם); and thus, in Gen. iv. 10. where Abel's murder is mentioned, which was undoubtedly a wilful murder, it is expressed in the plural, according to the Hebrew. We have in Ecclus. xl. 9. Θάνατος καὶ αἷμα, *death and bloodshed;* where αἷμα cannot mean murder, because it is a punishment inflicted by God, as by the sword: so in Ezek. v. 17. xxviii. 23. xxxviii. 22. Θάνατος καὶ αἷμα is rendered *pestilence and blood:* where αἷμα signifies any unusual sort of death, rather than murder.

Dissimulation.] Δόλος. This, I think, would be better rendered *deceit* or *cheating,* which is its more usual acceptation: and so it is taken in the description of such idolaters, Rom. i. 29. This sense likewise is more agreeable to the context. By the Syriac interpreters it is rendered, *fraude,* and by Calmet, *la tromperie.*

Corruption, unfaithfulness.] Φθορὰ, ἀπιστία. We are not to understand φθορὰ of corruption of manners in general, nor yet of corruption by lust in particular; but of such practices, probably bribery, in some, as induced others to unfaithfulness, or breach of trust, which is the ἀπιστία that follows, and is used for *perfidia;* and in this sense the Syriac and Arabic versions, with Junius, agree, rendering the words by *corruptela* and *perfidia;* which latter is certainly a more proper word than *infidelitas,* which the Vulgate uses. (See Rom. i. 31.)

Ver. 26. *Disquieting of good men.*] Θόρυβος ἀγαθῶν. It may as well signify, according to the present pointing of the Greek, *confounding of good things, bonarum rerum confusio;* and so some interpreters do indeed expound it.

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According to the sense of our version, and of almost all the commentators, these idolaters were not only ἀφιλάγαθοι, *despisers of those that were good,* (2 Tim. iii. 3.) but their opposers and persecutors: but I question the propriety of this rendering; for I do not well understand how θόρυβος ἀγαθῶν can signify any thing, but a crowd or tumult of good people, as θόρυβος τοῦ λαοῦ, (Mark xiv. 2.) means an uproar of people in general; or how it can be rendered with our translators, *disquieting of good men.* Would not the construction be better, if these three words, ἀγαθῶν χάριτος ἀμνηστία, were taken together, as they stand by themselves in the same stiche in the Alex. MS. and θόρυβος be rendered by itself? It will be sufficiently distinguished from τάραχος, which goes before, as it is of stronger signification and greater force. Τάραχος properly means *disturbance, strife, stirs;* τάραχος οὐκ ὀλίγος, (Acts xii. 18.) *no small stir among the soldiers;* but θόρυβος is properly *tumults, riots, insurrections,* which are of a more public and dangerous nature, and it may be considered as the conclusion of that climax. And, indeed, the Bible commonly called St. Jerome's actually so distinguishes, and renders θόρυβος by itself, *tumultus: bonorum Dei immemoratio,* i. e. *forgetfulness of God's benefits,* or of the good things received from the grace and kindness of God; which is likewise Tirinus's interpretation of χάριτος. But, according to our version, it means no more than *ingratitude;* which is scarce of consequence enough to be inserted in the midst of so black a catalogue.

Defiling of souls.] Ψυχῶν μιασμός. According to the rendering of all the English versions, no particular vice seems denoted hereby; it may be equally predicated of every crime here enumerated, that, as a sin, it is a defiling of the soul. I would therefore understand ψυχῶν in the complex sense, as taking in the whole man, body as well as soul; in which sense it often occurs in Scripture; and, as the expression is plural, it may be supposed to include the sin of more than one person, some heinous offence, in which persons, their bodies as well as souls, were jointly concerned: and, according to the character of such idolaters, and as it stands connected with other like shocking vices, sodomy seems most probably to be meant; especially as γενέσεως ἐναλλαγὴ, and ἀσέλγεια, both which our version seems to understand of that particular vice, are capable of another and very consistent sense. But if this explanation of ψυχῶν is not satisfactory, may we not then suppose σαρκῶν μιασμὸς to be the true reading, and to denote that particular species of uncleanness? St. Jude has the same expression, and, as it seems, upon the like occasion of filthiness. That σαρκῶν is often used plurally, see Job ii. 5. Wisdom xii. 5. Apoc. iv. 15. xix. 18. 21. Or, lastly, if I may be indulged one conjecture more, may not φύσεων μιασμὸς be thought agreeable to this place? *i. e.* defiling of natures, or sexes, by bestial or unnatural mixtures; see Levit. xviii. where all the abominable practices here mentioned are forbidden, and the idolatrous Canaanites, on that account, said to be drove out. I shall only add, that persons guilty of such uncleanness, as if it did utterly depose them from their manhood, and debase their very nature, are in Scripture called by the name of *dogs.* (Apocal. xxii. 15.)

Changing of kind.] Γενέσεως ἐναλλαγή. Our translators seem to have read, γένεος ἐναλλαγὴ; but Coverdale's and the other ancient versions understand by it, *changing of birth,* i. e. uncertainty of legitimate issue; for, says Calmet, where marriages are defiled, and adulteries frequent, there must be great confusion in the birth of children, *l'incertitude de la naissance;* and spurious and doubtful ones will often be brought into families. The Vulgate reads, *nativitatis immutatio;* and the Arabic more clearly, *partûs commutatio;* and Badwell, *prolis suppositio et adulteratio;* expressions all denoting spurious or supposititious children. Grotius is singular in expounding it of sodomy. The learned Selden proposes it as a conjecture, whether γενέσεως ἐναλλαγὴ may not relate to some idolatrous rite, particularly the change of the sex (which is the marginal reading), by the woman assuming the habit and appearance of a man, and the man of a woman, which was customary in the worship of the Assyrian Venus, or Astarte. According to Julius Firmicus, the priests of that goddess must not otherwise officiate: "Nisi effœminent vultum, et virilem sexum ornatu muliebri dedecorent." (De errore prof. relig. cap. 4.) And in this sense Selden expounds Deut. xxii. 5. for the mere exchange of habit was not in itself so faulty; but being an idolatrous rite, as such, it was forbidden, and is therefore called an *abomination;* see Selden, Syntag. ii. cap. 4. who quotes Maimonides, as explaining the precept in the same manner, "That the counterfeiting the sex was not so much forbidden, as the worship of idols;" and particularly, "ipsa Veneris et masculæ et fœminæ sacra." (More Nevoch. cap. 38. p. 3.)

Disorder in marriages.] Γάμων ἀταξία. This does not mean any indecency committed by either of the married parties, for that is contained in adultery, which is next mentioned, but incestuous marriages, which are mentioned at large, and forbidden, Levit. xviii. The Vulgate renders, *nuptiarum inconstantia,* by which it seems to understand unsettled marriages, which were dissolved at pleasure.

And shameless uncleanness.] Ἀσέλγεια. Not any particular act or species of uncleanness is here meant, but this word includes all the kinds and sorts of it; and thus Grotius explains it, *omne lasciviæ genus.* (Annot. ad Gal. cap. v. 19.) For when men are come to such a pitch of wickedness and degeneracy, as to worship such gods, or evil spirits, as delight in uncleanness, and whose rites are so infamous and shocking, as to be even a reproach to human nature; such a religion must of course corrupt their lives, and produce those scandalous disorders and vile affections, which are here enumerated. We have the like melancholy account of the heathen vices, Rom. i. 23, 24. which the apostle charges upon their idolatry, as the consequences and effects of it; for God abandoned them, who had displeased him so much by idol-worship, to those unnatural lusts, called there πάθη ἀτιμίας, as being the greatest abuse of the species, and a dishonour to the human nature. That such instances of lust and uncleanness, as are here mentioned, were practised frequently by the heathens in their sacred rites, see Levit. xviii. 24. 1 Kings xiv. 24. xv. 12. 2 Kings xxiii. 7. 1 Pet. iv. 3. Hence πλεονεξία, which the fathers generally interpret to signify an action of lust, is in some of St. Paul's Epistles called idolatry itself. Such actions of lust were also among the Gnostics in their worship. (Epiphan. Hæres. xxvi.) And instances are still more flagrant in profane authors.

Ver. 27. *For the worshipping of idols not to be named.*]

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The Jews were forbidden to make mention of the names of the heathen idols, Exod. xxiii. 13. or *idols of the people*, as the Chaldee paraphrase expresses it; which the Vulgate explains by, *per nomen externorum Deorum non jurabitis, neque audietur ex ore vestro;* which the Psalmist likewise refers to, and resolves against; *Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, neither make mention of their names within my lips.* (Psal. xvi. 5.) And this the Israelites religiously observed; for they either changed the name of the idol, and of the places dedicated to its worship, or else substituted such a word as had some affinity with the true name, but withal expressed their contempt and abhorrence of it: thus they called Baal, *Bosheth*, i. e. *shame.* (Hos. ix. 10.) And when the Mount of Olives was defiled with idolatry, they called it the *Mount of Corruption*, (2 Kings xxiii. 13.) changing the Hebrew name: and *Beth-el*, which signifies the *house of God*, when it came to be the seat of idolatry, was called *Beth-aven*, i. e. *the house of vanity.* (Hos. iv. 15. x. 5.) In like manner they changed *Beelzebub* into *Beelzebul*, i. e. *Dominus Stercoreus*, by way of contempt and derision: and that grand impostor Barchochab, who would have passed for the Messiah in the reign of Trajan, they called, says Selden, *Barchozibam*, i. e. *filium mendacii.* (Syntag. ii. cap. 6. where more instances of this occur.) And, as the Jews were not to mention the names of the heathen idols, or strange gods, so neither might they cause to swear by them. (Josh. xxiii. 7.) Maimonides says, that, by the Hebrew canons, it was forbidden to make an infidel swear by his god, or even to mention the name thereof. (De Idol.)

For the worshipping of idols is the beginning, the cause, and the end, of all evil.] Idolatry is, in the opinion of Tertullian, the principal crime of mankind, the chief guilt of the world, the total cause of God's judgments and displeasure; for thus he begins his book, de Idololatria: "Principale crimen generis humani, summus sæculi reatus, tota causa judicii idololatria;" intimating hereby, that it is a kind of mother-sin, containing in it all other evils on which the Judge of the world passeth condemnation. (Tenison on Idol. p. 39.) Lactantius goeth still higher in his censure of it, calling it the inexpiable wickedness. (Instit. lib. i. cap. 18.) But, of all others, Gregory Nazianzen comes nearest this writer in his sentiments upon the guilt of idolatry; for he calleth it, ἔσχατον καὶ πρῶτον τῶν κακῶν, *the beginning and end of all evil:* (Orat. xxxviii. de Idol.) which are the very words of our author.

Ver. 28. *For either they are mad when they are merry.*] *i. e.* When they dance before the idol, or rejoice at the idol-feast; in both which senses the verb εὐφράνεσθαι, here used, frequently occurs; (see Acts vii. 41.) or it may refer to the mad howlings in their *orgia*, or Bacchanalian feasts, or to the drunkenness and extravagance commonly attending them, when women ran about like so many furies, their heads wreathed about with snakes, wildly brandishing their *thyrsus*, and tearing the flesh even of living animals to pieces with their teeth. Julius Firmicus thus describes these revels: "Illic [in Orgiis) inter ebrias puellas, et vinolentos senes, cum scelerum pompa præcederet, alter nigro amictu teter, alter ostenso angue terribilis, alter cruentus ore, dum viva pecoris membra discerpit." (De errore prof. relig.) That ὠμοφαγία, or *eating of raw flesh*, and particularly the entrails of the victims, was customary at these feasts, see 2 Macc. vi. 7. where, in the description of the abominable rites of Bacchus, σπλαγχνισμὸς is expressly mentioned, called also, παράνομος σπλαγχνισμὸς, (ver. 21.)

Or else lightly forswear themselves.] *i. e.* Without any scruple: which is not to be wondered at; for an oath can have no tie upon, or sacred authority among, such as are neither convinced of the truth of their religion, nor influenced by the power of it, nor affected by any awe or expectation of punishment. Innumerable almost are the instances which may be produced of the perjury of the heathens; as that of Antiochus the younger, who, notwithstanding the oath made to the people of Israel, yet overthrew the wall of Zion. (1 Macc. vi. 62.) And part of the charge given by Judas Maccabæus to his men, before his final engagement with Nicanor, was to shew the falsehood of the heathen, and their breach of oaths. (2 Macc. xv. 10.) To this sin of perjury, so frequent among the heathen, Spencer and other learned men think the Psalmist alludes, Psal. cxliv. 7, 8. *Deliver me from the hand of the strange children, whose mouth talketh of vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity;* i. e. from such of the heathen as devise lies, and falsely swear to them, by lifting up "dextra falsitatis," *the hand of deceit.* (See also Ovid. Fast. lib. v. ver. 681.)

Ver. 29. *Insomuch as their trust is in idols which have no life; though they swear falsely, yet they look not to be hurt.*] The like observation is made upon idols in the epistle of Jeremy; *Though a man make a vow unto them, and keep it not, they will not require it,* (ver. 35.) As the gods and idols they swore by had neither life nor power, so the heathens feared not any punishment from them for any breach of faith, as knowing they were ignorant of what passed, and were secure from their ever hurting them. Minucius, therefore, very wittily sneers the heathens on this account, when he says, "Tutius iis per Jovis genium pejerare quam Cæsaris:" for their emperors and magistrates they stood in awe of, being sensible they would punish them for their perjuries; but their idols being "res nihili," *mere nothings*, their oaths likewise were thought to be of no consequence: hence they made a jest of the obligation or sacredness of them; not unlike those Greeks of whom the orator speaks, "quibus jusjurandum jocus, et testimonium ludus:" (Cic. pro Flac.) or those whom Juvenal describes, "intrepidos altaria tangere," approaching the altars boldly, without any sense of fear, without any conscience of an oath. The heathens had likewise this farther reason to promise themselves impunity in the commission of many of their crimes—that herein they imitated their deities, and were warranted by their example. It is therefore a very just observation of St. Austin's, that Jupiter was to no purpose armed with thunder to punish guilty mortals, which must be useless and imaginary, unless he himself had been better than his offending creatures. (Confess. lib. i. cap. 16.)

Ver. 30. *Howbeit, for both causes shall they be justly punished.*] Ἀμφότερα δὲ αὐτοὺς μετελεύσεται τὰ δίκαια. The true literal rendering of this is, *utraque illos insequentur jura;* where *jura* may either mean *reasons* or *indictments*, or *vengeance* and *punishment.* In the first sense, Demosthenes uses τὰ δίκαια; in the latter sense Horace uses *jura;* "forsan debita jura, superbe, te maneant ipsum." (Carm. lib. i. od.

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28.) Dr. Grabe seems not sensible of this, and flings τὰ δίκαια, which is the reading likewise of the Alex. MS. as a corrupt one, into the margin, substituting τὰ ἄδικα in its place. From the double punishment here said to pursue the idolater, one may infer, that the nothingness of the idol will not, as has been pretended, excuse the worshipper. For though an idol be *formally* nothing of that which it is taken for, and nothing *materially*, but a lifeless piece of wood or stone, yet *relatively* an idol is something; and an oath by it, or worship and sacrifice offered to it, is not offered to nothing, but to demons, who in and by these idols imposed upon the heathen through their oracular delusions.

Because they thought not well of God, giving heed unto idols.] Not unlike is that of St. Paul, Rom. i. 25. where speaking of the gentile idolaters, he says, that *they worshipped the creature more than the Creator*, παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα, i. e. they worshipped the creature jointly and together with the Creator; or rather, as the original words will bear, they worshipped the creature contrary to, and in defiance of, the right of the Creator; as by παρὰ φύσιν, in the next verse, is meant a practice contrary to the right and usage of nature; for St. Paul cannot be understood, as if he blamed the gentiles for being *more* given to the service of the creature than of the Creator (for one single act of religious worship designedly performed to a creature will make a man an idolater), nor can he be thought to mean, that they would be more excusable, if they had worshipped both equally; but he blames them for giving that honour to other things, or beings, which is his peculiar right, and belongs to him solely, and exclusively of all creatures.

Despising holiness.] Καταφρονήσαντες ὁσιότητος. The Vulgate renders, *in dolo contemnentes justitiam*, applying ἐν δόλῳ to the last sentence. St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, reads very particularly, *in idolo contemnentes justitiam*. All the versions agree in rendering ὁσιότης either by *justitia* or *veritas*, applying it to that branch of righteousness which consists in the observance of truth, faith, promises, oaths, &c. which one man has a right to expect from another. And, therefore, Dr. Magney, with great judgment, conjectures, that the true reading here is, ἰσότητος, which seems the more probable, as nothing is more common, than the exchange of ὁσιότης and ἰσότης, and *vice versa*. (See notes in Philo, de Decem Orac.)

Ver. 31. *For it is not the power of them by whom they swear, but it is the just vengeance of* (leg. *against*) *sinners, that punisheth always the offence of the ungodly.*] Our version is somewhat obscure; but the meaning is, that idolaters and false swearers, who are here called the ungodly, whose offence is by the Vulgate rendered *prævaricatio*, shall certainly be punished; yet not by any act or power of their idols, or false gods, who can take no cognizance of perjury or falsehood; but by the just vengeance of an Almighty God, the revenger of injustice, and of strange and false worship: that the punishment of perjured persons, when it has happened, (which the superstitious pagans fondly attributed to the power and resentment of their false gods; see Juv. Sat. viii.) was rather to be ascribed to the vengeance of the only true God. St. Austin therefore rightly states the difference, "non te audit lapis loquentem, sed punit Deus fallentem."

CHAP. XV.

ARGUMENT.

The author praises God for preserving his peculium, or chosen people, from the sin of idolatry, with which all other nations were infected. He enlarges upon the folly of idolaters, and the invective is carried on against such as make idols; particularly images made of clay are condemned as an instance of greater folly, and the maker of them less excusable, than of the graven ones in the former chapter; inasmuch as himself and work are both a composition of clay, and are resolvable into dust; and that the very attempt to make a deity of such perishing materials, and by a hand itself frail and mortal, is little less than a contradiction; that they are contemptible, and nothing worth, as having neither life, sense, nor motion, in common with other images; but are more despicable on account of the earth they are made of, which speaks its own decay. The chapter concludes with the ridiculous and wicked worship of hurtful and venomous beasts, such as created even dread and horror from their very form and appearance.

Ver. 1. *BUT thou, O God, art—true.*] *i. e.* The true God, a being that necessarily exists; whereas the existence of idols is only imaginary: or the meaning may be,—that thy word is true, and thy miracles real; but the oracles of demons are equivocating, and their works lying wonders.

Ver. 2. *For if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy power.*] The whole verse is very obscurely expressed; the sense of this passage seems to be,—If we sin, we are in the hand of God, and under the power of his vengeance, and shall feel the effects of it. At the end of the former chapter, the author says, that the heathens perjured themselves without any scruple, because they did not fear, or stand in awe of, the vengeance of their dumb idols or blind deities. As for us, says he, who have the honour to be called thy chosen people, and have so many proofs of thy existence and infinite power, we are convinced, that if we have the misfortune to offend thee, thou wilt deal with us according to our sinful works, and make us experience the effects of thine anger. (Calmet in loc.) Or it may be understood like Isaiah lxiii. 16. *Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; i. e.* our hope, even when we are sinners, is in our relation to thee. So in all the other places of Scripture, where good men, as Moses, David, Ezra, Daniel, lament the sins of the Israelites, and supplicate for them, this consideration is more especially urged, that they are (even in their iniquities and transgressions) his peculiar people.

But we will not sin, knowing that we are counted thine.] *i. e.* If we continue faithful, and do not sin against thee, thou wilt reckon us in the number of thy children, and fill us with mercy and loving-kindness. All the ancient English versions, it is observable, read in the present tense: thus Coverdale; *If we sin not, then are we sure that thou regardest us:* and the Arabic is in like manner, *Si minimè peccemus, in tuos tuamque proprietatem nos reputari novimus.* The comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal upon this whole verse is short and clear; "If we sin, we are in the hands of God, as his enemies; if we sin not, we are in

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his hands as his friends:" which is followed by this useful reflection; "How careful therefore should we be to pursue every thing that may make God our friend, and to avoid whatever may make him our enemy, because there is no escape from his sovereign hand, which is all-powerful either to save or to destroy!" St. Austin quotes this very passage, and draws the like inference; "Quis dignè cogitans inhabitationem apud Deum, non enitatur ita vivere, ut tali habitationi congruat?" (Lib. de fid. et oper.) There is also another sense of this place, which seems more agreeable to the Greek; *viz.* We will not sin, because we know that we are in the number of thy children, and that thou regardest us as thine own peculium; from this consideration and persuasion, and from a more generous motive than that of a servile fear, we will be careful how we offend thee at any time, and forfeit thy love and regard for us.—The predestinarians therefore grossly abuse this passage, when they urge it in favour of absolute election; as if the sense of the place was, We shall not sin, knowing that we are thy chosen. But there is no authority from any of the versions for such a conceited interpretation; nor does human frailty permit it, or the Scripture make any man a vessel of mercy absolutely and unconditionally.

Ver. 3. *For to know thee is perfect righteousness; yea, to know thy power is the root of immortality.*] By knowing God, is not meant a barren knowledge, purely speculative; but a practical knowledge, or such as worketh by love, and is known by its fruits, in which consists perfect righteousness: and as the commission of sin is the cause of corruption and misery, so the knowledge of God's power, and that dread and fear of its effects, which keeps men from sinning, may properly be said to be the root of immortality; as such a well-grounded faith leads to holiness, from whence, as from its true source, happiness is to be expected.

Ver. 4. *For neither did the inventions of men deceive us, nor an image.*] It appears from this verse, as well as other particulars in this book, that king Solomon was not the author of it, however dignified with his name: for, whether we understand *us*, to mean Solomon himself, which is not an unusual manner of expression, when applied to or spoken by kings, or whether we understand it of the people of the Jews in his time, what is mentioned here does not suit with the morals and character of him or his people. For it is certain, that Solomon revolted to idolatry, and that this otherwise great prince, contrary to the caution given, Exod. xxxiv. 16. took him wives of the Moabites and Ammonites, and other strange women, who turned his heart after other gods. And it seems highly probable, by what is mentioned, 1 Kings xi. 33. that numbers of the people followed his example in worshipping *Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians; Chemosh, the god of the Moabites; and Milcom, the god of the children of Ammon.* The Jews, indeed, after the captivity, had the good fortune to keep themselves pure from the abominations of the heathens; and from hence one may conclude, that this writer lived after the captivity; for before that time he could not say this with any truth or confidence, when idolatry was so common both in Israel and Judah.

Nor an image spotted with divers colours, the painter's fruitless labour.] From hence Grotius concludes the author of this book to be an Alexandrian Jew; for they, following the exposition which the LXX. make of the Decalogue (supposed likewise to be Alexandrian Jews; see Hody de Bibl. text. orig.) understand οὐδὲ παντὸς ὁμοίωμα in the most extensive sense; and include pictures, as well as images and statues, under the prohibition in the second commandment. (See Grot. in Exod. xx.) And Philo understands the words in the same sense, lib. De Gigant. and the like notion occurs in his piece De Legatione. It is observable likewise, that a painter here is called σκιαγράφος, i. e. *a drawer of shadows.* Calmet observes from Pliny, (lib. xxxv.) that there was no painter so early as the time of the Trojan war; that its beginning was rude and accidental, found out at Corinth, by tracing with a pencil the shade which a man's body cast upon the wall. (Com. in loc.) This was its original, at first very simple, without any colours, diversity, or mixture; without any of that variety, boldness, or life; without that contrast, or pleasing emulation between art and nature; in a word, with that *je ne sçai quoy*, which is so much admired in complete and finished pieces; which improvement the author seems to mention as a probable inducement to idolatry.

Ver. 5. *The sight whereof enticeth fools to lust after it.*] Our translators seem to have made use of a copy which read, εἰς ὄρεξιν ἔρχεται, which is the reading of the Alexandrian MS. but the most common reading is that to which our margin refers, εἰς ὄνειδος ἔρχεται. Dr. Grabe, instead of ἄφροσιν, reads ἄφρονι, in the singular number; as the Vulgate does *insensato:* and would not ποθοῦντι suit this emendation better than ποθεῖ τε, which is the common reading of the next sentence? By *lust*, here mentioned, probably is meant that filthy lewdness which the demon, that resided in the idol, often raised in the worshipper towards the image itself: for, that very great and scandalous indecencies were practised, not only before, but even to the very statues themselves, is notorious from Pliny and Arnobius. Thus the latter: "Pygmalionem, regem Cypri, simulacrum Veneris adamasse ut fœminam, solitumque dementem, tanquam si uxoria res esset, sublevato in lectulum numine copularier amplexibus." (Lib. vi. cont. Gentes.) And indeed the word ὄρεξις will warrant this interpretation; for in such an impure sense it is often taken, particularly Rom. i. 27. where the vices of the idolatrous heathen are enumerated. "We may hence see the danger, and condemn the vicious taste of pictures, or statues, represented naked, and in indecent postures, which (says Calmet) raise loose ideas in weak and unguarded minds, and more so in tempers already corrupted and depraved." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 7. *The potter tempering soft earth, fashioneth every vessel with much labour for our service: yea, of the same clay he maketh both the vessels that serve for clean uses, and also all such as serve to the contrary.*] Καὶ γὰρ κεραμεὺς ἁπαλὴν γῆν θλίβων ἐπίμοχθον, πλάσσει πρὸς ὑπηρεσίαν ἡμῶν ἕκαστον. I think the reading would be better thus: Καὶ γὰρ κεραμεὺς ἁπαλὴν γῆν θλίβων, ἐπιμόχθως πλάσσει, κ. τ. λ. This is the pointing of the Vulgate, which also reads *laboriosè;* and indeed *labour* is more required here, than in the first instance. The meaning of the whole verse is, "Such images in particular are most ridiculous, as are made by the plasterer or potter out of clay; which, though very ancient, and probably before those of stone and metal (see Principes de la Sculpture, lib. ii. cap. 1. for as all arts had but rude and weak beginnings, so there is less difficulty to believe, that images of earth and of clay were the most early),

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yet, upon account of the meanness of the materials, and because the same lump of clay is often applied to base and dishonourable uses, are therefore the most despicable. And though in general the potter is the best judge of what comes properly under his own art and way of business, and knows what is most suitable to each design, and in the management of the same lump of clay has it in his power to what uses he will employ it; yet he never shews his own skill less, or the wretchedness of such an idol more, than when, from a parcel of common earth, which serves for the meanest uses, and often for vessels of dishonour, he attempts to make a Jupiter or an Apollo."

Ver. 8. *A vain god.*] Idols are generally called *vanities* in the prophetical writings, and by the LXX. as frequently translated μάταια. In Hebrew they are called *elilim*, which signifies, 1. things nothing worth, or which have no existence, τὰ μὴ ὄντα, *things that are not*, as they are called in the additions to the book of Esther, (xiv. 11.) *Dicuntur elilim*, says Mercer, *a nihilitate, quasi nihil idola sint.* (Com. in Job xiii. 4.) St. Paul confirms the same, when he says, that *an idol is nothing in the world.* (1 Cor. viii. 4.) Idols are, 2. called *elilim*, as being *al elim*, not gods, without power or strength, (Lev. xix. 4. Psal. xcvi. 5.) whereas *Elim* and *Elohim* are Gods of strength. (See Drus. observ. sac. lib. xvi.) 3. Idols are called *elilim*, from the radix *ala*, because they are abominable and accursed things. By the LXX. they are also styled τὰ ψευδῆ, *mendacia*, Amos ii. 4. Isa. xxviii. 15. Jer. xvi. 19. and in very many passages of the Apocalypse, Mr. Mede observes, idolaters and liars are synonymous, (b. v. chap. 11.)

When his life, which was lent him, shall be demanded.] Τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπαιτηθεὶς χρέος. Phædrus thus expresses the like thought, "Cum mors vicina flagitabit debitum." Life is represented in the same manner as a debt by many of the ancients; thus Plato, ἥ τε ἡλικία καὶ τὸ χρέων, *vita etiam est debitum.* Tully has a very remarkable expression upon the occasion, "Dederunt [Dii] vitam tanquam pecuniam, nullâ præstitutâ die." (Tusc. Quæst. lib. i.) Thus Seneca, speaking of the wise man, says, "Vivit commodatus sibi, reposcentibus sine tristitia redditurus." (De tranquil. animi, cap. 11.) Hence the phrase, "animam reddere," *to die.* We meet with the like thought in Philo; see also Joseph. Antiq. lib. vii. cap. 15. lib. viii. cap. 12. Epict. lib. iii. cap. 13. Luke xii. 20. where the same expression is used and on the like occasion, ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτὶ τὴν ψυχήν σου ἀπαιτοῦσιν ἀπό σου.

Ver. 9. *Notwithstanding his care is, not that he shall have much labour, nor that his life is short, but striveth to excel goldsmiths and counteth it his glory to make counterfeit things.*] There is another sense of these words, which the Greek will admit of; *i. e.* he has no concern or care upon him, lest he should be sick, or die, ὅτι μέλλει κάμνειν, which is the marginal reading; and that at best his life is but short, but his whole contest and aim is for glory, and to carry the prize from all competitors, even the most celebrated in other arts; contending either for the precedence of the plastic art, above that of sculpture, &c. as being the mother-art, "mater statuariæ, sculpturæ, et cœlaturæ" (see Steph. Dict. Histor. in voce *Praxiteles*), or that his own excellence exceeds or equals the best performances in metal; but his ambition herein is faulty, for he ought to consider this material difference,—that not only his own life is short and uncertain, but that the materials of his counterfeit things, *i. e.* his earthen false gods, (and such Varro assures us were common even in the city of Rome; see Pliny, xxxv. 12.) are mouldering and brittle; whereas the other artificers here mentioned, whether goldsmiths, or workers in brass, make their deities of what is more solid and durable, and do not descend to the same instances of meanness as to their matter. Though the worship of such gods as come out of the smith's furnace, or are fashioned by the anvil and hammer, is not here the more commended upon account of the value or strength of the materials, idolatry in every shape being, according to Arnobius, who was once guilty of it, a degree of madness. (Lib. i. cont. Gent.)

Ver. 11. *Forasmuch as he knew not his Maker, and him that inspired into him an active soul.*] St. Chrysostom has the like comparison and observation, πηλοῦ μὲν καὶ κεραμέως οὐσία μία, κ. τ. λ. *The clay and the potter are of the same nature; the potter indeed excels the clay in beauty and dignity; but it is not owing to any difference of nature, but to the wisdom and appointment of his Maker.* (De incompreh. Dei nat. hom. 27.) His obligation in particular therefore to God stands confessed, who made him what he is, gave him superior excellence, and animated him above that senseless mass which he abuses, by inspiring into him an active soul; *animam quæ operatur*, says the Vulgate; *that very soul by which he works*, according to Coverdale's version; and Calmet understands it in the same sense, *cette même ame par laquelle il travaille*, a soul so active in its operations, that it may be in general affirmed to be the principle of all the designs, inventions, and actions, of the best workmen, and most experienced artists.

Ver. 12. *But they counted our life a pastime, and our time here a market for gain.*] *i. e.* Says Calmet, such persons of unlawful occupations seem to imagine life to be either a farce, or comedy for diversion, or a fair and market for advantage: the fathers very commonly make use of the first simile, representing life as a comedy, in which every man must bear his part, and should endeavour to acquit himself with applause and satisfaction; but in a sense quite different from that of libertines, who indeed make life, and what is serious and useful in it, a farce, and, by proposing mere diversion and sinful pleasures as the *ultimatum* of their happiness, make a ridiculous figure upon the stage of life, and their exit is as contemptible. There are others who consider life as a great market for gain, who are only intent upon amassing riches, without considering the lawfulness of their callings, or the means they make use of for obtaining them; who care not how they are employed, whether it be in making earthen deities, or silver shrines for some Diana, provided it *may bring no small gain unto the craftsmen;* as if their maxim was that mentioned in Horace,

"Ut facias rem,
Si possis, recte; si non, quocunque modo rem."
(Epist. lib. i. epist. I.)

Which cannot be better translated than as it stands in our version, *We must be getting every way, though it be by evil means.* St. Chrysostom's reflection upon the mistaken conduct of mankind is very just: "Our life and our employ-

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ments are like the pastimes of children; like them we make a serious affair of laying up trifles, building houses, which tumble suddenly; and should they continue any long time, would be of no great service to us, as we must leave them, and what we have heaped together will not follow us into the other world."

Ver. 14. *And all the enemies of thy people that hold them in subjection.*] Καταδυναστεύσαντες αὐτὸν, which seems to imply more than holding them in subjection; it means oppressing them, and abusing their power over them. Accordingly Junius renders, *qui potentia in ipsum abutuntur.* From hence likewise an argument may be drawn, that Solomon was not the author of this book, because what is mentioned here of the Israelites being held in subjection, and oppressed by their enemies, does not agree with the happy and prosperous times of Solomon. (See 1 Kings iv. 20, 21. 24, 25.) If, therefore, the Jews were in the low and oppressed state here mentioned, and were not so in the time of Solomon, it follows, by an easy consequence, that this book was not wrote by him, nor in his time. This probably relates to the condition of the Jews after their return from the captivity, when this writer seems to have lived.

Are most foolish, and are more miserable than very babes.] As being idolaters; for that children, through inexperience and weakness of judgment, may often mistake images or statues for real persons, is no wonder; since sometimes art has arrived to such a happy imitation of nature, that even grown persons at first sight, at a distance, have mistaken them for life. Hence those expressions in the poets, *vivi de marmore vultus,* and *spirantia æra.* And hence probably the fable of Pygmalion's love of a favourite statue. Lactantius, producing those verses of Lucilius,

> —" Pueri infantes credunt signa omnia ahena
> Vivere, et esse homines,"—

observes, like this writer, that such as worship idols are weaker than children, " illi enim simulacra homines putant, hi Deos."

Ver. 15. *For they counted all the idols of the heathens to be gods, which neither have the use of eyes to see.*] *i. e.* They cannot observe the behaviour and devotion wherewith their votaries look up to them, and prostrate themselves before them. The imperfection of idols is described in like manner, Psal. cxv. 5—7. cxxxv. 16, 17. which this writer seems to have copied. Nor can we better expound that controverted passage, 2 Sam. v. 6. 8. than of David's ridiculing the idols of the Jebusites, or certain brazen images and statues of those heathen divinities in which they confided, calling them *the lame and the blind,* by way of derision, supposed indeed by them to be the Divine guards of the fort, the talismanical protectors of it. (See Gregory's Notes and Observat. p. 33.)

Nor noses to draw breath, nor ears to hear.] They have not the faculty of respiration, though necessary to the very being of life: and for the same reason the offering incense and sweet odours to them is fruitless, since they are insensible of the smell of them, and of the respect intended by them. It is equally vain to put up prayers and supplications to them; for, as appears from the instance of the worshippers of Baal, though they cry aloud to their false gods, from morning even until noon, *there shall be no voice, nor any that will answer.* (1 Kings xviii. 26.) Philo sneers such worshippers, whom he calls, " homines deploratæ amentiæ," in smart, but pleasant terms: " Heus vos viri egregii, votorum summa, et felicitatis finis est, reddi Deo similes; orate igitur ut similes fiatis vestris statuis, non videntes oculis, non audientes auribus, et summa felicitate fruemini."

Nor fingers of hands to handle; and as for their feet, they are slow to go.] And though they are often represented to their worshippers with thunderbolts in their hands, and made to appear terrible with daggers, and other instruments of vengeance, yet have they no use of them, nor do the wicked experience any harm or punishment from them. Their feet too are equally useless, ἀργοὶ πρὸς ἐπίβασιν, which would be better rendered *unable to go;* for idols cannot properly be said to move slowly, which do not move at all, ἀργοὶ here being the same as ἀεργοὶ, i. e. *feet idle and useless for walking.*

Ver. 16. *But no man can make a god like unto himself.*] Οὐδεὶς γὰρ αὐτῷ ὅμοιον ἄνθρωπος ἰσχύει πλάσαι Θεόν· *Nemo enim sibi similem homo poterit Deum fingere,* says the Vulgate, which our version follows, as if the original reading was, ἑαυτῷ ὅμοιον, and not αὐτῷ. The Alexand. MS. has οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ὅμοιον ἰσχύει πλάσαι Θεόν· but something seems here wanting: probably the true reading here is, with a very little variation, οὐδεὶς γὰρ αὐτῶν ὅμοιον ἀνθρώπῳ ἰσχύει πλάσαι Θεόν. And I offer this conjecture with the more confidence, as it is the exact reading of the Syriac version, " Nemo autem illorum fabricare potest Deum homini similem;" i. e. *none but the artists can make a god like, or equal to, a man;* for the maker of the idol, having life and motion, far exceeds the artificial god, who wants both: herein only the idol-makers, and such as worship and confide in them, are like the idol, because they are equally senseless. And thus that passage of the Psalmist is to be understood, *They that make them are like unto them, and so are all they that put their trust in them,* Psal. cxv. 8. (See De Muis in loc.)

Ver. 17. *For he himself is better than the things which he worshippeth.*] If the maker, therefore, of the idol be mortal, how can the dead thing which he worketh be supposed to have immortality? The reasoning therefore in the epistle of Jeremy is very just, *They themselves that made them can never continue long, how should then the things that are made by them be gods?* (vi. 46.) " What an absurdity is it (says Chrysostom) for a person to worship an idol, the work perhaps of his own hands; as if men had the power of making a god, and it ceased to be any longer their workmanship! If idols had any sense, they ought rather to worship men as their makers, since even the laws of nature teach us, that, according to the stated order of causes and effects, the maker is more perfect than his work, and not preposterously the work than the maker." (Serm. de tribus pueris.) And Lactantius no less expressly: " What divinity (says he) can an idol have, which it was in the maker's power to have made in another manner, or not to have made at all?" Upon the comparison, therefore, as Philo justly argues upon this occasion, the artists themselves deserved rather to have been consecrated, and to have received Divine honours, than their works to be deified, and themselves forgotten: which shews the great absurdity of idol-worship in general, and of the

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maker particularly, in falling down before his own handy-work.

Whereas he lived once, but they never.] Ὢν αὐτὸς μὲν ἔζησεν, ἐκεῖνα δὲ οὐδέποτε. This is the reading in the Alexan. MS. and all the editions; but it seems difficult to determine what ὢν relates to, or is governed by, except some such preposition as ἀντὶ be dropped, or understood before ὢν, or we might read instead of αὐτοῦ, ὢν in this place, ἀνθ' ὢν. But if this be objected against, why may not ὅτι αὐτὸς μὲν ἔζησεν, κ. τ. λ. be admitted? which sense is confirmed by the Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and, therefore, probably may be the true reading. Calmet renders, *Parce qu'il vit quelque tems*, which answers to ὡς or ὅτι, the former of which might likewise do here.

Ver. 18. *Yea, they worshipped those beasts also that are most hateful.*] Τὰ ζῶα τὰ ἔχθιστα, which may mean either *mischievous* or *odious*, such as wolves, dogs, cats, lions, crocodiles, serpents. Thus Cicero, after having mentioned that almost all sorts of beasts were worshipped by the Egyptians, "Boves, canes, lupos, feles, quibus nihil fœdius, obscœnius, lutulentius ne natura quidem ipsa viderit;" adds, that even such animals as were really mischievous and hurtful to mankind were adored by them, *viz.* crocodiles, asps, serpents; "etiam animalium monstra illa, a quibus hominum generi præcipua incommoda inferuntur, crocodilos, aspidas, serpentes." (De Consol. See note on xi. 15. and xii. 24.) This worship of the serpent is the more surprising, as the naturalists observe, that, ever since the fall of our first parents, occasioned by the subtilty of the serpent, there is the most deadly enmity between mankind and the serpent, and the strongest aversion and antipathy to it, above all the beasts of the field: This, says Mr. Mede, discovers itself both in the natural and sensitive faculties of them both; for their humours are poison to each other, and each of them is astonished and frightened at the sight and presence of the other. (Disc. 42.)

For being compared together, some are worse than others.] Either more mischievous, more odious, or more senseless, than others. In the last sense Grotius understands this place; and the Vatican, and some other copies, it must be confessed, seem to countenance it, which read, ἄνοια γὰρ συγκρινόμενα τῶν ἄλλων ἐστὶ χείρονα. And so does the Vulgate, *Insensata enim comparata his, illis sunt deteriora.* And the like sense is favoured by the Bishops' Bible, and all the ancient English versions: but ἄνοια, in this place, is liable to many objections, whether taken adjectively, or considered as a substantive. The true reading undoubtedly is that of the Alexand. MS. ἔνια γὰρ συγκρινόμενα τῶν ἄλλων ἐστὶ χείρονα, which our translators very justly render, *being compared together some are worse than others*, which is true in general, or with respect to those particular animals which the Egyptians worshipped, as appears by the next verse.

Ver. 19. *Neither are they beautiful, so much as to be desired in respect of beasts.*] The Bishops' and the Geneva Bibles render more properly and explicitly, *Neither have they any beauty to be desired in respect of other beasts.* Calmet observes, that as to the appearance of reason and understanding, many other animals, particularly the horse, elephant, and fox, are more surprising, sagacious, and cunning, than the ox, sheep, wolf, or beetle, which the Egyptians reckon among their deities. And as to beauty, almost all beasts (not to mention birds, which may be here included among the ζῶα, or living creatures) are preferable in that respect to serpents and crocodiles, which they have such a great regard for. (Com. in loc.) According to Messieurs du Port-Royal, the meaning of this and the foregoing verse may be, that some of the animals which the Egyptians worshipped were so frightful and monstrous, that, if compared even with some curious pieces of art, particularly with idols, or statues expressed to the life, they seem less worthy of adoration, because such finished pieces of art have something in them pleasing and entertaining to the sight, and are the more engaging by their great likeness to, and resemblance of men; whereas their sacred animals, and serpents in particular, are so odious above all others, that they naturally strike those that look on them with dread and horror.

But they went without the praise of God and his blessing.] *i. e.* Says Calmet, they are not of the number of those whom God praised and blessed: they have, by being abused and perverted to idolatry, renounced, in some measure, God's benediction, and lost that original goodness and beauty, which they were possessed of in common with other creatures, when they first came out of the hands of their Creator. (Gen. i. 31.) The author seems to intimate, that God, provoked with the crime of idolaters, cursed in like manner these animals, as in the beginning of the creation he did the serpent, the instrument of man's deception and ruin, whom, on that account, he condemned to go, ἐπὶ τῷ στήθει καὶ τῇ κοιλίᾳ, upon his breast and his belly; (Gen. iii. 14.) for so the LXX. read, by way of punishment and disgrace, being probably before a glorious flying seraph. (See Mr. Mede, Disc. 41.) Or more generally thus, "All created beings, animate and inanimate, praise God in their beauty, and derive it from his hand as a blessing; but odious and deformed objects, such as for their ugliness are called monsters, proclaim not their Maker's praise, as not having received from his bounty those amiable and good qualities, which are to be esteemed a blessing." Some have fancied the meaning here to be, that God passed by all creeping things, and serpents among the rest, when he gave his blessing to other creatures, Gen. i. 22. 28. Others, that he excluded these from their share of praise, when he pronounced of the works of his creation, that they were very good, as being produced at first from corruption, and consequently not of his making. But these are forced expositions, and fond conceits, the one unsupported by Scripture, the other contrary to it, and to the received notions of true philosophy. Nor can I assent to those interpreters who think the meaning here to be, that serpents, by being so frequently worshipped in different places, usurped the glory due to God only, and rivalled his power of blessing; for though the fact itself must be acknowledged to be a melancholy truth, yet no such interpretation is warranted by the original, or any of the versions: it arose, probably, from mistaking the rendering of the Vulgate, and reading there *effugârunt laudem Dei*, instead of *effugerunt*, as it is in all the correct copies. The Syriac and Arabic interpreters understand these words of the worshippers themselves, and not of the animals, and indeed this sense is agreeable to the beginning of the next chapter.

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CHAP. XVI.

ARGUMENT.

The author opens this chapter with the observation, (xi. 16.) that God deals more graciously with his favourite people than with the wicked, exemplified by a parallel drawn between each, by his sending frogs among the Egyptians, which came upon their tables, and made them to loathe and fly from even their necessary food; but the Israelites were fed with quails. That God, even when he punishes his chosen, deals more favourably with them than with the heathen, shewn by a comparison between the punishment of the Egyptians by flies and locusts, and that of the Israelites by fiery serpents, who, though their torment was greatest for the present, had a sovereign remedy appointed for their cure, even the brazen serpent, which was the means and instrument of health, and a sign of salvation to such as turned to it, and with faith looked upon it.—To the strange hail and rain sent upon the Egyptians, is opposed the manna, or bread from heaven, given to the Israelites: that, to serve the purposes of God's providence, the very elements suspended their natural force, according to his appointment; so that hail was not melted by fire mixed with it, nor manna dissolved by its power, though the sun had a different effect upon it. By all which instances, opposed to each other by way of antithesis, God's care in preserving the righteous was remarkably displayed, and his vengeance against sinners no less visible.

Ver. 2. *THOU preparedst meat for them of a strange taste.*] *i. e.* A taste they were unaccustomed to. Coverdale renders, *a new taste;* for we must not suppose any new creation of quails for their use: the miracle consisted in this; that they were brought in such quantities, and at such a particular time, and fell in such places only as God appointed, *viz.* round the camp for their nourishment. Bishop Patrick, from the authority of Ludolphus, thinks, that locusts are here meant; but the Psalmist, by calling them *feathered fowls,* manifestly understands real birds. (Psal. lxxviii. 28. See De Muis in loc. Bochart. vol. iii. p. 108.)

To stir up their appetite.] Εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν ὀρέξεως. This seems not properly rendered, for that their appetite was sufficiently keen, appears from their impatient murmuring for meat. The Geneva Bible renders better, *To satisfy their appetite thou hast prepared a meat of a strange taste.* But Coverdale's and the Bishops' Bibles come nearer the Greek: according to the former, God gave them *their desire that they longed for;* according to the latter, he *prepared for the desire of their appetite a strange taste:* and thus Calmet, *En lui donnant la nourriture delicieuse qu'il avoit desirée.* The Psalmist expresses it by, according to the LXX. τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν αὐτῶν ἤνεγκεν αὐτοῖς. (Psal. lxxviii. 29.) This gracious dealing, as it is here called, seems to refer to the first sending of quails, mentioned Exod. xvi. 13. rather than the second, which happened a year after; (Numb. xi. 31.) for the Israelites, upon their second petition for them, betraying too much impatience, were afflicted with a plague for their murmuring, and, as the Psalmist expresses it, *While the meat was yet in their mouths, the heavy wrath of God came upon them, and slew the wealthiest of them.* (Psal. lxxviii. 31.) Calmet seems to include both, and thinks there is a mixture of mercy towards his people, even in this judgment; his reflection upon it is worth inserting: "If God (says he) fed his people thus deliciously, even when they had provoked him, what will he not give them, when they shall be faithful and obedient to him?" In either sense the instance proves what the author brings it for; *viz.* God's different manner of dealing with his own people, and such as are strangers to him.

Ver. 3. *To the end that they, desiring food, might, for the ugly sight of the beasts sent among them, loathe even that which they must needs desire.*] Καὶ τὴν ἀναγκαίαν ὄρεξιν ἀποστρέφωνται. The Bishops' Bible gives the true and literal translation; *To the intent that they . . . might begin to loathe even their necessary appetite.* The Vulgate and St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, render in like manner, *Etiam a necessaria concupiscentia averterentur,* i. e. through the disagreeableness of the animals sent amongst them, διὰ τὴν εἰδέχθειαν τῶν ἐπαπεσταλμένων, as the true reading is, particularly the frogs, which tainted and spoiled their meat, they loathed the thoughts and the desire even of necessary food and refreshment. Josephus gives the same account of these disagreeable animals, τάς τε κατ' οἶκον αὐτῶν διαίτας, κ. τ. λ. *Domesticam etiam vitæ eorum consuetudinem turbârunt in eduliis et potu repertæ, et in lectis eorum passim oberrantes.* (Antiq. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 14.) This plague puts one in mind of the harpies, which Virgil thus describes:

> "Exstruimusque toros, dapibusque epulamur opimis.
> At subitæ horrifico lapsu de montibus adsunt
> Harpyiæ, et magnis quatiunt clangoribus alas,
> Diripiuntque dapes, contactuque omnia fœdant
> Immundo: tum vox tetrum dira inter odorem."
> (Æneid. lib. iii. 225.)

Ver. 4. *For it was requisite that upon them exercising tyranny, should come penury which they could not avoid.*] Ἀπαραίτητον ἔνδειαν ἐπελθεῖν, *Poverty without excuse,* according to some of the ancient English versions; the Geneva Bible has *extreme poverty,* and Coverdale's follows the Vulgate, which renders, *interitum sine excusatione:* ἀπαραίτητος will bear any of these significations, which occasioned such a difference in the versions. The author shews, in this and the following verses, God's different manner of dealing with the Israelites and Egyptians in three particulars. 1. That he punished the Egyptians with rigour, as a severe judge, tormenting them for their tyranny and oppression of others, with deserved, extreme, inevitable want or hunger, occasioned by the animals which infested them, and drove them from their necessary sustenance: but he chastised his own people, as a father, afflicting them comparatively but a little, but by that little making them sensible, how tenderly he had dealt with them in comparison of their enemies. 2. That though he suffered the Hebrews to be in want for a small season, yet he kept them from perishing by hunger in the wilderness; and to recompense, as it were, that short affliction by hunger, he fed them after, not only with necessary food, but satiated them with delicacies in abundance. But a succession of plagues, without respite, pursued the Egyptians. 3. That though the whole wilderness, through which the Israelites marched so many years, was full of fiery serpents, (Deut. viii. 15.) yet God did not permit these to assault them but for a small season only, and even then he

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appointed an immediate remedy to heal them, *viz.* the brazen serpent: but the Egyptians died without mercy, neither was there any cure provided for the wounds and stings which they received from the flies and locusts.

Ver. 5. *For when the horrible fierceness of beasts came upon these.*] Ὅτε αὐτοῖς δεινὸς ἐπῆλθε θηρίων θυμός. Θυμὸς here does not signify *fierceness*, but *poison*. Thus (Apoc. xiv. 8.) what our version renders, *the wine of the wrath of her fornication*, Mr. Mede expounds the *poison* of her fornication. (See also xviii. 3. where there is the like expression.) And it is remarkable, that the same word, in the Hebrew, signifies both wrath and poison. (Mede's Works, p. 910.) And θυμὸς is used by the Hellenistical Jews in the same double respect. To the observation of this very judicious writer, I shall add an instance or two from the Old Testament, than which nothing can be closer, or more evince the sense I am contending for. The first is Deut. xxxii. 33. Θυμὸς δρακόντων ὁ οἶνος αὐτων, καὶ θυμὸς ἀσπίδων ἀνίατος, where it is twice used in the same verse in this sense, and our translators render accordingly, *Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.* The next is, Job xx. 16. Θυμὸν δὲ δρακόντων θηλάσειεν, ἀνέλοι δὲ αὐτὸν γλῶσσα ὄφεως, which our translators rightly render, *He shall suck the poison of asps, the viper's tongue shall slay him.* And in ver. 14. of the same chapter, χολὴ, which is synonymous to θυμὸς, is used in the same sense. Χολὴ ἀσπίδος ἐν γαστρὶ αὐτοῦ, which, though it signifies both wrath and poison, our version takes in the latter sense, and renders, *The gall of asps is within him.* The last instance I shall mention is that in Psal. lviii. 4. Θυμὸς αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὴν ὁμοίωσιν τοῦ ὄφεως, which in our version is happily rendered, *Their poison is like the poison of a serpent.* This poison, as naturalists observe, is the consequence of their rage, and thrown out by it, and therefore may be considered as one and the same. The word ἐπῆλθε, here used by our author, intimates, says Bochart, the suddenness of the attack of these venomous creatures, who accordingly renders this place, *Supervenit, (tanquam ex improviso) serpentum venenum.* (Vol. iii. p. 425.)

And they perished with the stings of crooked serpents, thy wrath endured not for ever.] The sacred story relates, that the Israelites, by their rebellious murmuring, provoked God to send serpents among them, whose poison was so mortal, that it brought the most painful death upon them.—In this affliction they addressed themselves to the Father of mercies, who, moved by their repentance, commanded Moses to make a serpent of brass, and erect it on a pole, in view of the whole camp, that whosoever looked upon it should be healed. This punishment by serpents the son of Sirach reckons among other instances of God's vengeance, *All these were created for vengeance—teeth of wild beasts, and scorpions, serpents, and the sword, punishing the wicked to destruction.* (Ecclus. xxxix. 30. where the margin refers to this very passage.) But it has been thought by some learned men to have been a punishment adapted on purpose by God to the transgression of the Israelites, which was evil-speaking against the Lord, and slandering his providence. In this view, the conformity between the sin and the punishment is very visible, and the justness of our author's observation, xi. 16. farther proved. Σκολιὸς, likewise, the epithet here given to the serpent, will equally suit the slanderer; for he is crooked through artifice, as the other is by nature; is alike mischievous and designing, and, to serve his own purposes, can turn himself into as many odious shapes. Solomon makes the same comparison, Eccles. x. 11. The serpent was a known hieroglyphic among the Egyptians and other nations; and perhaps its crookedness and perfection in turning, was one reason of its being made the symbol of their year.

Ver. 6. *Having a sign of salvation, to put them in remembrance of the commandment of thy law.*] The sign of salvation here mentioned was the brazen serpent, erected, by God's command, upon a pole or standard, like the Roman eagle, for the cure of the people. It was, in the opinion of many learned men, the image of a seraph, or glorious winged serpent. Arias Mont. reads Numb. xxi. 8. *fac tibi saraph.* It was a symbol of a good ministering angel, which executeth God's will on earth, whilst a secret virtue, from the unseen God, perfected the cure, by whose supernatural power it was effected, whose mercy worked in and by that emblem. It is properly therefore called a sign of salvation, as it was the instrument only through which the cure was conveyed. But it was *salutare signum*, or the means of recovery, to such only as looked up to it with faith, and its saving effect depended upon their reliance on God, and belief of his power to heal them, in and by that instrument. It had also this farther use implied in it—to admonish the Jews how to conduct themselves upon other occasions, where a like mysterious trial should occur, *viz.* to comply with all God's positive appointments without any reluctance, even though the reason of such an injunction should not be discoverable by them. For the choosing this image, which had no inherent virtue in it, rather than any other, was the mere will of God, who can make things, evidently of no importance in themselves, effectual to what purposes he pleases, as might be proved from many other instances in Scripture.

Ver. 7. *For he that turned himself towards it, was not saved by the thing that he saw.*] The mere beholding it did not alone confer the benefit of a cure; nor could it, though fixed in public view, effect a single recovery by any natural operation: God did not order it to be erected on any such account; nor was Moses induced to make this image from any occult skill or persuasion that he had, that the effigies of this brazen serpent could heal the Israelites by any power of art or nature, for the very matter of this serpent has been thought rather inconvenient and improper for such an effect. Nor can we find, says a learned writer, an instance or example of any telesme that was ever known to cure a disease by only looking upon it; but in all wounds by venomous serpents, the cure was effected by a local application of some proper remedy to the part affected. (More's Mystery of Godliness, p. 430.) What, therefore, was the intent of elevating this image upon a pole, and why must the diseased look towards it, and the healing virtue be conveyed through their eyes? Undoubtedly this appointment, besides the exercising the faith of the beholder upon this occasion, had a reference to the mystery of Christ, whose victory over the old serpent, the grand enemy of mankind, was hereby typified and represented. Many of the ancients are of the same opinion, and imagine this serpent to be an emblem of the cross, and a symbol or sign of that salvation afterward to be effected by it: but Justin Martyr is more particular; for he adds, that this serpent

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was likewise made in the very form of a cross. (Apol. 2.) It is certain our Saviour, in his discourse with Nicodemus, explains it of himself and his cross, (John iii. 14.) and chose this figure for the instruction and information of the Jews, who always acknowledged a mystery couched under this serpent.

But by thee that art the Saviour of all.] Τὸν πάντων Σωτῆρα. This, I think, relates to the Λόγος, (see note on ver. 12.) and comprises more than his bare healing the Israelites of this plague. The word Σωτὴρ, or *Saviour*, here used, admits of several acceptations: 1. He may be called a saviour, that saves the life of his enemy in the field; but he that thus saveth another, commonly doth it upon a prospect of some advantage to himself, either of selling the poor captive, or of making him his slave, which something abates his glory. 2. The word Σωτὴρ not only signifies one that preserves the life of another, but also one that is the restorer of some happy condition which was lost; and thus the Roman orator explains it, "Qui amissam salutem dat." (In Verrem, lib. ii.) Now all the happiness which such a saviour or deliverer could confer, was but a temporal happiness, which is likewise a lessening of it. 3. The judges of Israel, who delivered their country from the yoke of Midian, the Syrians, or the Philistines, are by Nehemiah called Σωτῆρες, ix. 27. But then these saviours saved but one country, or perhaps city, as Camillus did Rome, for which he was styled Σωτὴρ, *a Saviour*. But all these characters come very short of ὁ Σωτὴρ πάντων, which is a title too great to be applied to any less than a Divine person; for the person here meant was far more glorious than any single hero, or all those judges of old together. He it was that smote all the first-born of the Egyptians, that brought the Israelites out of Egypt, that rescued them from their greatest bondage, that overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, that led them in the wilderness, protected and sustained them there, and at last gave them possession of Canaan. But even this deliverance was but a type of a greater, designed for them by him, and that Canaan but an earnest of a better country intended for all true Israelites. (See Dr. Gale's Serm. Disc. 14.) With great propriety, therefore, this Saviour is described, in the next verse, as an Almighty Redeemer, ὁ ῥυόμενος ἐκ παντὸς κακοῦ. Which expression of our author is agreeable to the sentiments of the ancient Jewish writers, and is founded on the very high notions which the Jews entertained of their great *Goel*, or Deliverer. Our translators, it is observable, insert the word *ever*, not confining God's mercy, to save and heal his faithful children, to this instance only of his goodness. And indeed the idea of God's philanthropy is greatly enlarged by understanding these expressions, and that in ver. 12. in a more comprehensive sense, than a mere deliverance from the venom of serpents.

Ver. 9. *For them the bitings of grasshoppers and flies killed.*] This writer seems to intimate that the locusts, for so I understand *grasshoppers*, and so they are called Judg. vii. 12. Psal. lxxviii. 46. killed numbers of the Egyptians. This, if it be not strictly according to truth, very probably arose from too literal an acceptation of Exod. x. 17. *Entreat the Lord that he may take away from me this death only;* which may admit of another and fair interpretation, without supposing that the locusts killed any persons directly, as the hail did: for the locusts destroying the supports of life, by eating up the corn when ready for the sickle, and consuming all before them within the space of a few hours, may, by consequence, in bringing a famine, be said to kill the people; in which respect Pharaoh might properly call them *deadly locusts*. And thus Bochart, "Locustæ homines et bruta occidunt, saltem ex consequenti, quod aiunt, quia consumptis illis quæ fuissent vitæ subsidio, sic ad mortem eos adigunt." (Vol. iii. p. 463.) Pliny's account of them is really dreadful, "In India, trium pedum longitudine esse traduntur, Deorum Iræ pestis ea intelligitur. Namque grandiores cernuntur, et tanto volant pennarum stridore, ut aliæ alites credantur; solemque obumbrant, sollicitè suspectantibus populis ne suas operiant terras; sufficiunt quippe vires. Et tanquam parum sit maria transisse, immensos tractus permeant, dirâque messibus contegunt nube, multa contactu adurentes, omnia verò morsu erodentes." (Nat. Hist. lib. xi. de Locust. cap. 29. See also Aristot. Hist. Anim. lib. v. cap. 23. Boch. Hieroz. lib. iv. cap. 5. Bacon's Natural History, cent. 10.) Agreeable to this account of Pliny, is that of a learned modern writer, who says, "That the number of locusts he saw in Barbary in the years 1724 and 1725 is beyond expression; that in the heat of the day they formed themselves into large bodies, appeared like a succession of clouds, and darkened the sun; that they marched directly forward, climbed over trees, walls, houses, ate up every plant in their way, and let nothing escape them. That the inhabitants, to stop their progress, made trenches all over their fields and gardens, and filled them with water, or else, placing in a row great quantities of heath, stubble, and such-like combustible matter, they set them on fire upon the approach of the locusts, but all to no purpose." (Shaw's Travels, p. 256, 257.) In the description of this plague, Exod. x. 5. it is said, that *they shall cover the face of the earth*, where the Chaldee paraphrase reads, *They shall hide the face of the sun from the earth*. But I should deservedly be thought wanting in the respect due to the canonical Scriptures, if I should pass over in silence that beautiful description of the plague of locusts in the second chapter of Joel, for there cannot be a greater or more lively instance of the hypotyposis: the prophet, in the chapter referred to, represents the desolation occasioned by these creatures, whose teeth he calls the *teeth of lions*, like the ravaging of a country, or the storming of a city by an army; which description is the more remarkable, because the analogy is carried on throughout so properly and naturally, "in the regularity of their march, eating up the provision, burning the country, scaling of the walls, running about through the conquered city, breaking into houses, and the general horror of the inhabitants, that (says a learned author) if one would have described the outrages of an army without a metaphor, it could hardly have been done in more proper terms." (See Nicols' Confer. par. iv. p. 152.)

And flies killed—for they were worthy to be punished by such.] *i. e.* Says Bochart, they sorely wounded them, and then sucked their blood till they killed them. And in this sense many commentators understand those words, Exod. viii. 24. *The land was corrupted;* or, as the margin has it, *was destroyed by reason of the swarm of flies;* to signify, that many of the people were poisoned, or stung to death by them. See Pool's annot. in loc. and Psal. lxxviii. 45. where the LXX. read ἐξαπέστειλεν εἰς αὐτοὺς κυνόμυιαν, καὶ

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κατέφαγεν αὐτοὺς, as if a particular sort of fly was meant; but the true reading, as I have elsewhere observed, is, κοινόμυιαν, which includes flies of all sorts, which through their number devoured them. We read of creatures of this nature so mischievous and deadly, that the Greeks thought fit to have a particular god to deliver them from them, under the title of Myiagros, or Myiodes. (Pliny, lib. x. cap. 28. Selden, de Diis Syris, Syntag. ii. de Baal-zebub.) One cannot but perceive in this punishment of the Egyptians, a conformity of it to the sin of that people; for the noise, tumult, and stinging of these vengeful animals, answered to the passionate language and severe blows of the Egyptian taskmasters, and might be designed to revenge that hard treatment. Nor is the justice of God less to be admired in this particular also, that this plague was specially calculated for the punishment of a nice, effeminate, and luxurious people, no less indulgent to themselves than inhuman to others: for what could be more proper or effectual for humbling the pride and vanity of Egypt, or what a greater mortification to their niceness, than to be thus tormented, and beset every where with shoals of frogs, and swarms of flies and locusts?

Ver. 12. *But it was thy Word, O Lord, which healeth all things.*] This seems to be spoken of the very person of the Λόγος, and is undoubtedly taken from Psal. cvii. 20. ἀπέστειλε τὸν Λόγον αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἰάσατο αὐτούς, *He sent his Word and healed them, and they were saved from their destruction.* That the Λόγος is here meant, seems reasonable to suppose, because it is certain he inflicted the punishment referred to: for in Numb. xxi. 5, 6. where it is said that the people murmured against God, the Chaldee paraphrase reads, *They murmured against the Word of the Lord;* and afterward it follows, that *The Word of the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people.* But we learn still more expressly who that Divine person was, whom the Israelites tempted, or spoke against, from those words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 9. *Neither tempt ye Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.* It is certain, then, that the Λόγος was the person murmured against, and that punished them for it. And it seems very probable, from the passage of the Psalmist before quoted, that it was he that likewise cured all them that were rightly disposed for a cure; and that the brazen serpent was the symbol of the presence of the Λόγος in particular, and of his Divine power and goodness to heal all that truly turned to him. The Chaldee paraphrase on Numb. xxi. 8. thus understands it, "Erit quemcunque momorderit serpens, et intuitus fuerit ipsum, tum vivet, modo cor ejus directum fuerit ad nomen verbi Domini. Et fuit quando mordebat serpens virum, et contemplaretur serpentem æneum, et cor ejus intentum erat in nomen verbi Domini, vivebat," i. e. *Whomsoever a serpent shall bite, he shall be healed, if he directs his heart to the name of the Word of the Lord: and it came to pass, that when a serpent bit any man, and he directed his heart to the name of the Word of the Lord, he accordingly recovered, and lived.* The like presence of the Λόγος upon this occasion of healing, has been inferred by some learned men from John iii. 14. (See Tenison of Idol. p. 359.) It may also, according to Calmet, be understood in this farther sense, *viz.* of a word of God's mouth, or of *his holy word.* Of the power of the former to heal all bodily diseases, the centurion in the gospel seems to have been convinced; (Matt. viii. 8.) for, instead of troubling our Saviour to come to his house, he says, out of a principle of great faith, *Speak the word only, and thy servant shall be healed.* Of the power of the latter to heal all the diseases of the soul, to cure those that are broken in heart, and as containing a medicine to heal every infirmity and sickness, St. Austin is to be understood, when he says, "Omnis morbus animæ habet in Scriptura medicamentum suum." (In Psal. xxxvii.)

Ver. 13. *Thou leadest to the gates of hell, and bringest up again.*] We meet with the same thought, and almost the same expression, Tob. xiii. 2. *He doth scourge, and hath mercy; he leadeth down to hell, and bringeth up again; neither is there any that can avoid his hand.* The expression in both places seems to be taken either from 1 Sam. ii. 6. or Deut. xxxii. 39. see also Apoc. i. 18. where Christ is said to have the keys of hell and of death. By the ancients, the place or receptacle of the dead is represented as a house, that has its doors and gates; and death, in their language, as the gate or entrance into *hades;* and to die, or to descend into the grave, is to go down to *hades,* or to be brought to the gates of death: accordingly, to live again, is to leave *hades,* or to open the gates of death. Agreeably to this notion and periphrasis, so frequent to be met with in Homer, Virgil, Theocritus, Euripides, Hesiod, Theognis, &c. is the constant usage of this phrase in the Old Testament, and Jewish writers. In Job xxxviii. 17. the expression is very observable, and occurs twice in the same verse; *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee, or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?* By the like phrase the Psalmist describes the afflicted state of such as had been in captivity, and groaned under the severest hardships, Psal. cvii. 18. where the expression of our version is again remarkable, and close to the present purpose, *They were even hard at death's door,* which the LXX. render, ἤγγισαν ἕως τῶν πυλῶν τοῦ θανάτου. And when God shews his power in restoring men from such an afflicted state, he is then said in Scripture, to *lift them up from the gates of death.* (Psal. ix. 13.)

Ver. 14. *A man indeed killeth through his malice; and the spirit, when it is gone forth, returneth not; neither the soul received up, cometh again.*] St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, reads, *Homo autem occidit quidem per malitiam animam suam,* which Coverdale's version follows, *Man through wickedness slayeth his own soul:* but the rendering of the Geneva Bible seems preferable, *A man indeed by his wickedness may slay another, but when the spirit is gone forth, it turneth not again; neither can he call again the soul that is taken away.* And in this sense almost all the commentators understand the words, οὐδὲ ἀναλύει ψυχὴν παραληφθεῖσαν. Our version seems to follow a copy, which read, οὐδὲ ἀναλύει ψυχὴ παραληφθεῖσα· and so indeed the Syriac and Arabic interpreters do expressly render the former, *Spiritus egressus non revertitur, nec redit anima, quæ aufertur;* and the latter, *Egressusque spiritus non revertitur; neque redit anima assumpta.* According to Grotius, the sense is, that a wicked man may indeed kill another, but he cannot hurt or destroy the soul; which, after its separation from the body, being lodged in its proper receptacle, is out of the power of man to injure; making the sense to be the same with Matt. x. 28. Calmet understands it in the same manner, "L'homme n'ancantira pas l'ame lorsque Dieu l'aura reprise à lui;" i. e. *Man shall not be*

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able to destroy or annihilate the soul, when God has taken it again to himself; its substance is inaccessible, and beyond the reach of malice and violence. (Com. in loc.) That, after death, and before the day of judgment, the souls of men are reserved in a separate state or region, a paradise of comfort and rest, or a prison of misery and despair, according to men's respective behaviour, was the received doctrine of the synagogue, or ancient Jews. But this passage of our author not only favours such an opinion, but seems likewise to point out the place of this receptacle. It is remarkable, that those words of the Psalmist, *O take me not away in the midst of my days,* Psal. cii. 24. are by Arias Mont. rendered from the Hebrew, "Ne facias me ascendere," i. e. *make me not to ascend,* or to go upwards to the invisible region of separate and departed souls. It seems also probable, that human souls, after their separation from the body, are carried by angels εἰς ἀξίους αὐτῶν τόπους, (Luke xvi. 22.) into regions of bliss or misery, as they have respectively deserved; and in that intermediate state have either a ravishing foretaste and pleasing hope of future happiness, or wait their doom and final sentence with sad forebodings, and dreadful apprehensions.

Ver. 16. *For the ungodly that denied to know thee, were scourged by the strength of thine arm: with strange rains, hails, and showers, were they persecuted,* &c.] That proud Pharaoh, who could say to Moses, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go,* at length experienced the severity of thy judgments, being persecuted with storms and tempests beyond all precedent and example. For hail, and particularly such dreadful storms of it as are described in the sacred history, was quite unusual and miraculous in those parts of Egypt, where, according to Josephus, Philo, and Pliny, there was no rain. Hence, with great judgment, they are said by this writer, to be *persecuted with strange rains, novis aquis,* according to the Vulgate; *i. e.* rains falling at times, or in places where it was not usual and customary. Hence, that lash and sarcasm in the Psalmist, *He gave them hail for rain.* (Psal. cv. 32.) But this observation of new and strange rain, is not to be extended to all parts of Egypt; for in the maritime parts, and those towards Ethiopia, instances of this sort of weather sometimes happen, and where it happened but seldom, or not at all, that want was supplied by the overflowing of the Nile. Thus Philo: Αἴγυπτος οὐ παραδέχεται, κ. τ. λ. *Ægyptus hiemem nescit, hiemalesque tempestates. Hæc circa brumam irroratur parvis rarisque pluviis in locis duntaxat maritimis; supra Memphim autem nullas omnino sentit, restagnationes Nili arva satis fœcundant, ut naturæ de imbribus Ægypto providere non sit opus.* (De Mose, lib. i.)

With hails and showers were they persecuted, that they could not avoid.] Καὶ χαλάζαις καὶ ὄμβροις διωκόμενοι ἀπαραιτήτοις. If we retain ἀπαραιτήτοις, which is the reading in most editions, I think it should be rendered, *severe* or *extreme,* (see note on ver. 4.) rather than *inevitable;* for if the Egyptians could not avoid this plague of hail, but through it, and the fire mingled with it, were unavoidably to be destroyed, why did God, according to Moses's account, (Exod. ix. 19.) direct the servants of Pharaoh to gather their cattle, and all that they had in the field, into their houses; or what need of this caution and warning, if their doom was fixed, and they could not avoid it? I think, therefore, this does not relate to all the Egyptians, but to such obstinate and careless ones among them, as regarded not the word of the Lord, but left their servants and cattle in the field, and these perished by the extreme violence of the hail; which is no wonder, since the hail was of an uncommon bigness. The Complut. edition reads, χαλάζαις καὶ ὄμβροις διωκόμενοι ἀπαραιτήτως, *i. e.* they were severely, and without mercy, persecuted by these, and at length consumed by them and the lightning intermixed. The Vulgate and Coverdale omit this word in their version, and Calmet in his comment. Philo's account of this plague agrees with our author, φορὰς ὑετῶν, χάλαζαν πολλὴν καὶ βαθεῖαν, κ. τ λ. *Imbrium nimbi, plurima et aliè exaggerata grando, ventorum confligentium et obstrepentium procellæ,* (storms of wind—*showers,* as it is rendered in our version, diminish the terror of the idea, and is too mild a term) *nubium fragores, fulgetra et tonitrua alterna crebraque, assidua fulmina, longe prodigiosissima specie.* And a little after, he describes the consequence of this storm in much the same terms, "Non paucis animantibus simul exitio fuit, tum frigoris rigore, tum gravi lapidatione cadentis vulgo grandinis, tum etiam ignis consumptione." (De Mose, lib. i.) It is observable here, that three of the elements, though contrary and repugnant in their powers and qualities, were in confederacy, and united against this obstinate people—the air in the thunder, the water in the hail, and the fire in the lightning, which contrast, Milton thus beautifully expresses in a few words:—

> "Fierce rain with lightning mixt, water with fire
> In ruin reconciled." (Parad. Reg. b. iv.)

And this God did to shew that he was Lord of universal nature.

Ver. 17—19. *For, which is most to be wondered at, the fire had more force in the water that quencheth all things—Sometimes the flame was mitigated, that it might not burn up the beasts that were sent against the ungodly—At another time it burneth even in the midst of water, above the power of fire, that it might destroy the fruits of an unjust land.*] One cannot help observing many marvellous qualities and effects in the fire sent from heaven to punish the Egyptians: 1. That it kept burning, though mixed with rains and hail; and instead of being quenched by the quantity of rain which fell, as might be expected, it became the more violent for it, as if the water nourished it, and helped to inflame it; not unlike, says Calmet, that fire which fell from the Lord, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and licked up the water in the trench, which the prophet Elijah had ordered to be poured upon the altar and the wood in great abundance, to make the miracle more glorious and unquestionable. (1 Kings xviii. 39, 40.) 2. That this fire, hail, &c. happened in Egypt, where such storms were unusual, and spread over the whole country, except the land of Goshen; whereas other storms of lightning and hail generally reach but a little way in comparison, and fall within a small compass. 3. It melted not the hail with which it was mixed. Philo gives the same account of the lightnings: θέοντες διὰ τῆς χαλάζης, κ. τ. λ. *Vulgo per grandinem in tanta naturæ repugnantia grassantia, tamen nec eam liquabant, nec ab ea exstinguebantur, sed eadem usque durantia, et sursum deorsum cursitantia, grandinem incolumem conservabant.* (De Mose, lib. i.) 4. The lightning

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and hail spared all the cattle and fruits of the Israelites, but destroyed both man and beast, and every herb of the field among the Egyptians. Lastly, It never burnt or hurt any of those beasts that were sent to plague the Egyptians, as if it had sense and reason to know and distinguish them. Capellus objects against our author for supposing that the animals which were sent in the former plagues still subsisted in Egypt; for, says he, before the sending of the lightning and hail, "ranæ, κνυόμυια, et omnia animalcula prius in Ægyptios immissa pridem fuerant abducta et exstincta:" (Cens. in lib. Sap. Sol.) *i. e.* the frogs and flies, and such other animals as infested the Egyptians before the hail, were gone and extinct, which indeed is agreeable to Moses's account, Exod. viii. 11. 31. Calmet endeavours to account for this difficulty two ways. 1. That by *beasts* are meant the lice, which still might remain upon man and beast, untouched by the fire, there being no mention of their ceasing, or being destroyed, in the history of Moses, as there is of the frogs and flies. 2. That by *fire* may be meant those occasional fires, which the Egyptians kindled to drive away the flies, &c. which had no effect upon them, and seemed to have lost all power over them. But, I think, the first solution agrees not with the account of the same animals, xix. 21. where they are described by this writer to be such as *walked in the flames*, which suits not with a diminutive and almost-invisible animalcule. Nor does the second remove the objection; for artificial fires, or such as are usually made to disperse noxious animals, seem not here spoken of; for the context shews, that lightning is here meant, or the fire of God from heaven, to take vengeance upon the ungodly. Instead of offering any forced interpretation, I must ingenuously acknowledge, that our author, in this particular, seems to have exceeded historical truth, and to have used a rhetorical exaggeration, to make God's dealing with the Egyptians appear more terrible, which may be observed also in his account of manna, and the Egyptian darkness in the next chapter, where many additional circumstances are inserted, purposely designed to raise terror and surprise, and to heighten the description, which are not to be met with in the account of Moses, or the Psalmist.

For the world fighteth for the righteous.] This is true, whether applied to particular persons, as Moses, David, &c. or to whole nations. It is particularly visible in the history of the Jewish nation, which may be considered as a theocracy, and God their king and leader: at different times he commands the several elements in their favour. The air thunders, and his arrows go abroad, to assist Joshua, the conductor of his people; the sun stands still to prolong their victory; the fire consumes Korah and his rebellious accomplices; the waters stand on a heap, to make a way for his chosen; the earth at one time opens her mouth for vengeance, and at another her bosom for mercy; Egypt, at his command, becomes a desolation, and Goshen another Paradise. This discretionary power (if I may be allowed the expression) in the elements, that are vague and insensible, and a sort of wisdom to determine when, where, and how to act, and with what degree of violence to discharge themselves, is finely represented in the original, Job xxxviii. 36. which, according to the late accurate translation, runs thus, *Quis posuit in Jactibus vagis sapientiam, aut quis dedit phænomeno distinctam intelligentiam?* This fine thought, perfectly agreeable to the context, is wholly lost in our version, nor do the LXX. succeed better in their translation, τίς δ' ἔδωκε γυναιξὶν ὑφάσματος σοφίαν, ἢ ποικιλτικὴν ἐπιστήμην. (Grey's lib. Job. p. 272. See also Mercer in loc.)

Ver. 20. *Instead whereof thou feddest thine own people with angels' food.*] Called also *ambrosia*, γένος ἀμβροσίας τροφῆς, xix. 21. (see note on that place.) We are not hence to imagine, that angels ate this sort of food; but it is so called, either to signify its excellency above common food, or because God gave them manna from the habitation of angels (and thus the Chaldee paraphrase on Psal. lxxviii. understands it), or by the ministry of angels, an instance of singular honour, and special dignity to the Israelites to be attended by such messengers: on either or all these accounts, it is in the next words properly called, *bread from heaven*, and so it is styled Exod. xvi. 4. (See Theodoret on Psal. lxxviii. 25.) By St. Paul it is called *spiritual meat;* (1 Cor. x. 3.) and in this sense it is taken by many of the fathers, as an emblem of God's word, and by others of the eucharist in particular, whose saving virtue the manner of nourishment, by manna, has been thought mystically to represent: for whereas manna was in substance very small, but yet gave great strength and vigour to the body, it was a proper image of the power of spiritual food, which being invisible, yet gives life and nourishment more truly and perfectly than gross and solid meats. And thus they interpret the words of Moses, Deut. viii. 3. *Therefore he fed thee with manna—that he might teach thee that man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.*

And didst send them from heaven bread prepared without their labour.] By *heaven*, we are not here to understand that very place where the great and glorious presence of God is more immediately manifested, for it is certain, the manna descended only from the clouds, and therefore our Saviour tells the Jews, *Moses gave you not that bread from heaven.* (John vi. 32.) It is said to be bread prepared without their labour, because it fell every night round about the habitations of the Israelites, and was ready every morning for their use. Instead of labour to subdue the earth, and rain to make it fruitful, God sent showers of manna, which supplied the place of corn, and was ready prepared for them. And this made their ingratitude the greater, because they at length despised this heavenly nourishment, which they were at no labour or expense about. Hence, or from its being thus always ready, says De Muis, and with him agrees Dr. Hammond, (see comment. on Psal. lxxiii.) it was called manna, from the Hebrew verb, מנה *manah*, which signifies to prepare, or make ready. The common etymology of manna he condemns, as if it was so called from the Israelites' doubting about, and examining, *what it was;* for though מן *man*, in the Chaldee and Syriac, may have such a sense, yet it has not in the Hebrew, which was the language of the Israelites: and therefore he blames Josephus, who was a Jew, for so understanding and explaining it. The LXX. use the same periphrasis, and render τί ἐστι τοῦτο; οὐ γὰρ ᾔδεισαν τί ἦν, to which agrees our English version of the place.

Able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste.] The Jewish doctors from ancient tradition main-

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tain, that manna had in it all manner of pleasant and agreeable tastes, according to men's different palates, and all the relish that could be desired in any food, being a complete epitome of every thing nice and delicate. The Syriac renders it, *Panem omni dulcedine suaviorem, cunctisque saporibus jucundiorem.* But the Scripture does not seem to represent manna as having any high goût, nor have we any hint from Moses's writings of its being so variously delightsome to the palate, as the author of this book seems to suggest. (See Shuckford's Connex. vol. iii. p. 10.) This notion of manna accommodating itself in so great a variety to the several palates of those that ate it, is most probably a rabbinical conceit, lest the Israelites, being confined to one sort of food always of the same taste, for so many years together, should seem to be treated with hardship. It plainly appears from the books of Exodus and Numbers, that manna, however delicious, was but of one taste, like wafers made with honey, (Exod. xvi. 31.) and it appears yet more fully from their bold and presumptuous complaint about it, calling it in scorn *dry meat;* (Numb. xi. 16.) for which no pretence or ground can be conceived, if manna had all that variety of agreeable tastes, which has been ascribed to it by some Jewish writers. Or what occasion was there for their still requiring Βρώματα ταῖς ψυχαῖς αὐτῶν, as the LXX. render Psal. lxxviii. 18. meat for their souls, *i. e.* to feed their fancies and lusts, if this alone was so complete, as to include every relish, and satisfy every desire?

Ver. 21. *For thy sustenance declared thy sweetness unto thy children.*] *i. e.* The manna, the sustenance which thou providedst for thy people, as it tasted when newly fallen like honey, so was it both an instance and an emblem of thy tender love and kindness for them. Some of the ancient fathers read here, *thy substance,* instead of *thy sustenance,* understanding by it the Λόγος. Thus Fulgentius, *Substantiam enim tuam, et dulcedinem tuam, quam in filios habes, ostendebas,* which is the very reading of St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, and urges this passage to prove the consubstantiality of the Λόγος, who was that living bread that came down from heaven. (Arrian. Object. Discus. Nazianz. Orat. 49.) And in this sense Philo expounds manna, calling it τὸν πρεσβύτατον τῶν ὄντων λόγον. Huetius also understands it in the same manner. (Demonst. Evang. p. 624. edit. Paris.) And it must be confessed that they are countenanced herein by the Vulgate, which renders, *Substantia enim tua dulcedinem tuam ostendebat;* and by the Greek, which reads, ὑπόστασίς σου; and by the Arabic version, which has, "figura tua dulcedinem tuam præbuit liberis tuis," *thy image communicated thy sweetness to thy children.* The commentators in general understand it in the first sense, of that nourishment which came down from heaven, which was a repeated evidence, and a proof always new of God's goodness to his chosen. Dr. Grabe places ἀπόσταξις in the text, to denote, I suppose, the manner of the *falling* or *dropping* of the manna.

And serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man's liking.] Τῇ δὲ τοῦ προσφερομένου ἐπιθυμίᾳ ὑπηρετῶν, πρὸς ὅ τις ἐβούλετο μετεκιρνᾶτο. Calmet says, that the literal rendering of the Greek is, *obeying the will of him that gave it,* "de celui qui la donnoit," it changed itself into that which every man desired. (Com. in loc.) The joining of ὑπηρετῶν to ὑπόστασις, or ἀπόσταξις, as Grabe has it, may seem harsh and unusual, but this is according to the Attic dialect, which joins sometimes a feminine substantive and masculine adjective. There may be three senses given of this place; the first opinion is, that the manna changed its taste according to the will and desire of those that used it, which is the common acceptation, and is the sense of the Syriac and Arabic versions; the latter reads, *Ejusque sapor immutabatur apud eum cui offerebatur, et subministrabat ei summum appetitûs sui, in qualibuscunque saporibus exoptasset.* But this being mentioned in the foregoing verse, seems needless to be repeated by the author. The second sense therefore is, that the quantity of it served, or was according to the appetite of the eater, being ordered and appointed to be gathered by every man according to his eating, and in proportion to the largeness of his family. Or the meaning may be, according to others, that the manna suited itself only to the appetite and taste of every good and thankful eater, but had none of that agreeable variety in it to a wicked and profane one. And this is thought by learned men to be the meaning of St. Austin, where he says, "in primo populo unicuique manna secundum propriam voluntatem in ore sapiebat;" (Epist. 118.) *i. e.* as Mr. Mede expounds it, the manna was unto every man's taste according unto his will, or as he was inclined and disposed. (B. i. Disc. 46. Fagius in Numb. xi.) Lyra, from rabbinical tradition, says, That it had the taste of any sort of fish or fowl according to the wish of him that ate it; but then, with St. Austin, he restrains the privilege of finding in the manna the taste of what they most loved to the righteous, or God's faithful servants only; with respect to all others it admitted of no alteration, and some have asserted that to a wicked, as being a vicious taste, it was quite insipid. The reasoning of the same learned father against manna having all sorts of tastes indifferently to all is very strong: "To what purpose did the Israelites murmur against God and his servant Moses for want of meat, and their Egyptian food in the wilderness? Might they not have found the taste of what they wanted and desired in the manna, if indeed it changed its nature according to the wish and liking of the eater?" And therefore he confines this miraculous alteration to the good and obedient only. (Retractat. lib. ii. cap. 9. 20.) From this supposed quality in the manna, Mr. Mede runs the parallel between it and the eucharist, which may be considered as spiritual manna,—that as there were unworthy receivers of the manna in the wilderness, to whom the manna was merely such, without any alteration, so this acts differently upon the souls of men; in wicked ones, it produces no change for the better, no improvement or addition of good qualities; but upon the well-disposed it has most excellent effects, administers great comfort to them, and an inward satisfaction, far beyond any sensible sweetness, according as the Holy Spirit, which is the dispenser of all graces, sees it most needful for men's spiritual exigencies, either to strengthen them in their weakness, or to enlighten them in their doubts, or to forward their progress in the ways of godliness, (in loc. citat.) Messieurs du Port-Royal have the same reflection. (Comment. in loc.)

Ver. 22, 23. *But snow and ice endured the fire and melted not, that they might know that fire burning in the hail, and sparkling in the rain, did destroy the fruits of the enemies—*

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But this again did even forget his own strength that the righteous might be nourished.] Manna is here called snow and ice, from its likeness, says Calmet, to the hoar frost, or drops of dew frozen, to which Moses compares it, (Exod. xvi. 14.) and from its soluble quality of melting in the sun, and turning to water, as snow and ice do; hence called an *icy kind of heavenly meat,* (xix. 21.) *of a nature apt to melt,* which the Vulgate renders, *Quæ facile dissolvebatur sicut glacies.* A comparison is carried on here between the effect of the lightning mixed with hail upon the fruits of the Egyptians, and that of the fire upon the manna of the Israelites; that as the former burnt intensely and unusually for the destruction of their trees and plants, so the latter lost, or, as the author elegantly expresses it, purposely forgot its own strength, for the others' preservation and nourishment. Hence the Israelites might easily perceive the hand of God against their enemies, and his interposition in their favour—when lightning, even under all the disadvantage of being mixed with rain and hail, could occasion such a desolation, as if its violence was rather increased than abated, and the fire itself, though in its full strength, could not dissolve the food appointed for their nourishment, though naturally disposed to melt.

Ver. 24. *For the creature that serveth thee, who art the maker, increaseth his strength against the unrighteous for their punishment, and abateth his strength for the benefit of such as put their trust in thee.*] The author here speaks of the same creature which he treated of in the precedent verses, *viz.* the element of fire, which was fiercer and more powerful in the water, when it was ordered to afflict the Egyptians, but abated its fury to contribute to the good and advantage of the Israelites. This obedience of fire to the will of its maker, appeared remarkably in the double effect of the fiery furnace, which lost its power over those saints that were in it to such a degree, that even *the smell of the fire had not passed upon them;* and yet, through its exceeding fierceness, slew those that were without it, as if it acted where it was not, *increasing its strength against the unrighteous for their punishment, and abating its strength for the benefit of such as put their trust in God,* (Dan. iii.) We may also understand this place in a larger sense, *viz.* that the whole creation serveth its Maker, and thus κτίσις is used, Rom. viii. 22. In which sense it should be likewise taken in the three foregoing verses. (See Wall in loc.) And indeed some of the old versions plainly favour this general meaning; the Syriac in particular renders here, *tibi enim tota creatura tua subjecta est;* and St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, renders, *omnia transfigurata gratiæ tuæ deserviebant,* which Coverdale's translation follows. And indeed the observation is equally true of the other elements, all of which do wait upon God, and follow his appointment, either for mercy or judgment; and when the creatures do exceed their natural powers, it is by the will and particular direction of their Creator, for inanimate beings have certain fixed and general laws of their creation, which of themselves they cannot pass. Hence the Psalmist, speaking of those things which are often the causes of great calamities in the world, says, *Fire and hail, snow and vapours, winds and storms, fulfil his word,* or *pleasure.* (Psal. cxlviii. 8.) Philo, in his description of the Egyptian plagues, observes of all the elements, what our author does of fire in particular,—that God makes use of them occasionally, as his instruments, to destroy a guilty land; at one time he employs them for the production of things, or the preservation of persons, and at another, the very same are made scourges and messengers of vengeance, τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ παντὸς, γῆ, καὶ ὕδωρ, καὶ ἀὴρ, καὶ πῦρ ἐπιτίθενται, κ. τ. λ. *Elementa universi, terra, aqua, aer, ignis, ex quibus mundus constat, de sententia Dei opt. max. infesta ad evastandam impiorum regionem inferuntur, imperium, potentiamque qua Deus utitur, ostendentia; qui quidem eadem salutariter ad rerum procreationem temperet, et cum commodum est, ad impiorum exitium convertat.* (De Vita Mosis, lib. i.)

Ver. 25. *Therefore even then was it altered into all fashions, and was obedient to thy grace that nourisheth all things, according to the desire of them that had need.*] *i. e.* Says Calmet, the fire, to obey the orders of its Maker, and to fulfil the designs of his providence, was variously altered, and acted not only in a different, but contrary manner. It destroyed the fruits of the Egyptians, and it spared those of the Hebrews, in Egypt; it burnt even in water; in the wilderness it seemed to have little or no power at all, and affected not even that which was of a nature apt to melt. And herein it acted in obedience to God's mercy, for so he understands *grace* here, as Vatablus likewise does, rendering here *benignitati tuæ;* which, as it takes care of mankind in general, so in particular it provides for the wants and necessities of the good and faithful, according as they ask or need it, πρὸς τὴν τῶν δεομένων θέλησιν, *pro indigentium voto,* says the Arabic. Junius renders very unaccountably, *ad voluptatem gentium;* but undoubtedly this is a mistake, the true reading there I suppose was, but corrupted by some accident, *ad voluntatem indigentium.* According to other expositors, manna is here meant, which was altered into all fashions or tastes, agreeably to the desire of the users in general, or such in particular who ate it with faith and thanksgiving, in which sense they understand τῶν δεομένων in the original, and the marginal reading seems to favour it. This, though exactly the sense of the twentieth and twenty-first verses, and so seemingly not necessary to be repeated here, is yet countenanced by the ancient versions, particularly the Arabic, which reads, *propterea donum tuum in rem quamlibet tunc immutabatur, et in omni cibo pro indigentium voto subserviebat.* It is observable, first, that δωρεὰ, in the original, is here rendered *gift,* and not *grace,* as our translators have it, *i. e.* the gift of manna, called here, by way of excellence, and its extensive use, παντότροφος. Secondly, It is probable, that the Syriac and Arabic interpreters followed different copies from the present, or however differently pointed, for both of them have δωρεὰ in the nominative case. If this indeed was the true reading, it would answer to the same thought and expression a little above, (ver. 21.) τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ ὑπηρετῶν, but there seems no necessity to alter the present reading of the Greek, for κτίσις may be understood of fire, and δώρεὰ of manna. And fire, which in one verse serveth the Maker, may in another be properly enough said to be subservient to the gift, *i. e.* to the preparation of the manna, by God's appointment, and be seemingly altered in its qualities with regard to it. I take the whole, from the nineteenth verse to the end of the chapter, to be one continued reflection on the circumstance mentioned ver. 27. that manna endured the fire in all methods of preparing and

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dressing it by fire, and yet evaporated with the heat of the morning sun only: if indeed by κτίσις, ver. 24. we understand the creation, we may then take this place too in a more general sense, *viz.* that because the Egyptians, Greeks, and other nations, had a conceit that there were some gods of the earth, others of the air, some that ruled the fire, and others the water, therefore the true God altered the elements into all fashions; for he chastised the Egyptians, not only by the earth and the sea, but the air thundered, and his lightnings went abroad, that so he might teach them, that he was the sovereign ruler of the elements, and that the God of Israel was the supreme Lord of universal nature.

Ver. 26. *That thy children might know that it is not the growing of fruits that nourisheth man: but that it is thy word which preserveth them that put their trust in thee.*] *i. e.* Thy people Israel were hereby taught, that it was not the nature of manna, as such, that sustained them, but thy will, or command, or blessing, which by that provision supported them; for of itself it was of no subsistence or continuance, but was corrupted and good for nothing, if kept contrary to God's command. It was the observance, therefore, of God's word or direction in all its particulars, and his blessing upon the supply, that was their support so long in the wilderness. Or it may be taken in the same sense with Deut. viii. 3. which Calmet thinks it an imitation of, *viz.* that as man doth not live by bread alone, so neither does he by any of the sorts of the fruits of the earth only (for so I understand γενέσεις τῶν καρπῶν), but by any thing else that God is pleased to appoint for his nourishment, and will favour with his blessing. For though the fields should yield no meat, and the earth prove barren and unfruitful, yet can the Lord supply means, as he did manna to his chosen, to feed such as rely and depend upon him. The question, therefore, of the murmuring Israelites, *Can God prepare a table in the wilderness, or can he give bread, or provide flesh for his people?* (Psal. lxxviii. 20, 21.) was a wicked distrust of God's power and providence. The comment of Messieurs du Port-Royal raises another very useful reflection from hence, *viz.* not to depend on any of the creatures, but to rely upon God alone, who uses and governs them, who is so intimately concerned in every material occurrence, that it is neither marriage that introduces persons into the world, nor bread that nourishes them, nor diseases that kill them, nor medicines that cure them, *i. e.* independently, and of themselves, but the order and will of God only, who makes use of the creatures, in all these cases, as his instruments, to fulfil his own wise decrees and purposes. (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 28. *That it might be known that we must prevent the sun to give thee thanks, and at the day-spring pray unto thee.*] The literal meaning of this, as it relates to the manna, is, that such among the Israelites as would gather this blessing vouchsafed them from heaven, were obliged to prevent the sunrising, lest the heat of it should melt it; but there is likewise a beautiful moral couched under it, and a very useful reflection to be drawn from it. For did Almighty God give the Israelites in his mercy every night a supply of manna, and appoint it to be gathered very early for the comfort and sustenance of the whole day, and were they in duty and gratitude obliged to be as early in their return of thanks, and to shew forth his glory before the sunrising? we are hence instructed to be each morning as early at our devotions, to bless God, as for his other benefits, so particularly for the safety of the night past, and the sweet refreshment of beloved sleep, and, with the Psalmist, *Prevent the night-watches to be occupied in God's word.* But there is another very obvious reflection to be made from God's appointing a particular time to gather his manna, *viz.* That God's blessings are not at our election, or in our choice to have them when we will, but then only may we hope to find them, when we seek for them at the time and in the manner which he appoints. His manna is ready if we come in time, but if we delay till the sun arises, it melteth away and is gone.—God is very gracious, he giveth to all a gathering time, and expecteth we should use it as he intendeth; he would have the morning of our lives devoted to his service, that so we may eat the labour of our hands, when the evening of age cometh. (See Bishop Babington on Exodus.) God's forbidding manna to be kept till the next morning, had also this useful design or meaning under it,—to teach the Jews not to extend their care of necessary supplies beyond the present day, but to leave the provision for the morrow to the Divine providence.

Ver. 29. *For the hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's hoar frost, and shall run away as unprofitable water.*] *i. e.* Such careless Israelites as deferred gathering the manna before sunrising, found it melted away as the hoar frost, and to be as useless as corrupted water. This comparison is used here rather than any other, because manna in Scripture is likened to it, Exod. xvi. 14. which it resembled not only in appearance, but in its short duration. And such other ungrateful persons as are unmindful of God's favours, or are in no concern or haste to return thanks for them, will see their hopes vanish in like manner. For though God gives his blessings with great readiness, yet it is only to the humble, he loves a grateful receiver, and would have us acknowledge his mercies, in order that he may continue them to us, or increase them in some greater degree and proportion.

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

A farther account of the Egyptian plagues for their ill usage of the Israelites, particularly the thick darkness which was spread over all the land of Egypt for three days, excepting the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were, which enjoyed the blessing of light as usual.—A description of the terrors of an evil conscience, that the Egyptians were continually haunted with imaginary spectres and apparitions, and had no inward quiet, from an apprehension of danger and mischief from hissing serpents and fierce beasts, which seemingly passed before them.

Ver. 1. *FOR great are thy judgments, and cannot be expressed: therefore unnurtured souls have erred.*] *i. e.* For want of knowing and considering them, they have erred and miscarried; for the knowledge of them keeps men in their duty. According to Calmet the meaning is, *Dreadful are the judgments which thou pourest out upon the wicked that oppose thy will:* the history of the Egyptian plagues manifestly evinces this, and therefore that people

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were greatly mistaken, when, by offending God, and injuring his chosen people, they exposed themselves to them, and brought the fierceness of his wrath upon them. Coverdale's and the other ancient English versions render, *Therefore men do err that will not be reformed with thy wisdom.* And the marginal reading is to the same effect.

Ver. 2. *For when unrighteous men thought to oppress the holy nation, they being shut up in their houses, the prisoners of darkness.*] This plague of darkness is mentioned first, Psal. cv. 28. where the rest are enumerated, though the ninth in order, according to the Mosaical account, where the succession of them is strictly preserved, as carrying in it, says De Muis, a greater degree of terror than any of the rest, as it startled and awaked their guilty consciences, and filled their minds with melancholy and despair. This darkness was purposely sent at a time when it might be most perceived, some time after the close of the night, about sunrising. This is intimated, Exod. x. 23. where the LXX. read οὐκ ἐξανέστη οὐδεὶς ἐκ τῆς κοίτης αὐτοῦ τρεῖς ἡμέρας, i. e. *nobody rose from his bed for three days,* as if it had been a continued night all that time, which our translators do not fully explain, when they render κοίτη by *place.* And the like seems intended here by ἔκειντο, κατακλεισθέντες ὀρόφοις. The Chaldee paraphrase on the passage above fixes the precise time when the darkness commenced, "Erunt tenebræ super terram Ægypti in aurora, at recedent prius tenebræ noctis." Philo's account is more particular and circumstantial, λαμπρᾶς ἡμέρας οὔσης, ἐξαπιναίως ἀνάκειται σκότος, κ. τ. λ. "When the day was bright and clear, on a sudden came a thick darkness, occasioned, perhaps, by an eclipse of the sun, which lasted longer than usual, or by a collection of very dark clouds, which by their closeness and thickness hindered the rays of the sun from breaking out, so that the day differed nothing from the night; or rather, it might seem to be a continued night for the space of three usual days and nights, insomuch that the people durst not rise from their beds, and such as upon any necessity were called abroad, like blind persons, taking hold of the wall or something else for their support, they with difficulty found their way out." (De Mose, lib. i.)

And fettered with the bonds of a long night.] It might well seem to be a very long night, from the unusual time of its continuance. A darkness of three days, without any intermission, exceeds any account in profane history, upon the most extraordinary occasion. Tully indeed speaks of a darkness somewhat resembling this in Sicily, occasioned by very extraordinary eruptions of Mount Etna; he tells us, it lasted two whole days, and that it was so gross and thick, that "nemo hominem homo agnosceret." (De Nat. Deor. lib. ii.) The metaphor of *bonds* and *fetters* applied to darkness, is not improper, as it incapacitates men from stirring and acting; nor is it unusual either in profane or sacred writings. Thus Isa. lxi. 1. *The opening of the prison to them that are bound,* is by St. Luke, who quotes that prophecy, rendered, τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψις, *recovering of sight to the blind.* (Luke iv. 18.) So again, Isa. xlii. 7. *The opening the eyes of the blind* is immediately after explained, by *bringing out the prisoners from the prison,* ἐκ δεσμῶν, *and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house,* which this passage of our author resembles, especially in the version of the LXX. We meet also with the like expression, 2 Pet. ii. 4. where, speaking of the fallen angels, the apostle says, God delivered them *into chains of darkness.* (See also Jude 6.)

Lay (there) *exiled from the eternal Providence.*] According to the fixed and established order of nature, the sun each day enlightens the world; but at this time that order seemed to be reversed, at least with respect to Egypt, where the sun shone not, or was not visible for a long time, and one tedious, continued night succeeded in its place; so that they were deprived of light and heat, the chief benefits and blessings of God's providence, which indeed are common to all mankind, and their seasonable influence is equally shed upon the just and the unjust. It is a figurative expression, and, by a metonymy, the cause is put for the effect. Coverdale renders, *Shut under the roof, thinking to escape the everlasting Wisdom;* as if the meaning was, that, conscious of their wickedness, they fled from God's providence, and concealed and hid themselves, hoping to escape the Divine notice, which seems to be the sense likewise of the Geneva version, and has indeed some countenance from the beginning of ver. 4.

Ver. 3. *For while they supposed to lie hid in their secret sins, they were scattered under a dark veil of forgetfulness.*] This may either mean, that as they committed κρυφαῖα ἁμαρτήματα, *sins of darkness,* or *secret wickedness,* under the dark veil of night and secrecy, so were they in return punished with this gross darkness; or the meaning may be, that they supposed and hoped their secret sins committed in the dark, and under the cover of night, would have lain concealed and buried, as it were, in oblivion: for so I choose to understand the place, induced hereto by the authority of the Arabic version, which reads, *Quod in occultis perpetrarunt, oblivionis velamine lucis experte latiturum arbitrati;* and Junius renders in like manner. Our version seems faulty here, as it is in many parts of this chapter; the true rendering seems to be, "While they thought or flattered themselves, that they lay hid in their secret sins, under a dark veil of forgetfulness, ἐσκοτίσθησαν, they themselves were darkened, or overtaken with this plague of darkness." For I think this to be the true reading, instead of ἐσκορπίσθησαν, as the common editions have it; and I have the pleasure to find this conjecture confirmed by the Alexandrian copy, and from thence Dr. Grabe thus points the Greek, λανθάνειν γὰρ νομίζοντες ἐπὶ κρυφαίοις ἁμαρτήμασιν ἀφεγγεῖ λήθης παρακαλύμματι, ἐσκοτίσθησαν θαμβούμενοι δεινῶς: but in either sense, the sin is clearly discerned and exemplified in the punishment. The observation of St. Austin too is very just, whether we understand it of the Egyptian or moral darkness, "Spargit Deus pœnales cæcitates super illicitas cupiditates." (Aug. Confess.)

Being horribly astonished, and troubled with (strange) *apparitions.*] But what was more terrible than darkness, or rather increased the terrors of it, was, that they were haunted and tormented with monstrous spectres and frightful apparitions. Commentators differ about these spectres, whether they were real, or only the effects of a disturbed imagination; those that suppose the former, say, they were either the ghosts of the Hebrew infants which they drowned in the river; or of their own departed friends and relations, that died by some of the former plagues; or, lastly, the forms of some of their deities, which appeared to them in different shapes. (See Calmet in loc.) But these are mere conjectures, nor is it of any great moment to determine

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them. The Psalmist seems to suppose them real, for it is observable, Psal. lxxviii. 50. that instead of the plague of darkness, which he there omits, he lays great stress upon God's sending *evil angels among them*, as if the furiousness of his wrath, anger, and displeasure, was chiefly shewn in this particular, which is the learned Lightfoot's opinion, and that it had more effect upon Pharaoh than all the foregoing plagues. If indeed these were real, it may seem a just judgment of God, and agreeable to his usual proceedings, to punish the Egyptians by such evil angels as they, perhaps, had made the objects of their worship, or their magicians, in their enchantments, had had recourse to. The writer of the book of Ecclesiasticus intimates, as if God, for the punishment of the wicked, sometimes makes use of cacodemons, as his instruments of vengeance, for so many interpreters understand his words, *There be spirits that are created for vengeance, which in their fury lay on sore strokes; in the time of destruction they pour out their force, and appease the wrath of him that made them,* (xxxix. 28.) This was likewise the opinion of some of the ancient heathens; thus Plutarch, "An illud verius est quod a quibusdam Romanis dicitur, et Chrysippus opinatur, dæmonia quædam mala circuire, quibus Dii quasi carnificibus et scelerum ultoribus adversus injustos et impios utuntur?" (Plut. in Problemat.)

Ver. 4. *But noises* (as of waters) *falling down, sounded about them.*] Ἦχοι καταράσσαντες, by which we may either understand great and terrible noises, for so the comparison which is included in the parenthesis, as not being in the original, is frequently understood: (Ezek. xliii. 2. Rev. i. 15. xiv. 2. xix. 6.) or screaming and ill-boding noises may be meant, which probably is the meaning of *vox maledictionis* in the Syriac version of this place: or, lastly, that they were frightened even at the sound of their own voices; for so the Arabic renders, *Propriæ ipsorum voces continuo cum strepitu conjunctæ perterrebant eos.*

And sad visions appeared unto them with heavy countenances.] Φάσματα ἀμειδήτοις κατηφῆ προσώποις ἐνεφανίζετο. Does not this seem to be tautology? For what are κατηφῆ φάσματα, or sad visions, but visions with sad or heavy countenances? The Arabic interpreters, as if sensible of this, render, *Phantasmata nequaquam hilaria eum, cujus tristis erat vultus, consumebant,* applying the words to the Egyptians themselves, that they, through fright, had heavy or melancholy and dejected countenances. The Vulgate reads in like manner, *Personæ tristes illis apparentes pavorem illis præstabant.* Calmet understands it in the same sense, *Ils voyoient paroitre des spectres affreux, qui les remplissoient encore d'epouvante.* Badwell's reading of the Greek, φαντάσματα ἀμειδῆ τοῖς κατηφέσι προσώποις ἐνεφανίζετο, seems preferable to that in the common editions, is clearer, and may suit either sense. (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 5. *No power of the fire might give them light, neither could the bright flames of the stars endure to lighten that horrible night.*] *i. e.* The darkness was so thick, that they could not see one another, nor attempt any business, for want of the necessary help from fire, candle, and the other usual means to convey light, which, upon this occasion, were useless, and lost their power: for the darkness which encompassed Egypt, was not like the common and ordinary darkness, which disappears at the approach of the sun: this began about that time, and hindered its shining, and was so gross with fogs and vapours, that it extinguished the light of the heavenly bodies, which were not to be discerned in the midst of it. Philo's account agrees with our author's, and is equally as surprising and extraordinary, καὶ γὰρ χρειώδους πυρὸς τὸ φέγγος, κ. τ. λ. *Ignis quo utimur quotidie, vel aere turbato exstinguebatur, vel vincebatur a crassissimis tenebris—videndi sensu adempto, cæterorum nullus erat usus; nam nec loqui, nec audire, nec cibis frui licebat, sed triduo illo vehementer fame cruciabantur, nulli vacantes sensui.* (De Vita Mosis, lib. i.) The Hebrew expresses the greatness of this darkness by a remarkable pleonasm, calling it *darkness of obscurity;* but the exaggeration of the LXX. is still more observable, who describe it by three words immediately following one another in the same verse, σκότος, γνόφος, θύελλα, *darkness, thick obscurity, tempestuous darkness.* If, then, the force of the sun could not penetrate or overcome that darkness, much less can we imagine the feeble light of the stars to have any effect upon it, which were naturally either lost as it were in that thick medium, or, by God's appointment, they might withdraw their shining; for even these, in their courses, attend upon and fulfil the will of their Creator. (Judg. v. 20.) Thus, Job xxxviii. 15. it is said in general, that *from the wicked their light is withholden,* and the same reflection occurs often in this ancient writer; but in ix. 7. he particularly mentions, among the judgments of God, the withdrawing of the light of the stars, *He commandeth the sun and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars;* a metaphor inexpressibly beautiful, which, though spoken upon another occasion, and thought to allude to a much more ancient piece of history, (see Bp. Sherlock's Dissert. ii.) is very applicable to the Egyptian darkness; when, to pursue the metaphor, God sealed up the firmament with the signet of the Almighty, and rendered its glories invisible for a determined time. But if the Egyptians had really no light, it may be asked, How they could then discern the apparitions and spectres, which are mentioned in the preceding verses? To this Calmet answers, That it was by means of those sudden flashes which sometimes darted upon them, and are described in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *Only there appeared unto them a fire kindled of itself, very dreadful.*] Διεφαίνετο δ' αὐτοῖς μόνον αὐτομάτη πυρὰ φόβου πλήρης. The usual sense given of this place is, that they had no other light but what was occasioned by sudden flashes of lightning, which added greatly to their terror, for that faint light served to make the apparitions visible to them, though nothing else could be distinguished to any purpose. Or the meaning may rather be, and the words of the original seem to favour it, and the sense likewise is improved by it, that sudden flashes of fire or lightning appeared to the Egyptians only, and not to the Israelites, who were free from this darkness, and the surprising phenomena attending it. See ver. 21. where the like is said of the darkness, that over them only was spread a heavy night. In this sense, Junius understands the words, who renders, *Apparebat ipsis solum pyra timore plena,* &c. There seems to be the like mistake in our version, Phil. i. 27. *Only let your conversation be such,* where the rendering would be better, *Let your conversation be only such as becometh the gospel of Christ.* But besides this sense, that the fire appeared μόνον αὐτοῖς, to the Egyptians only, there is another sense of the words, which will very well suit with

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the context, and I am inclined to prefer, *viz.* that this fire was *in appearance only*, μόνον διεφαίνετο, was not real, but imaginary, arising from and suggested by their fears; which is the rendering of the Bishops' Bible, *A blaze of fire on a sudden appeared only.* Μόνον, taken in either of these senses, is preferable to that in our version; but the latter sense I like best, for I think this, and what follows, to be not so much a description of any real incident, as of fear, arising from the apprehensions of a bad conscience, which suggested imaginary noises and apparitions; or may we not understand, in a metaphorical sense, by αὐτομάτη πυρὰ φόβου πλήρης, an alarmed conscience itself, which accuses, condemns, and punishes? and πυρὰ, here used, comes nearer this sense, and is more proper than πῦρ, inasmuch as it signifies both fire and fuel; and where it is αὐτομάτη, *self-raised, self-kindled,* it expresses more still, something like that of our Saviour, a *fire that is not quenched;* which is very applicable also to an evil conscience. This whole chapter is, undoubtedly, very obscure and difficult; and if it be taken as a description only of the state of the Egyptians during the plague of darkness, I think it inexplicable in several places. But the author seems to intend (taking occasion from the literal darkness in Egypt) a description of spiritual darkness, or the state of a bad conscience in general, both invaded with real and reasonable fears, and creating to itself imaginary horrors: in this view a new light is struck out amidst the thick darkness, though hitherto unobserved by any of the interpreters: nor is the exposition any ways harsh or forced; and if there was no foundation in the context for understanding it of spiritual darkness, as there certainly is, (verses 11—13. 21.) yet such allegories are very frequent, especially in Origen and Philo; nor does the writer of this book seem to be unacquainted with this manner of writing. See xviii. 24. which is a remarkable instance, among others, of the allegorical strain.

For being much terrified, they thought the things which they saw to be worse than the sight they saw not.] Ἐκδειματούμενοι δὲ τῆς μὴ θεωρουμένης ἐκείνης ὄψεως, ἠγοῦντο χείρω τὰ βλεπόμενα. Our version seems again faulty here; for is this any argument of their being much terrified? Is it not natural for people to think those dangers or evils which they actually see and feel, worse than those which are at a distance, and they see or know nothing at all of? People that are much terrified, are apt to imagine, and be afraid of every thing, not only what they actually see, but of their own shadows and phantoms of their own raising; they are apprehensive that something worse and worse will still happen to them, and frighten themselves most with imaginary dangers: this seems to be a more just description of fear, which always forecasteth grievous things, (ver. 11.) especially when it proceeds from a bad conscience. I think, therefore, the present rendering not right. The true sense of the place depends very much upon the right pointing of the Greek. If the comma be placed after ὄψεως, as all the editions I have seen have it, though otherwise, I suppose, in the copy followed by our translators; the sense then seems to be, that being frightened at what they had only an accidental glimpse of (for the flashes were not strong enough, nor of a continuance sufficient to view and discern things distinctly), they were more afraid of the objects that passed before them, and thought them worse than they were: and thus Calmet, *Etant epouvantez par ces fantomes qu'ils ne faisoient q'entrevoir, tous ces objets leur en paroissoient encore plus affroyables;* for a sudden glimpse, a broken and interrupted view, instead of encouraging them, and raising their spirits, rather increased their terror, and made them imagine these objects still more frightful. (Com. in loc.) But I think this passage would be clearer still, and the sense more agreeable to the context, if conjecture might supply the place of authority here, in inserting μὴ before βλεπόμενα; thus, ἠγοῦντο χείρω τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα: which may either mean, that being so much terrified at that imaginary appearance (*sc.* πυρᾶς) which an evil conscience had raised, they thought such inward, unseen disturbances, which passed within their own breasts, and occasioned such dreadful appearances before them, to be worse than any outward calamities they had experienced; or, that being frighted at such a fantastical an appearance, they apprehended that something more dreadful, though unseen and unknown, might still happen, and that worse was yet to come. Such an apprehension is the natural and common effect of fear, which Pliny makes to be more grievous than actual and positive pain; "Parvulum differt patiaris adversa, an exspectes: nisi quod tamen est dolendi modus, non est timendi." (Lib. viii. epist. 18.) And Servius is of the same opinion: "Exspectatio pœnæ gravior est; nam in exspectatione et præsens metus est, et dolor futurus, in ipsa autem pœna solus dolor." (Ad Æneid. vi. ver. 614.)

Ver. 7. *As for the illusions of art-magic they were put down.*] The magicians themselves were not able to assist them, nor to remove this plague of darkness. Those tricks and cheating artifices, by which they used to impose upon the simple, were at this time of no service to themselves, or others. Learned men are not generally agreed, whether the wonders wrought by these magicians were real miracles, or in appearance only: that they were only so in appearance, seems to have been the sentiment of the ancient Jewish synagogue, and of the author of this book, who calls them here ἐμπαίγματα, or *illusions;* which was also the sentiment of Josephus, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, St. Ambrose, and St. Jerome. The magicians of Egypt always tried by their enchantments to imitate the real miracles of Moses; but herein God sufficiently distinguished between them,—that whereas he did indeed enable them to produce some effects of a wonderful nature, they were such as contributed rather to the calamities of Egypt; nor did he give them power afterward to remove them; they turned the waters into blood, but they could not restore them; they brought up frogs, but they could not take them away. That the chief of these magicians were Jannes and Jambres, is not only the opinion of the Jews, but even of some of the heathens. Numenius, a Pythagorean philosopher, cited by Eusebius, (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 8.) gives the following history of them: "Jannes et Jambres, scribæ rerum sacrarum Ægyptii, quo tempore Ægypti finibus ejecti Judæi sunt, claruere; viri omnium judicio rerum magicarum scientia nemini concedentes: quippe ambo quidem communi Ægyptiorum consensu delecti sunt, qui Musæo duci Judæorum, cujus apud Deum potentissimæ preces erant, sese opponerent." (See Usher's Annals ad Ann. Mund. 2513.) But we have a more sure evidence; for St. Paul not only says, that *Jannes and Jambres re-*

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sisted Moses, (2 Tim. iii. 8.) but that their folly was *manifest unto all men,* which is equivalent to the expression which follows here, *their vaunting in wisdom was reproved with disgrace.*

Their vaunting in wisdom was reproved with disgrace; for they that promised to drive away terrors and troubles from a sick soul, were sick themselves of fear, worthy to be laughed at.] The wise men of Egypt and the magicians are joined together, Gen. xli. 8. as if they were synonymous, and they are here deservedly ridiculed, because, notwithstanding their pretences to wisdom from a knowledge of the magical art, and their skill in the mysteries of divination, to foresee impending evils, they could not prevent those calamities, which they pretended to remove from others, from falling upon themselves: for as in some of the former plagues which befel the Egyptians, they could neither preserve their own cattle from the murrain, nor themselves from biles; so neither could they at this time, by any spell or sorcery, by any power over the air, or interest with the demons it it, escape the common calamity of the darkness, and the miseries attending it, which God (who had permitted these magicians to exert an extraordinary power in some few instances, to shew the world that the devil, with his permission, can do great things) now equally involved them in, to convince Pharaoh and his people of their vanity in trusting to such impotent magicians, and of their folly in opposing that God, who could control and confound their power when he pleased.

Ver. 9. *For though no terrible thing did fear them: yet, being scared with beasts that passed by, and hissing of serpents, they died for fear.*] The verb *fear* is here taken in a very unusual and improper sense; one would imagine, according to our version, that the spectres and apparitions were so bold and courageous, as not to be afraid of the Egyptians, instead of their being so much terrified by them, as is above represented: but should we allow that it here signifies *to make afraid,* as indeed it ought to be rendered, we may next inquire, with what propriety it can be said, that no terrible thing did make them afraid, when it follows in the very next words, that they were so scared with beasts, and hissings of serpents, that they died for fear? Grotius, sensible of this seeming contradiction, expounds the passage thus, "That if no such terrible things, as sudden flashes of lightning, ghastly spectres, and strange apparitions, had before affrighted them," εἰ γὰρ μηδὲν αὐτοὺς ταραχῶδες ἐφόβει (where εἰ he observes has the force of the potential mood, and ταραχῶδες is the very word used before, ver. 3. concerning the apparitions, though other copies read τερατῶδες, which is still more expressive), yet were there other plagues now to disquiet them; they were alarmed and persecuted with the hissings of serpents, and the noise of furious beasts, which so affected them, that they were ready to die through fear: and in this sense it must be confessed the Arabic interpreters take it, who render, *Etsi nihil eos turbulentum territasset, vitiosarum tamen belluarum stipationes, et insectorum sibili propulsatos illos pavidosque profligarunt.* And Junius in like manner, *Etenim si nihil ipsos turbulentum conterruerat bestiarum transvectionibus, et reptilium sibilis peribant tremebundi.* Calmet too understands the place of real animals; "That God at this time permitted serpents, whom they kept in their houses, out of their very great regard to them, (Herod. lib. i. cap. 36. Elian. Hist. Anim. lib. xvii. cap. 5.) or which came into them, pressed with hunger through the tediousness and long continuance of the darkness, to make assaults upon them, and attempt to devour them, as a just judgment for paying Divine honours to such venomous animals." (Com. in loc.) This difficulty, or seeming contradiction, may be also avoided, by supposing these hissings of serpents, and noise of beasts, to be the effect only of a disturbed imagination, and that these imaginary dangers, suggested by an evil conscience, though no terrible thing, no real animal, no dreadful monster, from without at this time actually frightened them, had such an effect upon them, that they almost died through fear and apprehension. These hissings of serpents in particular, and the noises of other animals, God might permit to haunt them, as they had probably offended him by the worship of them, and the sense of their guilt might now lie heavy upon their consciences, who, in their sad state of darkness, and under an incapacity of attending to or executing any business, had little else to reflect upon but their own wickedness. Such descriptions of fantastical visions and imaginary frights, expressed in terms of nature and reality, and exhibited, as it were, present to the senses, are very common to be met with in the best writers, especially the poets. Euripides abounds with representations of this sort, some beautiful instances of which Longinus produces from thence in his chapter Περὶ φαντασίας, sect. 15. (Eurip. in Orest. passim.) Nor are lively strokes of this nature wanting in some celebrated pieces of the modern drama. But though such representations are very common among the poets, yet I cannot agree with Capellus, that this and some other instances in this chapter are mere poetical fictions, invented at random by this writer, the sport of his fancy only; for there is nothing in this description so improbable, but what may be supposed to have happened to a wicked and disturbed imagination; or why may we not, lastly, understand this place metaphorically, of an evil conscience itself? for κνώδαλον, which is here rendered *beast,* signifies also an *insect,* or *reptile,* and particularly *vermes,* a *worm;* may it not then mean here the σκώληξ in Isaiah and Mark ix. *that dieth not?* And why may not the hissings of the serpents allude to dreadful apprehensions of devils, and the powers of darkness? The heathens themselves could describe the remorses of the mind, by animals gnawing the liver, and by furies armed with hissing snakes, &c. and may not these be considered as figures of the same import in this place?

Ver. 10. *They died for fear.*] If we should understand these words strictly, there are instances in history to justify the observation. Vopiscus, speaking of unusual thunders, says, "Negari non potest eo tempore—tantum fuisse tonitruum, ut multi terrore ipso exanimati esse dicantur." (In Vit. Cari.) And Pliny, "Crescente formidine mors sequebatur." (Lib. vii. epist. 27.) But I rather incline to think this an hyperbolical expression, meaning only, that they were ready to die; not unlike that of St. Luke, ἀποψύχειν ἀπὸ φόβου, (xxi. 26.) and that of St. Matthew, ἀπὸ φόβου ὡσεὶ νεκροὶ ἐγένοντο, *became as it were dead men:* (xxviii. 4.) not that they actually died for fear, but were ready to do so; like that too in Homer,

—— ἀπὸ δὲ ψυχὴν ἐκάπυσσεν, (Il. xxii.)

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where an ancient scholiast remarks, ὑπερβολικῶς, ἀντὶ τοῦ, ἐξέπνευσεν.

Denying that they saw the air, which could of no side be avoided.] Here again our translation seems faulty; for is this any proof of their consternation, that they denied they saw the air? Is it not rather a proof of their want of veracity? that they denied they saw that, which they could not, as is here expressed, avoid seeing? but neither is this true, that they could not avoid seeing the air: for do people in a fright see it only, or best; or is a thick darkness the proper medium to see the air in, which at mid-day we only discern by its effects? Do not some learned grammarians and etymologists tell us, that it is called ἀὴρ, *quod aer per se sit obscurus;* and does it not often signify darkness, and is synonymous to ἀορασία, especially in the feminine gender, which I take to be the sense and true acceptation of it in this place? for I conceive the author's meaning to be, that they durst not or would not look up or view the darkness, which could not escape their notice, as it was on all sides of them. Their inward terrors were so great, that they refused to mind or take notice of the outward darkness which surrounded them, as bearing no comparison or proportion to their fright within. The three following verses manifestly relating to an evil conscience, greatly confirm the sense which I have before given of the context.

Ver. 11. *For wickedness condemned by her own witness, is very timorous, and being pressed with conscience, always forecasteth grievous things.*] That this observation is true, the history of the lives of the most abandoned sinners and most wicked tyrants sufficiently evinces; for none have been more subject to this fear, which an evil conscience inwardly suggests, than such as have been placed seemingly in the height of the greatest temporal security, and for their greatness and tyranny have been most terrible to others; and yet even these have trembled in company only with themselves, and have been observed to shun retirement, as the reproof of conscience is then most sensible, and its lashes most powerful and affecting. See the account of Dionysius in particular, and the conference between him and Democles, Tuscul. Quæst. lib. v. And in another place the same orator finely observes, "Sua quemque fraus, suum facinus, suum scelus, sua audacia de mente ac sanitate deturbat: hæ sunt impiorum furiæ, hæ flammæ, hæ faces." (In Pison.) And thus when Orestes was much disturbed and agonized for having killed his mother, he acknowledges the cause of his misery to be, ἡ σύνεσις, ὅτι σύνοιδα δεῖν' εἰργασάμενος, i. e. *conscience torments me, for I am convinced I have done very wickedly.* (Eurip. in Orest.) Plutarch supposes, that an evil conscience erects, as it were, a tribunal in a wicked man's breast; that fright and remorse are his accusers which accuse him, his judges which condemn him, and his executioners which torment him. (De Tranquil. Animi. See Juven. Sat. xiii. Hor. Epist. lib. i. epist. 1.) But nothing can exceed Job's description of the uneasiness of wicked men, *The wicked man travelleth with pain all his days: and the number of the years of his tyranny is uncertain;* for so St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, reads this sentence, "Et numerus annorum incertus est tyrannidis ejus:"—*a dreadful sound is in his ears, in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him: he believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword,* (xv. 20—22.) But the version before referred to, expresses the terrors of the wicked in this place more strongly, by the mention of his inward disquiet, and a suspicion of dangers continually falling upon him: *Sonitus terroris semper in auribus illius, et cum pax sit, ille semper insidias suspicatur; non credit quod reverti possit de tenebris ad lucem, circumspectans undique gladium.* But the power of an evil conscience, and its dreadful self-reflection upon every accident and misfortune, is not any where so finely displayed, I think, as in the history of Joseph's brethren, who, even at twenty-three years' distance, could not help crying out, when they were imprisoned in Egypt by Joseph for spies, *Truly we are guilty concerning our brother—therefore is this evil come upon us.* (Gen. xlii. 21.)

Ver. 12. *For fear is nothing else but a betraying of the succours which reason offereth.*] Fear, in general, especially any great degree of it, for it is that which is here spoken of, may be defined to be a despair of succour, when a man sees his affairs desperate, and that reason suggests no expedients to him, nor application or industry any probable means of a recovery, and emerging from a calamitous estate, he abandons himself to despondency, and sinks into the deepest melancholy; but such a fear as arises from an evil conscience may be defined to be, a great concern of the soul, upon a view of its inward guilt, and an apprehension that it is deserted of all succour, is sinking into misery, in despair of help, and has not one comfortable glimpse of hope to speak any peace to it. Upon which account it has been wisely observed by some moralists, that there is not such a true coward as a wicked man; that he is suspicious of every thing, but afraid of himself most: that fear in general has the effect ascribed to it by this writer, that it betrays and indisposes a man from following the wholesome advice which reason offers, that it often deprives men of those helps and succours which might keep dangers off, and hinders them from guarding against many evils, which by a prudent and timely application might have been prevented, seems evident; because fear, when it is sudden and violent, suspends, as it were, for a time, the use of a man's reason, puts all things in confusion about him; he judges not truly of his present state, and has not resolution or forecast to amend it. The historian, speaking of the Persians, who in their flight flung away their weapons of defence, adds this very pertinent observation, "Adeo timor ipsa auxilia reformidat." And Seneca, mentioning how people's senses are affected with fear upon great occasions, such as earthquakes, &c. has the following reflection: "Quid mirum est animos inter dolorem et metum destitutos aberrasse?" But I cannot explain this in stronger terms, than by setting down the description of the fear of the Canaanites, as it occurs Josh. v. 1. according to the reading of the LXX. ἐτάκησαν αὐτῶν αἱ διάνοιαι, καὶ κατεπλάγησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς φρόνησις οὐδεμία ἀπὸ προσώπου, κ. τ. λ.

Ver. 13. *And the expectation from within being less, counteth the ignorance more than the cause which bringeth the torment.*] This passage is more obscure than any in this chapter, or perhaps in the whole book. None of the oriental or English versions give any light to it, and the commentators either pass it over, or leave it in the same obscurity: our version, in particular, is so far from deliver-

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ing the true sense, that it seems to have none at all. The common reading of the Greek, in most editions, is, Ἔνδοθεν δὲ οὖσα ἧττων ἡ προσδοκία, πλείονα λογίζεται τὴν ἄγνοιαν τῆς παρεχούσης τὴν βάσανον αἰτίας, which our translators manifestly follow, but give no determinate sense of the place: according to this reading I take the meaning to be, "The less the expectation of help, or means to escape, is, the more largely it computes, *i. e.* magnifies the danger, or imagines greater evils will happen through ignorance of the cause that brings the uneasiness, or torment." St. Chrysostom has a like reflection upon the sufferings of Job: "Ignorantia causæ quæ pœnam affert, valde auget calamitatem." If we read τῇ ἀγχινοίᾳ with the Alexandrian MS. instead of τὴν ἄγνοιαν, the sense perhaps may be, "That the smallest expectation or apprehension arising from fear, computes more largely upon future dangers and mischiefs than any just reasoning, or well-informed understanding." Or thus: "That a less degree of fear reasons more, and determines better, about the nature and true cause of any calamity than a greater, which is attended with less presence of mind;" which seems to be Grotius's sense of this place: "Metus remissior patitur rationem decernere," &c. According to Calmet the sense is, "That a state between hope and fear creates to itself more uneasiness, because the ignorance and uncertainty the mind is in of the evils and misfortunes which may happen, keep it in a continued state of inquietude, and it is apt, in such a situation, to imagine and represent dangers to itself, other and greater than they really are, through ignorance of its true state, and for want of knowing distinctly what to fear or rely on." (Com. in loc.) St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, renders, *Et dum ab intro minor est expectatio, majorem putat potentiam causæ*, &c. And Vatablus, *Magis reputat implacabilitatem causæ* (in the margin, *numinis*) *intus residens exigua spes; i. e.* the less hope the mind has, the greater does it suppose the power to be of the cause that inflicts the evil, and if it approaches to despair, it represents the Deity as implacable. In the midst of such a variety of renderings and interpretations, it will be a pleasure if the reader can find any satisfaction, or some new light to clear up the obscurity.

Ver. 14. *But they sleeping the same sleep that night which was indeed intolerable.*] Οἱ δὲ τὴν ἀδύνατον ὄντως νύκτα. If νὺξ ἀδύνατος be indeed the true reading, it must be either taken in the sense of our version, or in that of the margin; in the former sense the Arabic interpreters understand it, rendering *cum occupasset eos nox illa, quæ verè tolerari non potest.* And thus *impotens* is used, it must be confessed, as signifying *intolerable*, by good and approved classic writers. Tully has *principatus impotentissimus* to the same sense, (Philip. 5.) and Livy and Quintilian use it in like manner. Or νὺξ ἀδύνατος may be used in the sense of the margin, to signify a night, wherein they could do nothing. To apply ἀδύνατος in this manner, is a metonymy not unusual; for as it is no impropriety to say *impotent poverty*, meaning a person that is poor, and by that means disabled; *impotent sickness*, or *sleep*, meaning persons in those circumstances; so neither is there any absurdity in applying it to night or death. In either of these senses may ἀδύνατος be understood, if it be the genuine reading. But Grotius is of a different opinion, and corrects the place thus: οἱ δὲ τὴν ἄδυτον νύκτα, κ. τ. λ. i. e. *that impenetrable night;* meaning, that thick and continued darkness which the sight could not penetrate. But if the passage is thought still to want emendation, and I might offer a conjecture among others, I would read, τὴν ἀδωναῖον ὄντως νύκτα, i. e. *a night truly infernal*, which agrees well with the context. It is observable that the author here mentions the Egyptians as sleeping, and *sleeping the same sleep;* not that they were really so, for their fears would not permit that, but because, like persons asleep, they were in a like state of darkness, could transact and execute nothing, and had like disturbed fancies and wild imaginations.

Which came upon them out of the bottom of inevitable hell.] Ἐξ ἀδυνάτου ᾅδου μυχῶν ἐπελθοῦσαν. It is as difficult to say what ἀδύνατος ᾅδης is in the Greek, as what *inevitable hell* is in our version. For are we to understand by *hell*, the place strictly so called, and by the *darkness which came out of the bottom of it*, the darkness of hell beneath, or utter darkness, as the Scripture expresses it? This surely might have been better rendered *intolerable*, as ἀδύνατος is translated above, than *inevitable*, which carries too harsh an idea with it, expressed so laxly; and indeed the Arabic interpreters render it so, *Ex intolerabilis inferni crypta adveniens;* and the Bishops' and Geneva Bibles, by *the dungeon of hell which is insupportable.* Or does ᾅδης here mean the region of the dead, which is indeed an invisible region of darkness, and may justly be said to be inevitable? Job very emphatically calls it a *land of darkness, as darkness itself, a land of the shadow of death, where the light is as darkness*, (x. 22.) Ἀδύνατος applied to ᾅδης, in this sense, may have here again the signification which the margin gives of it before. For ᾅδης is confessedly a state or region *wherein men can do nothing;* it is that *night*, according to the language of the New Testament, *wherein no men can work.* (John ix. 4.) And thus the true Solomon, *There is no working in the grave whither thou goest.* (Eccles. ix. 10.) Grotius here again dislikes ἀδυνάτου ᾅδου, and reads ἐξ ἀδύτου ᾅδου μυχῶν. But besides that the same epithet being repeated so very soon looks suspicious, and which holds equally strong against ἀδύνατος, is not as much implied in ᾅδης itself? which, according to the etymology of many learned men, is ἀΐδης contracted (see H. Steph. Gr. Lexic. Leigh's Crit. Sacr. in voce), the same with the Hebrew *sheol*, which signifies a place which is dark and obscure, where nothing can be seen. Probably, therefore, the true reading may be either ὀδυνηροῦ ᾅδου μυχῶν, or rather, as Tartarus seems here referred to, ἐνδοτάτου ᾅδου μυχῶν, according to Homer's description upon the same occasion:

——ἦχι βάθιστον ὑπὸ χθονός ἐστι βέρεθρον.

For as Night, in the mythology of the heathens, is fabled to be the daughter of Orcus and Tartarus, and is described by them to be a place of darkness and misery, the seat or kingdom of fear, grief, and despair, the author here, by a metaphor or figure, accommodates and applies the notion of infernal darkness to this Egyptian plague, upon account of its thickness, the horror occasioned by it, the despair accompanying it, and the ghosts and spectres haunting and disturbing it.

Ver. 16. *So then, whosoever there fell down, was straitly kept, shut up in a prison without iron bars.*] Εἴθ' οὕτως, ὃς δήποτ' οὖν ἦν ἐκεῖ καταπίπτων, ἐφρουρεῖτο εἰς τὴν ἀσίδηρον εἰρκτὴν κατακλεισθείς. The meaning, according to the com-

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mentators, is, that such of the Egyptians as were overtaken by this darkness, were made prisoners, though there were no other chains that held them than σειραι ζόφου, (2 Pet. ii. 4.) the obscurity and darkness which surrounded them. But I think more is included in the original than our version expresses, *viz.* that such among the Egyptians as, during that darkness, through fear, or by any misfortune, fell down, were disabled from helping themselves; they either could not or durst not rise, but continued, οὕτως, in the same place and condition, as if they had been detained in a prison, or a deep abyss, from whence there was no returning. I would therefore point the Greek thus: εἴθ' οὕτως (ὃς δήποτ' οὖν ἦν ἐκεῖ καταπίπτων) ἐφρουρεῖτο, εἰς τὴν ἀσίδηρον εἱρκτὴν κατακλεισθείς: and the version should be, *Then, whosoever it was that there fell, he so continued; i. e.* was in the same state kept bound, &c. Thus Vatablus, *Hoc deinde modo, quicunque tandem fuisset illic collapsus, in angustias citra ferrum conclusus, custodiebatur;* and so Tirinus, *In eodem vestigio, quasi in carcere conclusus, hærebat.* Calmet too understands it in this sense, *Tous ceux qui y tomberent, qui s'y rencontrerent*, &c. *furent obligez de demeurer au même endroit où la nuit les surprit.* (Com. in loc.) This sense seems confirmed too by what is mentioned in the next verse, that such as were overtaken by this darkness, wheresoever they were, or whatsoever they were about, there were they obliged to continue, being laid under an unavoidable necessity or confinement, δυσάλυκτον ἀνάγκην; where the particle δὺς invigorates the expression, and denotes a greater intenseness of the darkness. And in this sense some interpreters understand the words in Exod. x. 23. that *none rose from his place for three days; viz.* that the darkness was so shocking, and the horror occasioned by it so great, that, like persons quite disabled and confounded, they durst not stir from the place where they were first surprised with it, but stood, or sat, or lay, just as the darkness, at its coming, found them, for the whole time of its continuance.

Ver. 18, 19. *Whether it were a whistling wind, or a melodious noise of birds among the spreading branches, or a pleasing fall of water running violently, or a terrible sound of stones cast down, or a running that could not be seen of skipping beasts, or a roaring voice of most savage wild beasts, or a rebounding echo from the hollow mountains: these things made them to swoon for fear.*] This is a fine description of the panic of the Egyptians, which was so excessive that nothing could stir but it frighted them. Not only noises which were really terrible in themselves, such as of falling rocks, and the howling of wild and savage beasts, whose very echo must increase their fears, but even such things as had a tendency to lull pain, and soothe uneasiness, such as gentle, whispering breezes, purling, murmuring streams, and the sweet, ravishing music of the groves, even these, though agreeable entertainments, and which, at another time, would have delighted and charmed the ear, not only lost all their relish, but proved a punishment, and created new torment to them. Had the Almighty at this time indeed sent forth his glorious voice in thunder, no wonder that conscious guilt should shrink; according to that of Seneca, "Pavescis ad cœli fragorem, et quoties aliquid effulsit, expiras." (Nat. Quæst. ii. 59.) But that harmless sounds, or such as usually charm the fancy; that noises merely imaginary, for of such chiefly must we understand this description, should have such an uncommon effect, displays the power of an evil conscience, which takes away the poignancy of every enjoyment, and sits brooding mischief and misery to itself. This sort of panic is beautifully described, Levit. xxvi. 36. by God's *sending a faintness into their hearts, so that the sound even of a shaken leaf could chase them.* That of Lucan by no means equals it,

——"Pavet ille fragorem
Motorum ventis nemorum."

But that of the Psalmist is inimitable, ἐκεῖ ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον, οὗ οὐκ ἦν φόβος, (Psal. liii. 5.) so tormenting is wickedness, and so timorous an evil conscience.

Ver. 21. *Over them only was spread a heavy night, an image of that darkness which should afterward receive them.*] *i. e.* The Egyptians only were sufferers by this darkness, all without Egypt was light and sunshine.—But something farther is here meant; for the author, under the idea of darkness and a heavy night, intimates that doom and misery which awaited the Egyptians after death. Many of the fathers make this Egyptian darkness to be an emblem of sin, and its final misery in another life. For the sinner is a voluntary prisoner, and has as many chains about him as he has wilful sins. He is deprived of the light of God's countenance, and given up by him to a judicial blindness in this life, which is an anticipation (says St. Austin) of that darkness to which he shall afterward be consigned; his wretchedness begins in this life, and is completed in the next. (In Psalm.) To the same purpose St. Bernard: "Deus tantas tenebras Ægyptiis immisit, ut ex hac quasi imagine discerent primò tenebras suæ conscientiæ; secundo, tenebras inferni sibi imminentes." (Serm. 72. in Cant.) Origen likewise allegorizes this plague of darkness, and says, "It signified the darkness of mind which the devil had blinded Pharaoh and his subjects with, who, though they had experienced so many plagues, would not open their eyes to see their lamentable state, nor believe in God to prevent more." We find the term *darkness*, which is mentioned here, often made use of by the sacred writers, to represent hell, or the place of punishment: see Matt. viii. 12. xxii. 13. xxv. 30. 2 Pet. ii. 4. 17. Jude 6. 13. In this last place the state reserved for the wicked is said to be ὁ ζόφος τοῦ σκότους, *blackness of darkness*, where the pleonasm expresses the great intenseness of it. Philo calls it, Τάρταρον καὶ βαθὺ σκότος. (De Execrat.) And the rabbins speak of it in like terms. What our author mentions here of the future miserable state of the Egyptians after death, is according to an ancient received notion among the Jews, who accounted such as enjoyed great outward prosperity, God's special favourites; and that spiritual blessings likewise were wrapped up in, and conveyed with, their temporal ones: on the contrary, they reckoned those accursed, who were overwhelmed with worldly adversities, and that spiritual and everlasting plagues were hidden under temporal judgments, which were, to those upon whom they fell, so many pledges of their condemnation. (See Mede, b. i. Disc. 46.) This opinion our author seems to have imbibed, and it is an instance, according to the very judicious Dr. Jackson, of that radical tincture which infected all his countrymen, who looked upon the many glorious tokens of God's extraordinary mercy and loving-kindness to their fathers, as sure and irrevocable earnests of

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their absolute predestination to acceptance, glory, and happiness. And that the Egyptians, Canaanites, and such other of their enemies whom God had scourged, were so many vessels of wrath, fitted for perpetual destruction.

But yet were they unto themselves more grievous than the darkness.] "Men can never efface (says a fine modern writer) the sense which God has imprinted in their hearts of his presence and justice. They can never succeed in persuading themselves that sin is in its nature indifferent, or will remain unpunished. Hence their inward fears, which are as so many witnesses ready to accuse and confound them: and when vengeance at length comes to shew itself, they shall be the first to own that they have deserved it." (Rollin, vol. iii. p. 148.) Many beautiful passages might be produced from ancient authors, to shew the melancholy state of a guilty conscience, what a bosom plague and inseparable tormentor it is, how tired and afraid of its own reflections, and how gladly it would fly from its very self, but self continually pursues it. St. Austin most beautifully represents this uneasiness, and includes the case of all other sinners in the following description of himself: "Ego mihi remanseram infelix locus, ubi nec esse possem, nec inde recedere. Quò enim cor meum fugeret e corde meo? Quò à meipso fugerem? Quò me non sequerer?" (Confess. lib. iv. cap. 7.)

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

To the darkness with which the Egyptians were oppressed, the author opposes, by way of antithesis or contrast, the great light which the Israelites were favoured with at the same time, and the great benefit of the fiery pillar, which afterward conducted them in the wilderness. The death of all the first-born of the Egyptians, in one moment, without any distinction, by the destroying angel, is described in a very affecting manner; and, on the other hand, God's great mercy to the Israelites is shewn, by a particular instance in the desert, when, through the intercession of Aaron, and the power of his incense, God was prevailed upon to stop the sweeping progress of the plague, and to hinder its spreading any farther.

Ver. 1. *NEVERTHELESS thy saints had a very great light.*] All the children of Israel, called here the *saints*, according to the conceited notion of that people, had light in their dwellings whereby they were enabled to do their business, and get all things ready for their departure, without the notice of the Egyptians; much less could they hinder their designs, who were involved in such a thick mist, that they were incapable of seeing what the Israelites were doing. The Chaldee paraphrase upon Exod. x. 23. adds other reasons for this light: "Erat lux omnibus filiis Israel ad sepeliendum improbos, qui inter eos mortui erant, et ut justi possent in præceptis occupari in habitationibus suis." This difference and distinction between them must be looked upon as the more wonderful and extraordinary, if, as many learned men suppose, the houses of the Israelites and the Egyptians were contiguous and close to one another, as seems probable from the blood sprinkled upon the door-posts of the Israelites by way of distinction, because they were mingled with the Egyptians. Philo and Josephus both intimate that, in the same place or dwelling, the Hebrews had light, and the Egyptians were without it: this made the miracle so great, says Gregory Nyssen, that while the Israelites and the Egyptians dwelt promiscuously together, the former at the same time had light, and the latter darkness. From this strange work of God, and singular interposition in favour of his chosen, we are instructed how able our heavenly Father is to make not only a distinction, but a real separation between his own children and the wicked, when he executeth his wrath and vengeance; for such is his providential care, that, though they be in one field, in one house, or bed, together, one shall be taken, and the other left; one shall be afflicted with his judgments, and the other escape them. And we may hence, as another pious writer observes, profitably learn, not to ascribe our preservation to our own merit or policy, when we ourselves are free from any grievous calamity which happens to others, but to look up to the almighty Author of our deliverance, and at his footstool to return our tribute for such a signal instance of his mercy.

Whose voice they hearing, and not seeing their shape, because they also had not suffered the same things, they counted them happy.] Ὅτι μὲν οὐ κἀκεῖνοι ἐπεπόνθεισαν, ἐμακάριζον· thus the Alexandrian and Complut. copies read. The sense of this passage is very different, according as it is applied to the Israelites, or the Egyptians, in which the interpreters are greatly divided; they that apply it to the former, make the sense to be, that the Israelites heard the cries of the Egyptians without seeing them; and thanked God that they did not suffer the same things, and were not like the Egyptians in the midst of darkness and obscurity; and thus the Vulgate renders ἐμακάριζον, *et quia non et ipsi eadem passi erant, magnificabant te*, which Coverdale's version follows: others, still applying the words to the same persons, render ἐμακάριζον, that the Israelites *blessed themselves*, or *counted themselves happy*, because they also had not suffered the same things: but if this passage be applied to the Israelites, should not the reading rather be καὶ αὐτοὶ, than κἀκεῖνοι? The Vatican edition reads, ὅτι μὲν οὖν κἀκεῖνοι ἐπεπόνθεισαν, ἐμακάριζον, which furnishes another sense, "That the Israelites thanked God, or glorified the justice of God, that the Egyptians were now afflicted in their turns, who had before so much afflicted them." They that apply the place to the Egyptians understand it in this manner, "That the Egyptians heard the voices of the Israelites, though they could not see them, and thought the Israelites happy, that they also did not suffer like them." This seems to be the sense of our version, as it is of the Geneva and Bishops' Bibles, and seems indeed more agreeable to the context.

Ver. 2. *But for that they did not hurt them now, of whom they had been wronged before, they thanked them.*] Ὅτι δὲ οὐ βλάπτουσι προηδικημένοι, ηὐχαρίστουν. Here again the sense has been mistaken by some interpreters, as if the Israelites thanked the Egyptians for not hurting them now, who before had much oppressed and injured them; but there seems no reason or occasion for the Israelites to thank the Egyptians for not doing what, at that time, however inclined, they were incapacitated to do. There is also another sense, which has no better foundation,—that the Israelites ηὐχαρίστουν, thanked God, that the Egyptians, who before had so much wronged them, were now not in a ca-

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pacity to hurt them. And thus Coverdale, *And they that were vexed afore (because they were not hurt now) thanked them;* and so the Vulgate, *Et qui ante læsi erant, quia non lædebantur, gratias agebant;* St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, supplies, *tibi.* But I think the true sense of the place to be rather, "That the Egyptians thanked the Israelites, for not revenging themselves upon them in their state of darkness and impotence, who had provocations enough, and had been so long injured and oppressed by them;" and that the passage might be rendered more intelligibly thus, "That because they (the Israelites) did not hurt them now, whom they (the Egyptians) had before hurt or wronged, they thanked them." This seems to be the sense of our version, though obscurely expressed, and the Geneva Bible understands the passage in the same manner.

And besought them pardon, for that they had been enemies.] Καὶ τοῦ διενεχθῆναι χάριν ἐδέοντο. This is capable of two senses, and may either mean, that the Egyptians asked forgiveness of the Israelites for the many injuries they had formerly done them, which is the sense of our version, and of the Geneva Bible, and so διαφέρεσθαι is used, 2 Macc. iii. 4. Such a submission in the Egyptians, arising rather from fear, than a real contrition, is natural enough to be supposed at this melancholy juncture, and might indeed be expected from people in their sad and helpless condition, entirely at the mercy of those, who had been so inhumanly treated by them. In this sense, χάριν must be taken adverbially, as it is sometimes, and may be considered here the same as ἕνεκα. And thus it is used, Gal. iii. 19. ὁ νόμος τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη, *i. e.* according to our version, *The law was added because of transgressions;* which seems not much unlike the expression here, τοῦ διενεχθῆναι χάριν ἐδέοντο, *they beseeched* or *entreated* them, *because of their former transgressions and differences.* There is also another meaning of this passage,—that the Israelites beseeched God, that there always might be such a difference made between his own people and the Egyptians, or between them and their other enemies, as there was in this particular instance of the darkness. (See Exod. xi. 7. where the like expression is used.) Coverdale renders according to this latter interpretation, *And besought thee (O God) that there might be a difference;* and so does the Vulgate, *Et ut esset differentia, donum* (χάριν) *petebant.*

Ver. 3. *Instead whereof thou gavest them a burning pillar of fire.*] Ἀνθ' ὧν πυριφλεγῆ στύλον. The sense of this place according to most interpreters is,—that instead of an Egyptian darkness, God favoured his people with a light of fire, as it is described by the Psalmist, Psal. lxxviii. 15. for their assistance in the night-season. It is called here *a burning pillar of fire,* because in the night flames are more visible, by reason of the darkness, whereas in the day-time they appear rather like smoke at any considerable distance. (See note on x. 17.) Ἀνθ' ὧν in the original does not so properly signify *instead whereof,* as our version has it, as *quamobrem,* or *propter quod,* as the Vulgate renders, which Coverdale's and the old English versions follow, *therefore had they a burning pillar;* or we may understand ἀνθ' ὧν to signify, *for whose sake,* or *upon whose account;* and thus Badwell understands it, rendering, *quorum causa,* referring it probably to the Israelites, who, in the preceding verse, had requested that God would make some difference in their favour; and so the Syriac interpreters seem to take it.

Both to be a guide in the unknown journey, and a harmless sun to entertain them honourably.] Ἥλιον δὲ ἀβλαβῆ φιλοτίμου ξενιτείας; *i. e.* It was as a harmless and inoffensive sun, which, without incommoding them, rendered their journey safe and prosperous by affording them light in it. And thus Calmet, *La Colomne de Seigneur leur servoit comme de soleil, qui sans les incommoder rendoit leur voyage heureux.* Our version is very faulty in the rendering of the latter part of this verse; there is nothing in the original to authorize or justify what is here mentioned about *entertaining them honourably;* the true reading of the Greek is, *God gave them an inoffensive sun in their glorious and honourable march.* And, indeed, this march of the Israelites may be said to be truly honourable and magnificent, being under the guidance and direction of Almighty God, who was himself their leader. In this view, it had rather the appearance of a grand and superb triumph, than a tedious and painful journey. And in such august terms the prophets describe it, Psal. lxviii. 7, 8. Hab. iii. 3. and I have the pleasure to find the version which I have given of this place confirmed by the Geneva Bible, which renders, *And madest the sun that it hurted them not in their honourable journey,* which is the sense of ξενιτεία here; and so Junius expounds it: *Præbuisti columnam——quæ et dux esset profectionis ignotæ, et sol innocuus magnificæ peregrinationis.*

Ver. 4. *For they were worthy to be deprived of light and imprisoned in darkness, who had kept thy sons shut up, by whom the uncorrupt light of the law was to be given unto the world.*] Though God communicated his will to the patriarchs, and particularly to Abraham, when he entered into covenant with him; yet had not the Israelites, when in Egypt, any express knowledge of the law, as such: this they received after their going out from thence at Mount Sinai, where God himself promulged it to them in form; *which he commanded them to teach their children, that their posterity might know it, and the children which were yet unborn; to the intent, that, when they came up, they might shew their children the same.* (Psal. lxxviii. 5—7. Deut. iv. 9. vi. 7.) But this revelation was not designed to be confined to that people only; God by their means, and through their hands, intended to give to other nations the knowledge of his laws: *To them pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.* (Rom. ix. 4.) But the lively oracles which they received were likewise to be delivered to others, and they were the appointed channels; an appointment, which this author here dwells upon and magnifies as a mark of particular distinction and favour to his chosen. And indeed from them other nations did receive the uncorrupt light of the law, and the excellent and sacred records of ancient times, and the several prophecies of those holy men, whom God raised up and inspired, from time to time, among them: by their means, in fact, we now converse with those great persons, Moses, David, Solomon, and others, and understand and reap the fruits of their wisdom and piety, by the writings conveyed to us from them, through the providence of God; for the Jews, by their numberless dispersions, were undesignedly made a kind of preachers of righteousness to as many as they lived

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amongst, and conversed with. Judea was from the beginning, as is evident from the Jewish history, the fountain-head of the true religion; Jerusalem, in particular, was the seat of Melchisedec, the high-priest of the living God in the days of Abraham; the Almighty had his court and dwelling in Sion, (Psal. lxxvi. 1.) and in David's time was *known in her palaces as a sure refuge.* (Psal. xlviii. 2.) From hence he sent out his ambassadors the prophets, to publish his laws and decrees to the world, which learned men have observed could be done with more ease and speedier conveyance from hence, than from any other region of the habitable world. And from hence accordingly, as from a central point, the light of the law first, and the gospel afterward, shone out to the surrounding nations. (Life of King David, vol. ii. p. 92.)

Ver. 5. *And when they had determined to slay the babes of the saints, one child being cast forth, and saved to reprove them, thou tookedst away the multitude of their children, and destroyedst them altogether in a mighty water.*] Βουλευσαμένους δ' αὐτοὺς τὰ τῶν ὁσίων ἀποκτεῖναι νήπια, καὶ ἑνὸς ἐκτεθέντος τέκνου, καὶ σωζέντος, εἰς ἔλεγχον τὸ αὐτῶν ἀφείλου πλῆθος τέκνων. This was particularly true of Moses, who, as he was cast into the river, with the rest of the Hebrew children, so was he saved from thence to be the instrument, by God's appointment, to drown the Egyptians in the Red Sea, by stretching forth his hand over it. The wisdom and providence of God are herein very observable, for the very exposing of Moses was the first step to his greatness, and the means of his being introduced into Pharaoh's own palace. And God saved him from perishing in the river, to make him the instrument of drowning the son of that prince, who had designed him the like fate, and with him were overwhelmed the chiefest of his subjects, whom he had obliged occasionally to execute his inhuman and cruel commands. The fathers upon this occasion observe, that Moses, who was the minister of the old law, as Jesus Christ of the new, was a lively figure of him from his very birth, both of them, through the Divine protection, being preserved from a massacre, which involved so many infants. The present reading of the Greek text here seems faulty in all the copies, and probably may, by a small alteration, be thus restored: Βουλευσαμένους δ' αὐτοὺς τὰ τῶν ὁσίων ἀποκτεῖναι νήπια, δι' ἑνὸς ἐκτεθέντος τέκνου, καὶ σωθέντος εἰς ἔλεγχον, τὸ αὐτῶν ἀφείλου πλῆθος τέκνων. I am encouraged to offer this emendation from the authority of the oriental versions; the Arabic reads, *Per unum expositum puerulum, et ad redarguitionem eorum servatum, perdidisti sine clementia multitudinem filiorum eorum;* and the Syriac, *Sed filius unus sanctus, qui ad eos castigandos, et multitudinem filiorum eorum exterminandam asservatus est, omnes simul in aquis immanibus perdidit.* The Geneva version renders in like manner, *By one child that was cast out and preserved to reprove them, thou hast taken away the multitude of their children;* and the Doway Bible is to the same effect.

Ver. 6. *Of that night were our fathers certified, that assuredly knowing unto what oaths they had given credence, they might afterward be of good cheer.*] God had foretold their bondage in Egypt, and promised their forefathers that he would be with them, and bring them up thence, and put them in possession of the land of Canaan. This oath or promise was made to Abraham: *Know,* says God to him in a vision, *that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge, i. e.* pour out my judgments upon, *and afterward shall they come out with great substance.* (Gen. xv. 13.) This future condition of his seed in both these respects, was represented to him at the same time by a *smoking furnace,* which signified the Israelites' misery in the iron furnace of Egypt, as it is called, Jer. xi. 4. and by a *burning lamp,* or a light shining out of darkness, which denoted their deliverance from thence. (Gen. xv. 17.) Moses had likewise acquainted them with the particular time of their going out of Egypt, and that it should be immediately preceded with the death of all the first-born of the Egyptians. (Exod. xi. 4, 5. xii. 2.) Our author adds, that God revealed this great event to his people, that they might depend upon its certainty, and when they saw the actual fulfilling of this promise, and the first-born destroyed in the manner, and at the time, he had foretold, they might have the stronger faith, and a more firm reliance upon his word. Ἐπευθυμήσωσι, *be of good cheer,* according to our translators; but it might more properly be rendered, *be of good confidence,* or *more assured,* both at the present and hereafter; for that night confirmed the truth of God's promises, and encouraged them to hope and trust in God the more for the future. And thus the phrase is used in many parts of the gospel, particularly Matt. ix. 2. where the Vulgate reads, *confide, fili,* and so do Beza and Junius in loc. (See also xiv. 27. Mark vi. 50. John xvi. 33.)

Ver. 7. *So of thy people was accepted both the salvation of the righteous, and destruction of the enemies.*] This is obscurely expressed. I take the sense to be, "That the Israelites, called here, and in many places of this book, *the righteous,* received a very signal deliverance at the same time that they saw the destruction of the Egyptians, or the *wicked,*" as the Vulgate renders. The same night, which was the beginning or commencement of the freedom and happiness of the Hebrews, brought upon the Egyptians the most terrible of all the plagues they had been afflicted with; the first saw themselves at liberty on a sudden, and the latter had all their hopes blasted by the surprising death of all their first-born in the same instant.

Ver. 8. *For wherewith thou didst punish our adversaries, by the same thou didst glorify us whom thou hadst called.*] Ὧι γὰρ ἐτιμωρήσω τοὺς ὑπεναντίους, τούτῳ ἡμᾶς προσκαλεσάμενος ἐδόξασας. Some copies read ὡς, and change τούτῳ into οὕτως to answer it. And so the Vulgate renders, *Sicut enim læsisti adversarios, sic et nos provocans magnificasti.* The Arabic and the old English versions read in like manner; and so does Junius and St. Jerome's Bible. If we retain ᾧ and τούτῳ in the sense of our translators, then the meaning is, that by the death of their first-born thou didst punish our enemies, and by a freedom from the same destruction thou didst glorify thy chosen; for God shewed his love to them, and the very great regard he had for them, in that terrible vengeance which he took of their oppressors, in order to their final release: for we may understand προσκαλεσάμενος, says Calmet, to mean *recall;* that God, by this decisive act of vengeance, recalled or fetched back his people to him, as a father does a son, whom he had long banished from him at a great distance. (Com. in loc. See note on xi. 26.) But we may also by ᾧ and τούτῳ here not only understand the fact itself, but also the per-

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son by whom that great event was brought to pass; thus, "For by whom thou didst punish our adversaries, by the same person, passing us over, thou didst glorify us." This interpretation is countenanced by the Chaldee paraphrase on Exod. xii. 42. "Apparuit Sermo Domini in media nocte contra Ægyptios, dextra ejus interficiebat primogenitos Ægyptiorum, et dextra ejus liberabat primogenitos Israelitarum, ad stabiliendum quod dicit scriptura, Filius meus primogenitus sunt Israelitæ." This difference or separation between his own people and the Egyptians, was visible in all the other plagues, but here it was most remarkably displayed. And the like gracious distinction, we may observe almost every where in Scripture, with respect to the righteous and wicked, whether we consider whole nations or particular persons. Thus God preserved righteous Noah, when the old world perished by water; nor was Lot less distinguished and favoured, when Sodom with the neighbouring cities were destroyed by fire.

Ver. 9. *For the righteous children of good men did sacrifice secretly.*] *i. e.* The children of Israel slew the paschal lamb at the time and in the manner God appointed them, called the *sacrifice of the Lord's passover*, Exod. xii. 27. and frequently by the name of *sacrifice* only, Exod. xxiii. 18. xxxiv. 25. It appears to have been properly a sacrifice by the rites belonging to it; for in it there was a shedding of blood, and a sprinkling of it by the priests. (2 Chron. xxx. 15, 16. xxxv. 11. 13.) And this the writer to the Hebrews, speaking of Moses, makes mention of, and assigns the original reason for; *By faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them,* (xi. 28.) This lamb at that time the Israelites sacrificed secretly, or within their own houses, marking the posts of their doors with the blood of the victim, that the destroying angel might not enter them to slay their first-born, as he had done in the houses of the Egyptians; and engaged to observe this rite, throughout their generations, of sacrificing the paschal lamb in memory of their deliverance. Which mystical repast, says Calmet, was a symbol of their covenant with God, and likewise of a strict union among themselves.

And with one consent made a holy law, that the saints should be like partakers of the same good and evil.] *i. e.* At the same time that they sacrificed the passover, they unanimously made a holy agreement, and entered into covenant, confirmed by the sacrifice, to have but one common interest, that they would share alike the good and the bad which should happen to them; that as they went out of Egypt with one willing mind, so they would equally partake in the common dangers in their march towards the holy land, and afterward divide the promised inheritance fairly and impartially among them. The Vulgate accordingly reads, *Justitiæ legem in concordia disposuerunt, similiter et bona et mala recepturos.*

The fathers now singing out the songs of praise.] There are two senses of this passage, according to the different reading of the Greek. The Vatican copy has πατέρων ἤδη προαναμελπόντων αἴνους, which is followed by our version; *i. e.* the fathers now sang songs of praise and thanksgiving to God for their deliverance, as if accomplished. According to Jansenius, προαναμελπόντων means, That the fathers began the chorus, and the rest followed or joined in it. The Alexand. MS. and Complut. edition read, πατέρων ἤδη προαναμέλποντες αἴνους, which the Vulgate and Junius follow; *i. e.* the children of Israel sang the praises, or hymns, in honour of their great forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom their deliverance from bondage was revealed, and the promise of the land of Canaan was made, which they now looked upon themselves as almost in possession of; and being confident of success, and a speedy departure from Egypt, they now, even beforehand, sang hymns and songs of triumph, as if they were actually delivered from it. And thus Calmet, "Ils chantoient deja par avance ces cantiques. Ils les chantoient comme etant deja delivrez de la servitude d'Egypte." (Com. in loc.) In aftertimes, the Jews, at the celebration of the Passover, sang the hundred and thirteenth Psalm, with the five next following, which the Hebrews call by the name of *Hallel*, or *the hymn*, which they recited at the table, in the paschal night, when they had eaten the lamb, concluding always with hallelujah. Maimonides says the following doxology was never omitted,—"Therefore are we bound to confess, to praise, to laud, to celebrate, to glorify, to honour, to extol, to magnify, and to ascribe victory unto him, that did unto our fathers and unto us all these signs, and brought us forth from servitude to freedom, from sorrow to joy, and from darkness to great light." (See Ainsworth on Exod. xii. 8.)

Ver. 10. *But on the other side there sounded an ill-according cry of the enemies, and a lamentable noise was carried abroad for children that were bewailed.*] *i. e.* There was a great outcry of the parents, like Rachel, weeping for their children, because they were not. How great this cry was, may be conceived from the Scriptures, comparing any very extraordinary affliction to the death of a first-born. But when all the first-born, the noblest offspring of them, were in one moment destroyed together, what comparison can equal such a grief, or what words strong enough to express it? The words here seem too faint, and the affliction would be better expressed in those vigorous mournful terms by which the LXX. express the lamentation of Esau for the loss of his blessing, ἀνεβόησε φωνὴν μεγάλην, καὶ πικρὰν σφόδρα: (Gen. xxvii. 34.) or of the Egyptians, and all the house of Joseph and his brethren, for the death of Jacob, ἐκόψαντο αὐτὸν κοπετὸν μέγαν καὶ ἰσχυρὸν σφόδρα. (Gen. l. 10.) The Chaldee paraphrase upon Exod. xii. 30. where the great cry of the Egyptians is mentioned, observes, that though Goshen was in the midst of the land of Egypt, and Pharaoh's palace at the entrance of it, yet, when Pharaoh called to Moses and Aaron upon this melancholy occasion, *Audita est ejus vox in nocte Paschatis usque ad terram Gosen: deprecabatur enim Pharao voce amara.* There is also another sense of the place given by some interpreters, "That there was a great cry of the children themselves, making lamentation." This is favoured by the Arabic, which renders, *Vox puerorum plorantium miserabilis immiscebatur;* and Junius takes it in the same sense, *Miserabilis huc illuc ferebatur vox lamentantium puerorum.* But I think the sense of our version far preferable; for as the death of the first-born was a sudden stroke of God, as they were all cut off in one moment, the cry of the children themselves seems not so probable, as that of their parents lamenting for them; which is the sense of the Greek, the Vulgate, St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, and of all the old English versions.

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Ver. 12. *So they all together had innumerable dead with one kind of death.*] Ἐν ἑνὶ ὀνόματι θανάτου. Ὄνομα is used in the same sense, xix. 18. And so *Nomen* is often to be understood in the classic writers. Thus Virgil:—

"Omnia pœnarum percurrere nomina possem."
(Æneid. vi.)

Would not the sense of our version be somewhat improved, if the rendering was, "So they all had an innumerable dead together, *i. e.* at the same time, with one kind of death?" To this sudden calamity of the Egyptians, the Chaldee paraphrase applies those words of Job xxxiv. 20. *In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away* (suddenly), *and the mighty shall be taken away without hand.* The Psalmist accordingly calls the first-born, *the chiefest of all their strength.* (Psal. cv. 36.)

Ver. 13. *For whereas they would not believe any thing by reason of their enchantments.*] Πάντα γὰρ ἀπιστοῦντες, which would be better rendered, "Though they disbelieved the rest of the miracles, and were not persuaded by all their other calamities." And thus Calmet, *Ils n'avoient point crû tous les autres prodiges, à cause de leurs magiciens.* And so the Arabic version expressly reads, *Non credentes omnibus calamitatibus quæ sibi acciderant.* And the Syriac, *His autem omnibus, propter magiam, non credentes.* The magicians Jannes and Jambres contributed much to this insensibility and disbelief of the Egyptians; for they would not acknowledge God's power manifested in their former plagues, because the magicians, by their enchantments, had imitated some of the wonders performed by Moses and Aaron: when they cast down every man his rod, they became serpents, as Aaron's rod did. (Exod. vii. 12.) With their enchantments also they brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt, as Aaron had done; (Exod. viii. 7.) and therefore, they had a specious pretext to look upon such wonders as an effect of art and magic, and not as any certain proof of the Divine omnipotence. But supposing these to be real miracles performed by the magicians, which some have thought to be ἐμπαίγματα, or *in appearance only;* yet this resemblance, in some particulars, was not sufficient to render their obstinacy excusable, because, though the enchanters could do mischief, yet it was not in their power afterward to remove and remedy it: and the plague of darkness in particular was such, that the magicians, upon account of it, were *sick themselves of fear worthy to be laughed at,* (xvii. 8.) The degrees, or rather the method of God's punishment in the several plagues of Egypt, is curious, and worth observing; first, he smote their water, then sent frogs, flies, and lice, and such other things as were grievous indeed, but not so affecting to them as the loss of their goods. 2dly, Therefore God smote their cattle, a greater plague than the former, yet not so near them as their own bodies. 3dly, Therefore God smites their bodies with painful sores and biles, very grievous and loathsome, yet he spared their lives. But now, when all the former plagues were ineffectual, he taketh away life itself; not a single life, or a number of them in particular families, but he smiteth, at once, all the first-born throughout the whole land of Egypt. We may observe (says a very learned critic) a kind method of Providence in punishing, whereby it sends some previous afflictions to warn men in time, so as to make them shun the greater evils by repentance. (Dacier's Not. on Aristot. Art of Poetry.) And then he instances in the Egyptian plagues, which he compares to Homer's account of the plague, supposed to be sent from heaven by way of punishment, and seizing first on mules and dogs, before it affected men:—

Οὐρῆας μὲν πρῶτον ἐπῴχετο, καὶ κύνας ἀργούς·
Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' αὐτοῖσι βέλος. (Iliad. i.)

On mules and dogs th' infection first began,
And last the vengeful arrows fix'd in man.

They acknowledged this people to be the sons of God.] This last plague, *viz.* the death of their first-born, at length subdued the stubbornness and hardness of their heart, and made them confess, not only the superior power of God, but that this people, in whose behalf he so signally interposed, were his sons, or chosen. The Greek reads Θεοῦ υἱὸν in the singular number, alluding, probably, to God's styling Israel *his son, even his first-born.* (Exod. iv. 22.)

Ver. 15. *Thine Almighty Word leapt down from heaven, out of* (thy) *royal throne.*] Grotius applies this description, which is very grand and magnificent, to an angel commissioned by God, for the punishment and destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians: other learned men have imagined, from the titles and attributes of the Divinity here mentioned, that God inflicted this last and most sensible plague upon the Egyptians immediately himself; for Exod. xi. 4. he says, *At midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die.* Bishop Bull, who condemns Grotius for applying these words to a created angel, says, they must necessarily be understood of a Divine person, and he assigns for his opinion the three following reasons:—1. That the Word is here called *Almighty.* 2. That it is described as having a *royal throne in heaven,* and descending from thence in dreadful majesty, commissioned by God to execute vengeance upon this occasion. 3. That its figure and appearance were so extraordinary, that, while *it stood upon earth, it touched the heavens;* denoting hereby its greatness and power in both. This Divine person he conceives to be the very Λόγος, and that the description and character are most applicable to him. (Defens. Fid. Nic. lib. i.) To the reasons produced by this learned prelate in favour of the Λόγος, we may add, that the *angel* so often spoken of in the Old Testament, both before and under the law, by the title of *Jehovah, the angel of Jehovah, the angel of God's presence, the angel of the covenant,* &c. who appeared so frequently about matters relating to the government, protection, and preservation of the church of God; unto Adam, Abraham, the patriarchs, Moses, and other holy men of old; who brought Israel out of Egypt, conducted them through the wilderness, gave them the law on Mount Sinai, and afterward resided in a wonderful manner amongst them in the tabernacle and temple, having the incommunicable name and attributes of God ascribed to him, and Divine worship and adoration paid to him,—was the ὁ παντοδύναμος Θεοῦ Λόγος, *the Almighty Word of Jehovah:* (1 Cor. x. 2. Exod. xxiii. 20. Philo de Agricult.) and so may be well supposed to be the agent in slaying the first-born, in defence and vindication of his own *pecu-*

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lium. But we need not suppose this only, there is yet a stronger evidence; the Chaldee paraphrase on Exod. xii. 29. where mention is made of the death of the first-born, expressly makes the Logos to be the agent, and renders, *Et fuit in media nocte decimi quinti, et Sermo Domini interfecit omnem primogenitum in terra Ægypti.* Lastly, there is a description not unlike this, Rev. xix. 15. And to particularize the person, it is said, ver. 13. Τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, which Mr. Mede observes to be the same as *Ipse est Verbum illud Dei.* (B. v. chap. 11.) That the Λόγος should be mentioned by this writer in terms not only of grandeur and magnificence, but divinity itself; that omnipotence and immensity should be ascribed to him, and a royal throne assigned him, probably the throne of his own glory (see Rev. iii. 21. and Mr. Mede, b. v. chap. 10. for though our English translations have *thy* throne, yet no copies of the Greek do warrant this, nor insert σῶν here, nor do the oriental or any ancient versions take notice of it): this so exalted a notion of the Logos, I say, our author probably took from the traditions at that time among the Jews, or from some hints in the Old Testament, or some authentic paraphrases of it, or from some ancient writers, the LXX. in particular, who, in many places of their version, speak of the Logos as a Divine person, and sufficiently shew their sentiments on this head.

As a fierce man of war into the midst of a land of destruction, and brought thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death.] Thus in Moses's song, the Lord, or Jehovah, is represented as *a man of war,* Exod. xv. 3. which the Vulgate translates, *quasi vir pugnator,* and the LXX. more strongly, Κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους. But the description here is more like that of the person who appeared to Joshua, in the form of a man, with a drawn sword in his hand, who called himself, *The prince or captain of the host of the Lord,* (Josh. v. 14.) but was himself a Divine person, as appears from the worship which Joshua paid him, and the title of Jehovah given to him, and was, according to the best interpreters, *the Word of the Lord,* or *the very Logos.* And thus the very learned Usher: "Jesus Dominus noster, princeps militiæ Patris sui, Jesu typico ad Jerichuntem stricto gladio apparens, promittit se populum defensurum." (Ad A. M. 2553.) The same Divine person, who conducted his people out of Egypt, and afterward their chief leader and commander, was likewise the ὁ ὀλοθρεύων τὰ πρωτοτόκα, victorious over that people by slaying their first-born. The Chaldee paraphrase on Exod. xii. 12. to express the greatness of this destruction, says, that almost an infinite number of destroying angels attended him, "Nonaginta mille myriades Angelorum perdentium." It has been objected against this interpretation, that the title of a destroying angel is an unworthy appellation of the Logos; but to this the answer is easy, *viz.* that the Divine person called *the Lord,* Gen. xix. 24. who *rained down from heaven fire and brimstone from the Lord upon Sodom and Gomorrah,* is, by Philo, the ancient fathers, and the best interpreters, understood to be the Logos, who, as he assists and succours such as are Israelites indeed, so upon his enemies, says Philo, he sends, ὄλεθρον καὶ φθορὰν ἀνίατον, *inevitable ruin and destruction.* (De Somn.) The Logos may therefore, without any imputation, be said to be the executioner of this vengeance.—The comparison of the Word of God to a sharp sword, which this writer uses occurs in Scripture, Ephes. vi. 17. Heb. iv. 12. (See also Philo de Cherub.)

And it touched the heaven, but it stood upon the earth.] The description here very much resembles that of the destroying angel, mentioned 1 Chron. xxi. 16. who, when he brought that great plague, which slew seventy thousand men, from Dan to Beer-sheba, is represented as visibly standing between the heavens and the earth, having a drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. Our author is to be understood of the same Divine person who is so magnificently described in the former verse, who, though equal with God, and partaking of the fulness of the Godhead, was his holy Father's agent in his communications with mankind, particularly with regard to the children of Israel, his *peculium;* and is expressly called *the angel of the Divine counsel,* not only as being the herald and publisher of his will upon earth, but as minister to execute his orders, sometimes to preserve good men or a chosen nation, and sometimes to inflict destruction upon a wicked people, and fills both heaven and earth with his immense presence. Upon all these accounts he may, with great propriety, be said *to touch the heaven, and stand upon the earth.* How much more properly and beautifully is this expression applied to the Logos, than to the person of Fame, as Virgil has used it?

"Parva metu primò, mox sese attollit in auras,
Ingrediturque solo, et caput inter nubila condit."
(Æn. lib. iv.)

Or to Discord, as Homer has applied it?

"Discord! dire sister of the slaughtering power,
Small at her birth, but rising ev'ry hour,
While scarce the skies her horrid head can bound
She stalks in earth, and shakes the world around."
(Pope's Hom. b. iv. 902.)

This last description, however it may be extolled by the critics as a just allegory, and a noble instance of the sublime, and as such is quoted and commended by Longinus, yet can be regarded only as an idea, the creature of a fine fancy, and not as a real person, like that in the description before us, who has not only a being in, but an almighty power over, nature. The expression of touching heaven, and yet standing upon the earth, when applied to the Logos, seems equivalent to that which God uses of himself, *Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool.* (Isa. lxvi. 1.) To which agrees that description of Orpheus, speaking of the Deity,

——Αὐτὸς δ' αὖθις ἐπ' οὐρανὸν ἐστήρικται
Χρυσέῳ ἐνὶ θρόνῳ, γαίῃ θ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶ βέβηκεν.

Ver. 17. *Then suddenly visions of horrible dreams troubled them sore.*] *Visions of horrible dreams* is an unusual expression, and scarce to be justified. The Greek is φαντασίαι ὀνείρων, i. e. *visions* or *apparitions in dreams.* And thus the Arabic understands it, *sæva somniorum spectra exagitarunt eos,* or *visions and horrible dreams,* which is Calmet's sense: *Ils furent troublez par des songes, et des visions horribles.* The Scripture makes no mention of these terrible dreams and visions preceding the destruction of the first-born. It may not improperly be asked, to whom these dreams and visions happened, whether the parents or

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the first-born, and for what end or design?—To suppose them sent to the first-born themselves, to advertise them of the reason of their deaths, would be of little satisfaction, and less use; for what effect could such a notice have upon persons immediately to die, especially such of the first-born as, through their infancy and tender age, could not have transgressed and given offence, and were incapable of shewing any repentance? Such a scene indeed, laid open to the parents, of the sad approaching fate of all their first-born, their dearest pledges, and growing hopes, and as inflicted upon them for their obstinacy and wickedness, must greatly add to their misery, as it affected them so nearly, and might be of future service to the parents to prevent their sinning against God, in the like daring manner. But did not Moses give them notice and warning of this imminent calamity very expressly? (Exod. xi. 45.) And was not this more to be depended upon than uncertain dreams and airy visions? This account seems to me to be grounded upon some rabbinical tradition, or to be a designed exaggeration, such as we meet with in profane story, where instances of dreadful apparitions, warning persons of some grievous approaching misfortune, are not uncommon. Thus, before the destruction of Troy, Hector, according to the poet, appears to Æneas:

"In somnis ecce ante oculos mœstissimus Hector
Visus adesse mihi, largosque effundere fletus;
Heu fuge, nate Deâ, teque his, ait, eripe flammis:
Hostis habet muros." (Æn. lib. ii.)

Ver. 18. *And one thrown here and another there half dead, shewed the cause of his death.*] This, at first sight, seems a little inconsistent, as our translators have rendered it. Is not sudden death always understood to be an utter deprivation of all sense and life? Can they then who are represented (ver. 12.) as destroyed in one moment suddenly, be with propriety said to be *cast here and there half dead*, suffering as it were a lingering death? or can a person *half dead* (ἡμίθνητος) shew the cause why he died? I once therefore thought the true reading here to be ὁμόθνητος, *i. e.* that one thrown here and another there (ὁμόθνητος) destroyed at the same time, and in the same manner, declared the cause of this common death and general calamity, *viz.* that it was the just judgment of God who inflicted it, and not the power of evil angels, nor the force of magic, nor any thing natural that befel them; which affords a good sense, and very applicable to so sudden a stroke, which destroyed such numbers in an instant. But as the sense of this place may seem confined to that of the immediate context, and the preceding and following verses refer both to dreams and apparitions, the meaning of this passage is generally taken to be, that the first-born of the Egyptians were apprised of their imminent danger, and acquainted with the true cause of it, by apparitions and notices given them in dreams; and being half dead through the apprehension of it, declared to their relations and friends the true reason upon which they should suffer, and why all of them were at once sentenced to die. According to this interpretation, Junius renders very properly ἔθνησκεν by *moreretur*, which makes the sense much clearer; and the Syriac and Arabic both express it by the same mood.

Ver. 20. *Yea, the tasting of death touched the righteous also, and there was a destruction of the multitude in the wilderness, but the wrath endured not long.*] From the destruction of the first-born, the author takes occasion to mention the overthrow of the Israelites in the wilderness; and, by a comparison of God's dealing with the Egyptians and his own people, it appears that the former were punished without mercy, the sentence of death against their first-born being executed without any mitigation, reserve, or exception; but Aaron no sooner appears in favour of the offending Israelites, but, through his intercession, the plague ceases, and the wrath of God is appeased. The expressions used by this writer, to describe their destruction, seem too mild and favourable for so great an overthrow. The Scripture history informs us, that no less than fourteen thousand and seven hundred were slain by the plague inflicted on them for murmuring against Moses and Aaron, (Numb. xvi. 49.) when *the dead thus fell down by heaps one upon another*, as it follows, ver. 23. Death may rather be said to have made havoc of the Israelites, but it is described here as a small calamity, and an inconsiderable loss, in comparison of what happened to the Egyptians. It is observable, that θραῦσις, by which this destruction is expressed, both here and in the book of Numbers, signifies likewise a *tumult* or *commotion;* and so it includes, elegantly, the cause and the effect, the sin and its punishment.

Ver. 21. *For then the blameless man made haste, and stood forth to defend them, and bringing the shield of his proper ministry, even prayer, and the propitiation of incense, set himself against the wrath, and so brought the calamity to an end.*] That is, in the Scripture language, Aaron interceded, and put on incense, and made an atonement for the people, and the wrath of God was instantly turned away; whereby he shewed the great power of the ministerial function with God. And thus St. Jerome, "Currens ira Dei sacerdotii voce prohibebatur," i. e. *The wrath of God coming, as it were, full speed upon them, was stopped by the voice and power of the priesthood.* It is worth observing, that Aaron, who undertakes to intercede for the people, is here described by the great character of *the blameless man:* upon which the fathers remark, that such, and so blameless, ought all those priests of God to be, who stand forth to defend others by their prayers and ministry, and would do true service to their people, and render their labours effectual to the great purpose of reconciliation. St. Gregory, in particular, thus happily enforces a blameless conduct in such as minister about holy things: "If a man is ashamed to present himself before an equal for pardon, whom he has offended, and with difficulty obtains forgiveness, how shall one that is conscious of his own bad life, and must conclude the God of purity and holiness to be his enemy on that account, dare to take upon himself the high dignity of an intercessor for others? How shall he, to any purpose, implore God's mercy for his brethren, who stands in so much need of it himself, and has reason to doubt of his own acceptance?" (Greg. Pastor. par. i. cap. 11.)

Ver. 22. *So he overcame the destroyer, not with strength of body, nor force of arms, but with a word subdued he him that punished.*] As the blood of the paschal lamb stayed the angel which destroyed the Egyptians from touching the Israelites, (Exod. xii. 23. Heb. xi. 28.) so the smoke of Aaron's incense (figuring the mediation of Christ) stayed the plague here from the surviving Israelites. The Lord, through the prevalence of his intercession, *repented him of*

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the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough, stay now thy hand. (2 Sam. xxiv. 16.) The Greek text of this passage of our author is different according to the copies; the Vatican edit. and Alexand. MS. read ἐνίκησε τὸν ὄχλον· and so the Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic, render; *i. e.* he overcame the plague or trouble, *ce trouble* (says Calmet), occasioned by their murmuring; for so ὄχλος sometimes signifies, as well as *multitude*, in which last sense it is improperly taken by the old English versions, for the contest was not with the multitude, but with the destroyer. The Complut. edit. has ἐνίκησε τὸν ὀλοθρεύοντα, which our translators manifestly follow here. The sense of the passage in either reading is, that Aaron stopped the plague, or the angel of death, by *the word;* and so the old versions, with more propriety, render; *i. e.* by the prayer which he so powerfully addressed to God; "Aaron le surmounta (says Calmet) par la force de la priere qu'il adressa à Dieu;" and by reminding him of the promises which he had made to their forefathers, the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the covenant which he had entered into, and the oath which he had sworn unto them; which last circumstance is not mentioned in the books of Moses, as an argument or motive urged by Aaron. There seems great strength and energy in the original words, λόγῳ τὸν κολάζοντα ὑπέταξεν· i. e. *By the power of prayer he brought under, or into subjection, the destroyer himself; and, as it were, forced or constrained him to relent.* This efficacy and almost uncontrollable power of prayer, is finely displayed upon another instance of disobedience, which provoked God's displeasure against the Israelites; they had solemnly promised God not to worship any image, as he had expressly forbidden them by Moses, and immediately after, as if in defiance of his vengeance, they made the molten calf, and sacrificed to it as their great deliverer out of Egypt: upon which God says to Moses, *Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them:* (Exod. xxxii. 10.) intimating, as if he could do nothing against them, that his almighty power was restrained, so long as Moses prayed and interceded for them.

Ver. 23. *For when the dead were now fallen down by heaps one upon another, standing between, he stayed the wrath, and parted the way to the living.*] The latter part of this verse is somewhat obscurely expressed; the sense is, he stood between the dead and the living, and prayed for the people (for so St. Jerome's Bible, as it is called, adds), and stopped the way of the destroyer to them that remained; the Geneva Bible renders, *He stood in the midst, and cut off the wrath, and parted it from coming to the living.* See Numb. xvi. 48. where the Chaldee paraphrase mentions Aaron standing praying in the midst, and with his censer making a separation: "Stetit Aharon in oratione in medio, et fecit interstitium cum thuribulo inter mortuos et inter vivos."

Ver. 24. *For in the long garment was the whole world.*] Ἐπὶ γὰρ ποδήρους ἐνδύματος ἦν ὅλος ὁ κόσμος· *In veste poderi quam habebat,* says St. Jerome's Bible; *i. e.* "Upon the long robe or garment which Aaron had on," not *in it,* as our version has it, was a representation of the whole world; for upon the skirts of the high-priest's robe, and on his girdle, was a variety of peculiar colours, as blue, purple, scarlet, and white, by which four, according to Josephus, were represented the four elements; for by the scarlet, the fire was represented; by the white linen, the earth; by the blue, the air; and by the purple, the water or sea. St. Jerome hath the very same conceit: "Pontifex Dei creaturarum omnium typum portans in vestibus suis:" (Epist. ad Fabiol.) which he borrowed probably from Josephus, (Ant. lib. iii. cap. 7.) or from Philo, who says, Ὅλη μὲν δὴ γέγονεν ἀπεικόνισμα, καὶ μίμημα τοῦ κόσμου, τὰ δὲ μέρη, τῶν καθ' ἕκαστον μερῶν. (De Mose, lib. iii. and in many other places he has the same thought, de Profug. de Somniis.) Clemens Alexandrinus expresses the sense of our author still nearer. Τοῦ δ' Ἀρχιερέως ὁ ποδήρης κόσμου ἐστὶν αἰσθητοῦ σύμβολον. (Strom. 5. see also Ambr. de fug. sæc. cap. 3.) It would be tedious to mention the many rabbinical conceits, supposed to be mystically implied in this imagery of the high-priest's robe. This is a very remarkable instance of the allegorical interpretation, which chiefly was in vogue from the time of the Septuagint version, to that of Aquila, for near four centuries. (See Mangey's Pref. vol. i.) Philo abounds in expositions of this sort: nor is it any wonder, that our author, who was most probably an Alexandrian Jew, should affect the same: instances of it are frequent in the writings of Barnabas, Hermas, and others of the apostolical writers. And we have a very remarkable one in St. Paul's Epistles: Τὸ γὰρ Ἄγαρ Σινᾶ ὄρος, κ. τ. λ. (Gal. iv. 24, 25.) But there is another interpretation of this passage of our author, which is not so far fetched, or mystical, as the former; *viz.* that upon the long garment, or high-priest's robe, were all sorts of ornaments, for so κόσμος very frequently signifies, as well as *the world.* And some have thought this sense of the word to be more agreeable to the place, and to agree better with the context, where some of the ornaments are mentioned, particularly the resplendent breast-plate. In this sense Junius understands the words, rendering, *In talari vestimento totus erat ornatus;* and thus the Geneva Bible, *In the long garment was all the ornament;* and Coverdale's version is rather more expressive, *In his long garment was all the beauty.*

And in the four rows of the stones was the glory of the fathers graven.] This is a description of the pectoral, adorned with jewels, which the high-priest wore, which were so artificially set in it, as if they were but one single stone, though really divided into four rows by little partitions of gold, and all together made a square of precious stone; the Greek accordingly expresses this by τετραστίχον λίθον in the singular number. Hereon were engraven, in Hebrew characters, the glorious names of the patriarchs, Jacob's twelve sons, and the insignia of the several tribes, according to their generations or births, called here the *fathers,* or the heads of the tribes; the names of the six elder were towards the right shoulder, and the other six towards the left. (Joseph. Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 7.) In the high-priest's breast-plate were likewise the *urim* and *thummim,* which gave answer in difficult cases; but the learned are not agreed upon the manner of consulting, or receiving the answer from thence. These two ornaments, says St. Jerome, which signify light and perfection, intimate, that in God's ministers, purity of doctrine, and holiness of life, should always be inseparable: that truth should be engraved in their very heart, and that the light within should shine forth in all that appears outwardly—not only their words, but their actions, their motions, their dress,

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should bespeak them more immediately the servants of God, and have some tendency to teach and instruct others. "Veritatem mente concipiat, et toto eam habitu resonet et ornatu, ut quicquid agit, quicquid loquitur, sit doctrina populorum." (Hieron. epist. 127. de vest. Sacerdot.)

And thy Majesty upon the diadem of his head.] Upon Aaron's triple crown or diadem, was an inscription of the sacred name of God: *Holiness unto the Lord*, being engraved in a golden plate upon the forehead. We may also, with Josephus, understand this allegorically, that the triple crown and plate of gold represented the glory and majesty of the Almighty. (In loc. cit. Ecclus. xlv. 12.)

Ver. 25. *Unto these the destroyer gave place, and was afraid of them.*] If such regard was paid, even by the destroying angel, to Aaron, the high-priest, apparelled in his sacred habit, appearing in his robe of glory, as to stop his hand and alter his purpose, we need wonder the less at what Josephus records concerning Alexander the Great; "Upon intelligence that he was drawing near towards Jerusalem, Jaddus the high-priest advanced to meet him, together with the rest of the priests in the habits of their order, with the citizens, in a venerable pomp and solemnity. When Alexander saw from a distance the order of the procession, the people all in white, with the priests at the head of them in their silken robes, and the high-priest himself in his purple stole, embroidered with gold, his mitre upon his head, and a golden plate upon his forehead, with the name of God engraven upon it, the majesty of this spectacle struck him with so reverend an awe, that he advanced to and embraced Jaddus, adored the sacred inscription, and, instead of destroying the city, he went up to the temple, and sacrificed there in form." (Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 8.)

For it was enough that they only tasted of the wrath.] We may hence see the truth of that observation, *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* (James v. 16.) For upon the intercession of Aaron, God thought fit to spare the rest of the people, and to give a specimen only of his displeasure for the instruction of such as yet remained alive. His design was by a taste only of his severity, to make his chosen sensible of the great danger of failing in their duty and obedience to him, and how dreadful and insupportable the fury of his wrath must be. But he dealt not so favourably with the Egyptians, upon whom his vengeance was poured out in full measure, when he smote all the first-born in Egypt, *the most principal and mightiest in the dwellings of Ham.* (Psal. lxxviii. 52.)

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

God's vengeance against sinners farther shewn in the final overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, whilst the Israelites, his chosen, passed over it as on dry land; upon which occasion Moses composed an ἐπινίκιον, or hymn of thanksgiving. A recapitulation of some of the former plagues, and of particular mercies vouchsafed to the Israelites in the wilderness. The author concludes the book with a fine observation,—that universal nature is obsequious to God's will; that all the elements fulfil his pleasure, and change their known qualities and powers, either to take vengeance upon his enemies, or to succour and protect his chosen.

Ver. 1. *AS for the ungodly, wrath came upon them without mercy unto the end: for he knew before what they would do.*] This, says Calmet, should be joined to the former chapter, in which the author mentions, that the wrath of God being hot against the murmuring Israelites, Aaron stopped its progress; but, says he, when God determines to take vengeance of the Egyptians, nothing is able to stop or withstand it; it admits of no intercession, nor knows any mitigation or end. After having smote them with successive plagues, and slain all their first-born in the same instant, his severity and indignation pursue them μέχρι τέλους, *to the very last, to an utter end of them*, which was accomplished by their final overthrow in the Red Sea. God knew the obstinacy and stubbornness of Pharaoh; he had pronounced of him long before, that he would not hearken unto Moses, nor regard any or all the wonders and signs done by him. (Exod. vii. 4.) He knew the evil heart of the Egyptians, and their inveterate malice against Israel, and he prepared a punishment suitable to their insidious design and wicked intention.

Ver. 2. *How that having given them leave to depart, and sent them hastily away.*] Καὶ μετὰ σπουδῆς προπέμψαντες αὐτούς· which signifies something more than *hastily:* it means, that they not only urged them to be gone, but assisted them in their departure, and furnished them with all necessaries that they wanted for their journey; which is confirmed by προπέμψαντες, which is joined to it: for so this very phrase is used by St. Paul, Ζηνᾶν καὶ Ἀπολλὼ σπουδαίως πρόπεμψον, i. e. *Help Zenas and Apollos forward on their journey with care and diligence:* and this is explained by the words which immediately follow, ἵνα μηδὲν αὐτοῖς λείπῃ, *that they may want nothing.* (Tit. iii. 13. see also Acts xv. 3.) This hasty departure of the Israelites was foretold, Exod. xi. 1. where the Hebrew reads, *When he shall send you away, he shall thrusting thrust you out from hence altogether.* The translation of the LXX. too is very strong and remarkable in this place, ἐκβαλεῖ ὑμᾶς ἐκβολῇ, where the very manner of the expression implies eagerness and impatience to perform it; but the Chaldee paraphrase upon the place is most full to the present purpose, *Expellendo expellet vos, et cum dimiserit, exitium erit ipsi;* and in the account which follows after, (Exod. xii. 33.) relating to their departure, it is said, that the *Egyptians were urgent upon the people that they might send them out of the land in haste;* where the LXX. render, with a peculiar emphasis, κατεβιάζοντο σπουδῇ ἐκβαλεῖν αὐτούς: and the learned rabbins observe, that the Hebrew word which expresses *haste*, and is used in this place upon the occasion, hath in it an extraordinary mark (noted also in the Hebrew margin) which increaseth the signification, and implies a more than ordinary care and haste in urging their departure: and no wonder that they were so importunate to have them instantly gone; for they said, as the same paraphrase continues the account, "Si moram traxerint ipsi hic horam unam, ecce omnes Ægyptii mortui," *If the Israelites continue here one hour longer, we are all dead men;* and therefore what Josephus adds is not improbable, that the Egyptians made the Hebrews very considerable presents to induce them to go the sooner away.

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Ver. 3. *For whilst they were yet mourning and making lamentation at the graves of the dead.*] This is not fully expressed, and probably wrong translated: in the original it is, ἔτι γὰρ ἐν χερσὶν ἔχοντες τὰ πένθη, καὶ προσοδυρόμενοι τάφοις νεκρῶν, which means a great deal more, as I apprehend, than bare crying and bewailing; ἐν καρδίαις, or ἐν φρεσὶν ἔχειν τὸ πένθος, may, indeed, express inward sorrow; but it seems little less than a solecism to describe such a passion of the mind by ἐν χερσὶν ἔχειν τὰ πένθη. I am inclined rather to understand and apply this phrase to the then employment of the Egyptians after the great loss of their first-born, that they determined to set forward, and pursue the Israelites, even then, when all hands were employed in making the usual necessary funeral preparations for their dead: for thus I understand ἐν χερσὶν ἔχοντες τὰ πένθη, which the Egyptians observed very strictly, and, according to Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, were not wanting in, either to the better, middle, or even the meaner sort. They mention likewise the manner of these preparations, how and at what rates they were performed, and that the whole took up a very considerable time; which is confirmed from Gen. l. 3. where the ἡμέραι τοῦ πένθους, or *the days of mourning*, as our translators there render, are said to be seventy days; which were not so many days of mere sorrow, but were the allotted days for the funeral preparations, and the performance of those previous rites and religious ceremonies to the body of Jacob deceased, which were usual and customary among the Egyptians; and Joseph, as living among them, or for other reasons, thought fit to follow on this occasion. (See Bishop Patrick in loc.) Our version therefore seems again mistaken, when it represents the Egyptians, in so short a time, making lamentations at *the graves of the dead*, just before their pursuit of the Israelites, which some make to be three days only, others six, after their general calamity. (See Usher's Annals ad An. Mund. 2513.) Herodotus expressly mentions, that till the seventy days for the funeral preparations were expired, ἐπεὰν παρέλθωσι αἱ ἑβδομήκοντα ἡμέραι, κ. τ. λ. the Egyptians did not put the body into the coffin, (lib. ii. cap. 86.) which seems confirmed from the order observed in Jacob's burying, which was after the Egyptian manner; for when the set days for the funeral preparations were fulfilled, the sacred text says, they *then* set forward, in order to bury him: the crying, therefore, or lamentation here mentioned, could not be at the graves of the first-born; for it must be much too early in point of time, according to the best accounts which are given of the Egyptian customs, on such occasions: they seem rather to be crying over the *exequiarum justa*, the preparations they were then making for their future interment, while they were getting things ready, their ointments, spices, gums, linen, and other necessaries for embalming, called ταφὴ, Gen. l. 2. and thus τάφος itself seems sometimes used. The whole passage may more properly be translated thus: *While they were busy, and all hands were employed in making the necessary funeral preparations, and were lamenting at or over the provisions making for their embalment and interment; in the midst of this work, which prescription, piety, and a love for their deceased children, had engaged them in, they set forward out of revenge to pursue the Israelites.*

They added another foolish device, and pursued them as fugitives, whom they had entreated to be gone.] *i. e.* They on a sudden changed their minds, and foolishly followed a different resolution, and pursued after the Israelites, as so many fugitives, not only because they returned not at the time expected, and the labour of so many hands was in danger to be lost; but they represented them as robbers, persons who, under the notion of borrowing, had run away with their goods, and spoiled them of their riches and substance: and thus *fugitivus* is used frequently by the old comedians; and so in St. Paul's Epistle to Philemon, where mention is made of Onesimus running away, which St. Paul artfully softens, calling it a *departing only*, it follows after, *If he have wronged thee*, &c. (ver. 18.) It was certainly the effect of a Divine infatuation, that the Egyptians should pursue after the Israelites so far, and in such a desperate manner, when they saw, or might have perceived the Red Sea open her bosom to give passage to God's chosen. A very learned writer thinks the Egyptians might reason thus: "Who knows whether all Moses's power be not confined only to the meridian of Egypt, or whether his commission may extend over Palestine and Madian? Probably, though his command was great over the wind and water, over the air and clouds, over the dust of the earth, and over all senseless and irrational creatures; yet he may have no such great command over armies or hosts of men. Upon these, and the like presumptions, they became desperately resolute to be avenged upon the Israelites for all the miseries and losses which Moses had brought upon them, especially as they knew the Israelites had no skill in arms, and had no offensive weapons with them." (Jackson's Works, tom. iii. cap. 40.) But God gave that great *leviathan* Pharaoh, for so the Psalmist expressly calls him, and his mighty army, as a prey to the promiscuous sorts of ravenous creatures which inhabit the wilderness, λαοῖς τοῖς Αἰθίοψι, as the LXX. express it, Psal. lxxiv. 14.

Ver. 4. *For the destiny whereof they were worthy drew them unto this end.*] Εἵλκε αὐτοὺς ἡ ἀξία ἐπὶ τοῦτο τὸ πέρας ἀνάγκη· *i. e.* a wretched stupidity and fatality possessed them, which hurried them on to this, *ad hanc rem trahebat*, says the Arabic, or to this desperate resolution, the end and conclusion of all, and which completed all their misfortunes, and made them insensible of what they had already suffered, that they might fill up the measure of the punishment designed them, which was to be in a very uncommon and exemplary manner: "For had Pharaoh and his people died of the pestilence, or other disease, when their cattle perished by the murrain, the terror of God's powerful wrath had not been so visible to all the world, as it was in the overthrowing the whole strength of Egypt at once, which had taken arms, and set themselves in battle against him: now the stronger the infatuation, and the more ignominious and general this destruction of Pharaoh and his mighty host was, the more was his glorious power manifested, and the brighter did the riches of his goodness shine towards his favourite Israelites, whom no secondary means could have affected so much, as the perpetual memory of this great victory." (Jackson in loc. cit.) There is an expression like this of our author's in Josephus, who, describing the calamities of his countrymen, under Vespasian, says, πεπήρωντο ὑπὸ τοῦ χρεὼς ὃ τῇ τε πόλει καὶ αὐτοῖς ἤδη παρῆν· *that they were blinded by that destiny*

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or fate which hung over them and the city: and the same infatuation was upon this people in order to their captivity in Babylon, and the destruction of their city and temple by the Chaldeans: and many other examples there are in every age of the world of such judicial infatuations, as betrayed particular persons, or whole nations, into that ruin and destruction which God justly decreed for them. So true is that observation, "Quos Jupiter vult perdere, dementat prius," that *God first infatuates those whom he intends to destroy.*

Ver. 5. *That thy people might pass a wonderful way.*] It was likewise through the permission of God that the Israelites were pursued by the Egyptians, that he might shew his power and mercy to them in their great deliverance; for the Israelites were shut up into so narrow a compass by their pursuers, between impassable mountains and the Red Sea, that it was impossible for them to have escaped: there was no thought of flying; and as they had no arms, they could not fight: and if they continued where they were, they must inevitably have been starved. In this strait and danger, Moses, by God's command, strikes the sea with his rod, and opens a way through the water for the Israelites' passage and escape, called here ὁδοιπορία παράδοξος, *a surprising* or *incredible march.* (See Joseph. Ant. lib. ii. cap. 15.)

But they might find a strange death.] The Egyptians, when they saw the Israelites marching forward in the sea, without any inconvenience or impediment, made no doubt but the same way was equally safe for them: they did not apprehend that Divine justice had opened this way at the same time for the preservation of his chosen, and the destruction of their oppressors. Upon viewing, therefore, the safe passage of the Israelites, and their successful progress, they advanced into the sea with the more eagerness, which returned upon them with great violence, and destroyed the whole army, that not a messenger was left to carry the tidings. Josephus computes the number of the Egyptians that perished in the Red Sea, to be fifty thousand horsemen, and two hundred thousand foot, and six hundred chariots. (Ant. lib. ii. cap. 15.) That such an infinite number of persons should perish at the same time, by the return of the mighty waters, may well be called ξένος θάνατος, *a new* and *an unusual kind of death,* never before heard of, but at the universal deluge; and the judgment of God was more visible in it, upon account of the far greater number that were destroyed, than when the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up Korah and his rebellious company, which the LXX. call φάσμα, *an unusual sight,* and *a very surprising accident.* God vouchsafed the like favour to the Israelites in the days of Joshua, when the waters of Jordan being cut off, and standing upon a heap, the children of Israel passed over it on dry ground. (Josh. iii. 17.)

Ver. 6. *For the whole creature in his proper kind was fashioned again anew.*] Ὅλη γὰρ ἡ κτίσις ἐν ἰδίῳ γένει πάλιν ἄνωθεν διετυποῦτο· *i. e.* by a supernatural power from on high. See the like use of ἄνωθεν, Luke i. 3. John iii. 31. James i. 17. iii. 17. in all which places it is used in the sense of οὐρανόθεν. Junius renders, *Tota creatura in suo genere de integro superne reformabatur;* and the Syriac and Arabic interpreters both express ἄνωθεν by *superne:* ours, and the old English versions, follow the Vulgate. The expression of *fashioning the creature again anew,* very much resembles the mode of the Hebrew language; for where mention is made in Scripture of the Lord's making a new thing, that is, altering the course of nature by some miracle, in the Hebrew it is expressed by, *the Lord creating a creature.* (See particularly Numb. xvi. 30.) The sense of the passage here is, that the elements were so altered in their operations, and diversified in their effects, through the power of God, that there seemed to be, as it were, a new creation, for there was nothing but miracle, either when God would punish his enemies, or protect his chosen: or there may be another sense of this place (says Calmet), "that the creatures seemed to return to their first and primogenial state, in which they were at the beginning of the creation; matter again appeared indifferent to all sorts of forms, so obedient was it to follow and execute all the orders of its Maker; the elements, in particular, were not any more what they were before, or in times past, but they seemed, as at the beginning, to have assumed a new form, so singular and extraordinary was their power." (Com. in loc.) Which I apprehend to be the sense of the Vulgate, though obscurely expressed.

Ver. 7. (As namely) *a cloud shadowing the camp.*] Τῇ τὴν παρεμβολὴν σκιαζούσῃ νεφέλῃ, according to the Alexand. MS. *i. e.* the Israelites were kept unhurt by the cloud shadowing the camp; which seems far preferable to the Vatican reading. There were three several uses of the cloud that attended the Israelites:—1. To guide them in their journeys; and this it did as a pillar going before them. 2. To preserve them from the heat of the sun in the wilderness; and then it was spread out like a covering, (Psal. cv. 38.) and was a cloud shadowing the camp in this sense. 3. It served to defend them from their enemies, that they might not be able to assault them; and so it stood between the host of Israel and that of the Egyptians, and was a cloud of darkness to the latter, hindering them from any approach to the Israelites in their pursuit after them. (Exod. xiv. 20.) This last sense seems most proper to this place. I have before observed (see note on x. 17.) that this miracle has been greatly misrepresented by some modern free-thinkers, as if there was not any real cloud, but only an occasional fire made by the Israelites, for a blind to their enemies, and to lead them into a mistake: but not only this writer, and the son of Sirach, Ecclus. xxiv. 3, 4. but the inspired penmen, make this cloud to be supernatural, the work of the Divinity itself. (Numb. xiv. 14. Psal. lxxviii. 14. xcix. 7. cv. 39.) Philo in particular, who speaks the sense of the Jewish synagogue and Alexandrian schools, speaks thus of the *cloudy pillar* and the Israelites' deliverance: "God does not succour or save in any such sort as man; it is peculiar to him to interpose his omnipotence where all human means fail." And accordingly he makes this whole matter miraculous, conducted by an invisible angel, and the cloud so thick and extensive, as even to cover the face of heaven. (De Vita Mosis.) From this extraordinary and supernatural cloud we may derive, probably, that part of poetical machinery of the heathen deities appearing in or with a cloud, so frequent to be met with in profane writings.

And where water stood before, dry land appeared; and out of the Red Sea, a way without impediment; and out of the violent stream, a green field.] It would be more pro-

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perly rendered, *In the Red Sea, or through it, was there a way made, without any danger or impediment.* And thus the Psalmist, *He led them through the deep, as through the wilderness;* ὡδήγησεν αὐτοὺς ἐν ἀβύσσῳ, ὡς ἐν ἐρήμῳ, according to the LXX. (Psal. cvi. 9.) and the Syriac renders, in like manner, *Aperta est in Mari Rubro via expedita,* and so do the old English versions. But, according to this writer, God not only made a passage for his people in or through the Red Sea, by gathering the waters thereof together into heaps, whereby the dry land appeared as in the beginning, when the earth came from the bosom of the waters, (Gen. i. 9.) but he adorned their way by a beautiful appearance of herbs and flowers. Some have represented this as a real description of the bottom of the Red Sea; but it seems rather to be a conceit founded upon some rabbinical tradition, or an hyperbole and exaggeration, to express the happy success of the Israelites, and the easiness of their passage; for there is no foundation any where in Scripture, for such a notion, nor in any history of good authority. Pliny indeed mentions, that the Red Sea was in many places interspersed with trees, and some of them bearing fruit, and had the appearance of a floating wood, "Rubrum mare, et totus Orientis oceanus refertus est sylvis." (Lib. xiii. cap. 25.) But this, if true, would rather hinder and obstruct the Israelites' passage, than any ways contribute to forward it. It is remarkable, that Josephus, when he describes this very surprising and extraordinary march of his countrymen through the Red Sea, extenuates the miracle undesignedly by the very comparison which he brings to illustrate it, and lessens the wonder of the fact, while he would accommodate it to the heathen's faith; he was afraid lest the gentiles should scruple to believe, that the unruly waves of the sea gave back at the shaking of a rod, or the voice of a man; and therefore, to make this the more easily believed, he intimates very injudiciously, that this passage of the Israelites was like that of Alexander the Great and his companions, through the Pamphylian sea: "Whether (says he) the thing was done by God's extraordinary will and appointment, or by the course of nature, no man ought so to wonder, as if it were a thing unheard of, that the sea should make way for the men of those old and innocent times, when but the other day, as it were, the Pamphylian ocean gave way to Alexander and his followers, rather than any thing should hinder the design which God had purposed to put a period to the kingdom of Persia." (Antiq. lib. ii. cap. 16.) But that this passage of Alexander and his companions ought not to be compared, much less equalled, with this of the Israelites through the Red Sea, appears from Strabo, who acquaints us, that where Alexander and his men passed over, there was a narrow passage upon the shore, which, at a low ebb is so dry, or the waters however so low, that they may be passed over on foot. (Lib. xiv. and Plut. in Vit. Alexand.) But there is no ground to suppose any reflux of the waters, or narrow passage of the Red Sea to help the Israelites over.

Ver. 9. *For they went at large like horses.*] Ὡς γὰρ ἵπποι ἐνεμήθησαν· which is the reading of the Vatican copy, and of the Alexand. MS. The generality of commentators understand this of the Israelites exulting for the great plenty of manna which God vouchsafed them in the wilderness, and that by it they grew wanton, like horses high fed. Others confine the sense to the joy expressed by them for their unexpected deliverance, sporting themselves, χλοηφόρῳ πεδίῳ, (ver. 7.) like horses at full liberty. Badwell prefers ἐχρεμέτισαν, *hinniebant,* which, he says, is the reading of the most correct copies, and with him agree Vatablus and the Geneva version; *i. e.* That the Israelites neighed, rejoiced, and wantoned, like horses coming to a green fresh pasture, after having been long kept up and confined in the stable. This simile is beautifully expressed by Homer in the following lines:—

Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις στατὸς ἵππος, ἀκοστήσας ἐπὶ φάτνῃ,
Δεσμὸν ἀπορρήξας, θείει πεδίοιο κροαίνων,
Εἰωθὼς λούεσθαι εὐρρεῖος ποταμοῖο,
Κυδιόων· ὑψοῦ δὲ κάρη ἔχει, ἀμφὶ δὲ χαῖται
Ὤμοις ἀΐσσονται· ὁ δ' ἀγλαΐῃφι πεποιθώς,
Ῥίμφα ἑ γοῦνα φέρει μετά τ' ἤθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων.
(Il. vi. 506.)

Which beautiful comparison Virgil has happily imitated:—

"Qualis ubi abruptis fugit præsepia vinclis
Tandem liber equus, campoque potitus aperto,
Aut ille in pastus armentaque tendit equarum,
Aut assuetus aquæ perfundi flumine noto
Emicat, arrectisque fremit cervicibus altè
Luxurians: luduntque jubæ per colla, per armos."
(Æn. lib. xi.)

There is the same simile, and upon the very same occasion, Isa. lxiii. 12, 13. where God is described as conducting the Israelites by the right hand of Moses: *With his glorious arm dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name, leading them through the deep as a horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble.* (See Habak. iii. 15.)

And skipped like lambs.] The Israelites are frequently represented in Scripture as a flock, under the conduct of their shepherd Moses: they are so described, Isa. lxiii. 9. 11. Psal. lxxvii. 20. lxxviii. 52. Σκιρτᾷν, by which the joy of the Israelites is expressed, properly belongs to beasts, and is here, by an elegant metaphor, applied to persons. (See Mal. iv. 2. in the LXX. Luke vi. 23.) And in the same manner it is used by Euripides. It was thus David expressed his joy before the ark, by bounding and springing from the ground by the most sprightly and playful motion, (2 Sam. vi. 16.) remarkable in and peculiar to the lamb and the deer: in like manner we find the passions of men frequently applied to beasts, and even inanimate things, both in sacred and profane writings.

Praising thee, O Lord, who hadst delivered them.] This blessing of their deliverance from the dangers of the Red Sea, and the visible overthrow of all their pursuers in it, was so unexpected and acceptable, that the Israelites spent that whole night in hymns and thanksgivings to God. Moses, in particular, composed a song, Exod. xv. which many learned men suppose to be in hexameter verse, (Joseph. Antiq. lib. ii. cap. ult. Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. lib. xi. cap. 3.) to the honour of God upon this joyful occasion, and in memory of their great escape from the violence of the waves, through his almighty power, which the waters saw, were afraid of, and retired. (Psal. lxxvii. 16.) "Refluum trepidavit æquor," as Cowley well expresses it. This

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mercy of God to the Jewish nation, and his command over the insensible and unruly element, are finely displayed in Psal. cxiv. *When Israel came out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among the strange people, Judah was his* (God's) *sanctuary, and Israel his dominion. The sea saw that,* i. e. perceived his presence, *and fled.*—At the fifth verse, the question is asked by one part of the choir, *What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest?* Τί σοί ἐστι, θάλασσα, ὅτι ἔφυγες; and the answer is very beautifully returned by the other, according to the LXX. version (for this is one of those psalms that were sung alternately), ἀπὸ προσώπου Κυρίου ἐσαλεύθη ἡ γῆ, ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἰακὼβ, (ver. 7.) Lactantius represents the Israelites as conducted through the Red Sea by an angel, or rather *the angel,* so often spoken of in the Old Testament, "in qua eductione ostendit virtutem majestatis suæ Deus. Trajecit enim populum medio Mari Rubro, præcedente Angelo, et scindente aquam, ut populus per siccum gradi possit." (Lact. de vera Sapient. lib. iv.) The same Divine person, whom Clemens Alexandrinus calls Μυστικὸς Ἄγγελος, and supposes to be the conductor of Israel out of Egypt. Virgil has a thought which very much resembles the Scripture account of this miracle, where he makes the goddess Cyrene in the beautiful episode of Aristæus, to divide the waters for his passage, and even to compel them to stand on a heap, as the Psalmist expresses it:—

"Simul alta jubet discedere latè
Flumina, quà juvenis gressus inferret; at illum
Curvata in montis faciem circumstetit unda,
Accepitque sinu vasto." (Georg. iv. 339.)

Ver. 10. *For they were yet mindful of the things that were done while they sojourned* (in the strange land).] Ἐμέμνηντο γὰρ ἔτι τῶν ἐν τῇ παροικίᾳ αὐτῶν. The words in the parentheses are added by our translators for explanation's sake, and are properly enough inserted, to confine the sense to what happened in their sojourning in Egypt. The place itself may be differently interpreted, according as we understand it of the Israelites, as on the banks of the Red Sea, immediately after their passage, or of them after their continuance in the wilderness for some considerable time. If taken in the former sense, is it any wonder that the Israelites should be yet mindful of the plagues of Egypt, which were so very lately inflicted, and some indeed but just passed, and all of them together, according to the learned Usher's account, (Ann. ad A. M. 2513.) lasted barely a month, and even according to the Jewish computation, which is the longest, not a twelvemonth? Some critics therefore understand ἔτι here, which the oriental versions wholly omit, in the sense of *moreover,* or *besides;* "That in the midst of their triumph for their present deliverance, it was an increase of their joy, when they remembered besides in how many other instances God had interposed in their favour when they were in Egypt, and the signal difference he made in the execution of his plagues, between the Egyptians and his chosen." Or it may be understood of the Israelites after their continuance for some considerable time in the wilderness; "That the sense of the many signal mercies which God had vouchsafed to them in their Egyptian bondage, was not yet obliterated; they compared the plagues inflicted on their enemies with the many blessings conferred upon themselves; how the river Nile, contrary to its nature, was troubled with foul blood; and instead of fishes, which it furnished before in great abundance, and was indeed the usual food of the inhabitants, (Numb. xi. 5.) cast forth disagreeable shoals of frogs: (Exod. viii.) that the soil of Egypt, rich and fruitful as it was, instead of cattle and creatures useful, bred venomous flies, and swarmed with noxious and destructive animals. —They remembered how, through the providence of God, and his distinguishing care over them, they were free at the same time from the general calamities; and when the earth and water both conspired to plague the Egyptians, those very elements favoured the Israelites, the former in supplying them with food, and the latter by opening a passage for them."

How the ground brought forth flies instead of cattle.] The marginal reading is, *lice.* "What is more despicable (says Philo) than a louse? and yet of such force and moment did these vermin prove, as even to extort from the Egyptians an open confession and acknowledgment that this was the finger of God, who can make the most inconsiderable creatures become terrible, when appointed to execute his vengeance." (De Vita Mosis, lib. i.) Our version here is not very accurate, or rather this writer, for the ground in reality does not bring forth flies, much less cattle; the meaning is, and the sense is more natural and just, that the ground was so disposed by God, as to be a proper *nidus* for the generation of flies, but did not afford its usual nourishment for the support and increase of cattle. This explication is favoured by Psal. civ. 14. where the Psalmist, enumerating the gracious dispensations of God's providence, says, *He bringeth forth grass for the cattle;* and immediately after he is said to bring, ἐξαγαγεῖν (the word here used), bread and wine out of the earth, for the comfort and refreshment of men; where the sense is not, that God bringeth these good creatures themselves immediately out of the earth, but makes it fruitful, and disposes it in a manner proper for the producing them.

Ver. 11. *But afterward they saw a new generation of fowls, when, being led with their appetite, they asked delicate meats.*] The meaning here is, that as the ground was so disposed as to bring forth flies, and the river frogs, for the punishment of the Egyptians in an unprecedented manner, so, to shew his favour to the Israelites, God furnished them in the wilderness with a new sort or generation of fowls for their entertainment. But we are not to imagine that the quails, which are the fowls here referred to, were at that time a species new created, or miraculous, as having never before existed: the expression is figurative, and intimates, either that these birds were in the desert, where they did not use to appear, or that they were new with respect to the Israelites, or that the manner of their appearing in such large flocks was unusual. Moses, who mentions this after a more simple manner, says only, that a wind from the Lord carried them into the wilderness, and made them fall round about the tents of the Israelites. Josephus supposes these birds to come from the Arabian Gulf, and then adds, very oddly, that they were so tired with crossing it, that they dropped down, being quite weary, into the camp of the Hebrews; (Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 1.) as if it was likely that they should be tired just at that particular spot, and could not fly farther, or stop shorter, or that

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God himself, by whose orders they were sent, had not directed their course, and appointed where they should fall. This seems another instance, where Josephus, by attempting a solution, extenuates the miracle.

Ver. 12. *For quails came up unto them from the sea for their contentment.*] Εἰς παραμυθίαν ἀνέβη αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ θαλάσσης ὀρτυγομήτρα. There is no necessity for supposing, as some have fancifully done, that one particular bird, the guide and conductor of a great number that followed, is here meant, for ὀρτυγομήτρα, by synecdoche, is put for a multitude of them. Instances of this are frequent in the sacred writings, particularly in the Scripture account of the plagues of Egypt: thus, where it is said in our version that *the frogs came up and covered the land*, the LXX. render, ἀνεβιβάσθη ὁ βάτραχος, καὶ ἐκάλυψε τὴν γῆν Αἰγύπτου, (Exod. viii. 6.) and so it is in the Hebrew. And in the description of the plague of lice, (Exod. viii. 17.) the Hebrew again expresses it by the singular number. The like may be observed of the locusts, which, though they are described as covering the face of the whole earth, and darkening the land through the infinity of their number, (Exod. x. 12. 14.) yet, in the original, are mentioned only as one, *the locust*. And the LXX. express it in like manner, ἀναβήτω ἀκρὶς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν προτέρα αὐτῆς οὐ γέγονε τοιαύτη ἀκρὶς, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα οὐκ ἔσται οὕτως.

Ver. 13. *And punishments came upon the sinners, not without former signs, by the force of thunders.*] The rendering of the Geneva Bible is more intelligible here, *But punishments came upon the sinners, not without signs, that were given by great thunderings;* which seems preferable too, as it preserves the opposition better, and the Syriac and Arabic render in like manner. I cannot agree with those interpreters, that would refer this passage to the desolation occasioned by the strange lightning and hail, mentioned xvi. 22. for then the pointing should be different; nor do we read of any signs preceding that plague. I am more inclined to understand it of the great overthrow in the Red Sea, "That, as God had given the Israelites many tokens and proofs of his favour, to encourage their trust and dependance upon him, so with respect to the Egyptians, called here, emphatically, *the sinners*, their sad catastrophe came not upon them without warning, and the notice of foreboding thunders." This is agreeable to what Josephus writes, "That this judgment was preceded with fierce winds and tempests, violent storms of hail and rain, and terrible thunders and lightnings." (Antiq. lib. ii. cap. 16.) And this probably is meant by those words of Moses, that the *Lord troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot-wheels, that they drave them heavily.* (Exod. xiv. 24.) And to this learned men apply those words of the Psalmist, *The clouds poured out water, the air thundered, and thine arrows went abroad: the voice of thy thunder was heard round about* (where the LXX. read very remarkably, φωνὴ τῆς βροντῆς σου ἐν τῷ τροχῷ, *rotâ curruum*, according to the Vulgate), *the lightnings shone upon the ground, the earth was moved, and shook withal.* (Psal. lxxvii. 17, 18. See De Muis, Hammond, Patrick in loc.)

For they suffered justly, according to their own wickedness, insomuch as they used a more hard and hateful behaviour towards strangers.] The sense of this whole verse, according to Grotius, is, that the punishment of the Egyptians did not happen to them without proper warning of the consequence of their inhuman behaviour, which they might have learnt from the punishment of the people of Sodom in particular, whom the Lord destroyed with fire from heaven, for their great wickedness and inhospitality. And, indeed, their punishment is expressly mentioned by St. Peter, as a designed example of God's vengeance upon the ungodly to all future ages. Calmet's exposition is to the same purpose, "That the goodness of God had a long time before given notice to the Egyptians of the misfortunes which threatened them, by the thunder and fire from heaven which fell upon the Sodomites for their inhumanity towards strangers, in which the Egyptians, imitating or rather exceeding them, might have read their own fate." (Com. in loc.) Philo speaks of their behaviour towards the Jews in like manner, and takes notice of the like aggravating circumstances: Ξένοι ἦσαν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ... καὶ τρόπον τινὰ ἱκέται, κ. τ. λ. *Judæi, exteri et hospites erant (cum auctores generis fame coacti per inopiam alimentorum Babylone, et ex superioribus satrapiis profecti in Ægyptum demigrassent) et quodam modo supplices, tanquam in asylum sacrum, ad fidem regis, et incolarum misericordiam confugerant Eos igitur qui patriam reliquerant, in Ægyptum advenerant, ut in altera patria tuto habitaturi, Regionis Imperator servilem in modum vexabat, et tanquam belli jure captos, aut tanquam vernas de justo domino emptos opprimebat, et pro mancipiis habebat, qui non modo liberi erant, verum etiam hospites, supplices, inquilini, mox etiam jussa supra vires imperabat, laborem labore alio subinde cumulans, deficientesque ferrum sequebatur.* (De Vita Mosis. See also Orig. cont. Cels. lib. iii. cap. 114.)

Ver. 14. *But these brought friends into bondage that had well deserved of them.*] Οὗτοι δὲ εὐεργέτας ξένους ἐδουλώσαντο· i. e. *These made slaves of strangers that had been benefactors to them;* Coverdale's and the Geneva Bibles render, with more propriety, *brought the strangers into bondage that did them good.* For the Egyptians, after having received great advantages from Joseph, especially in the time of famine, and from the Israelites in general by the improvement of their land; after having invited Jacob's family to settle among them, and made great rejoicings at their coming,—at length, even though they were incorporated, perfidiously treated them with unheard-of severities.

Ver. 15, 16. *And not only so, but peradventure some respect shall be had of those, because they used strangers not kindly; but these very grievously afflicted them, whom they had received with feastings, and were already made partakers of the same laws with them.*] The meaning is, that it was some mitigation of the fault of the Sodomites, or that some regard, ἐπισκοπὴ (see iv. 15.) ought to be had to them on this account, because the unkind treatment they were guilty of was done to persons unknown, to foreigners, and such as had no civil or political relation to them. But the Egyptians enslaved those whom they had invited, that were freely admitted among them, that lived under the same roofs, were governed by the same laws, and partakers of the same common rights and privileges. This explication is according to the reading of the Vatican copy, which Grotius thinks corrupt here, and has attempted to restore the text thus, Καὶ οὐ μόνον, ἀλλ' εἴ τις ἐπισκοπὴ ἔστη αὐτοῖς, ἐπεὶ ἀπεχθῶς προσεδέχοντο τοὺς ἀλλοτρίους, οἵδε μετὰ ἑορτασμάτων εἰσδεξάμενοι, κ. τ. λ. *i. e.* If the Sodomites deserved to be punished for using strangers so

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inhospitably, the Egyptians did much more, who evil-entreated such as were inmates, neighbours, friends. And thus ἐπισκοπὴ is used by this writer, xiv. 11. This conjecture Calmet approves of, as making the sense clearer, and agreeing better with the context. It may be proper to observe, that the comparison, which runs here in favour of the Sodomites, must be confined to the single point of their denying assistance to such as were mere strangers, and quite unknown; for considering their general behaviour to the angels after Lot had received them, which was the greatest breach of hospitality, and their unnatural designs upon them, which was an attempt of the greatest wickedness, no behaviour of the Egyptians could be so hateful, nor any action so criminal. Our translators probably were sensible of this when they inserted *peradventure* in the text, which has nothing to answer it in the original.

Ver. 17. *Therefore even with blindness were these stricken, as those were at the doors of the righteous man, when, being compassed about with horrible great darkness, every one sought the passage of his own doors.*] The Vatican copy reads, Ἕκαστος τῶν αὐτοῦ θυρῶν τὴν δίοδον ἐζήτει· *Every one sought the passage, not of his own, but of the righteous man's doors.* And this indeed seems to be the sense of the fact, as it is recorded, Gen. xix. 11. where it is said, *that they wearied themselves to find out the door.* (See Patr. in loc.) Our translators followed a copy which read, Ἕκαστος τῶν ἑαυτοῦ θυρῶν τὴν δίοδον ἐζήτει; which is the reading of the Alexand. MS. and of the Syriac and Arabic versions, and is indeed less doubtful and ambiguous. According to this reading, the sense is, whether we understand the place of the Sodomites or Egyptians, that they were so confounded with an excess of blindness, that they could not find out even their own doors. The Greek text, both here and in Gen. xix. expresses this blindness by ἀορασία, in the singular number, but the original in the latter has *blindnesses* in the plural, and the Jerusalem Targum renders in like manner, by *cæcitatibus*, which denotes very great and extreme blindness. Thus where the prophet mentions *bitter weeping*, (Jer. xxxi. 15.) as our translators render, in the original is, *weeping of bitternesses; fletus amaritudinum*, according to the Interlineary version, which the evangelist expounds, *weeping and great mourning.* (Matt. ii. 18.) According to some, the Hebrew etymology of Sodom implies darkness. (See Philo de confus. Linguar. Hesychius in voce Σόδομα.)

Ver. 18. *For the elements were changed in themselves, by a kind of harmony, like as in a psaltery notes change the name of the tune, and yet are always sounds, which may well be perceived by the sight of the things that have been done.*] Δι' ἑαυτῶν γὰρ τὰ στοιχεῖα μεθαρμοζόμενα, ὥσπερ ἐν ψαλτηρίῳ φθόγγοι τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ τὸ ὄνομα διαλλάσσουσι πάντοτε μένοντα ἐν ἤχῳ, ὅπερ ἐστὶν εἰκάσαι ἐκ τῆς τῶν γεγονότων ὄψεως ἀκριβῶς. This is the reading according to Grabe's edition; but the Vatican has μένοντα ἤχῳ, omitting the preposition; μεθαρμοζόμενα is not well rendered, *changed by a kind of harmony*, nor δι' ἑαυτῶν, *in themselves:* nor do they thus give any idea that is clear or consistent, μεθαρμοζόμενα denoting rather change of order and disposition (from μεθαρμόζω, *transmuto adaptando aliter*), and δι' ἑαυτῶν, *throughout*, or *among themselves*, which is a better rendering. Nor is our version more happy in applying πάντοτε μένοντα ἐν ἤχῳ, to φθόγγοι, which very manifestly relates to the elements, to the στοιχεῖα μεθαρμοζόμενα, and not to sounds. For the sense is (which will still be clearer by putting the simile in a parenthesis), that the change, or new disposition of the elements among themselves, which is described in the three following verses, occasioned no disorder or confusion; but the elements, notwithstanding their changing place, preserved that harmony which is peculiar to them, πάντοτε μένοντα ἐν ἤχῳ, always continuing in concert: as in a psaltery, or instrument of music, by the different movement of the strings the tune is diversified, and the name or kind of the measure or mode, the τὸ ῥυθμοῦ ὄνομα, is thereby altered: as among the Greeks there were different names for their different modes, *Phrygian, Dorian, Lydian;* and the same occurs among the Hebrews, who intimate every such ἐναλλαγὴ μέλους, or *change of modulation*, by the term *Selah*, which the LXX. very properly render διάψαλμα. (See Phavorinus, and Suidas in voce.) The elements are always a kind of emblem of the harmony of sounds, which they preserved under this new change, as in their natural state; for such a transitory alteration occasioned no more jarring in the system and order of the world, than different sounds arising from the several strings of an instrument, or from symphonies and voices of all pitches, disturb the melody of music, which the variety rather perfects than confounds. Seneca has finely described this agreeable and regular confusion; "Nonne vides quam multorum vocibus chorus constat? Unus tamen ex omnibus sonus redditur. Aliqua illic acuta est, aliqua gravis, aliqua media. Accedunt viris fœminæ, interponuntur tibiæ, singulorum ibi latent voces, omnium apparent:" (Epist. 48.) which Philo, borrowing the thought from the terms of music, as beautifully expresses concerning the harmony of the natural world, ἡ δὲ φύσις τὴν συμφωνίαν τοῦ παντὸς ἐξ ἐναντιοτήτων ἐναρμοσαμένη. (De Mose, lib. i.) And in this sense we are to understand Homer, where he makes Jupiter, the lord of nature, pleased with the discord of the gods: (Iliad. xxi.) that is, according to Eustathius, with the war of earth, sea, and air, &c. because the harmony of all beings arises from that discord: thus earth is opposite to water, air to earth, and water to them all; and yet from this opposition arises that discordant concord by which all nature subsists. Thus heat and cold, moist and dry, are in a continual war; yet upon this depends the fertility of the earth, and the beauty of the creation.—But there may, perhaps, another sense be given of this passage of our author's, if we consider ῥυθμὸς as meaning a set of measures or musical sounds, ranged at certain proportioned intervals, answering to our scale in music; for the ancients seem to have had several ῥυθμοὶ, or *scales*, to which the sounds or strings of different harps were proportioned and adjusted, and φθόγγοι τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ together may imply the differently-proportioned intervals of the measure, scale, or ῥυθμὸς, which the strings producing the sounds are set to and adjusted by. And these different sets of sounds, proportioned to the different ῥυθμοὶ, changed the kind of the music, and produced different τόνοι, or *modes*, which Aristoxenus and Euclid make to be thirteen, and Ptolemy only seven. (See Plato de Leg. lib. ii. Eucl. Περὶ ἁρμον. H. Steph. Greek Lexicon.) So that it is not improbable but that the true reading of this simile may be, ὥσπερ ἐν ψαλτηρίῳ φθόγγοι τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ τόνον διαλλάσσουσι, πάντοτε, or πάντα δὲ μένοντα ἐν ἤχῳ. Which still heightens the musical

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allusion, and the sense of the whole verse, as follows; "For the elements were transposed among themselves without losing their proper harmony; as in a psaltery, or ancient harp, the sounds of the harmonic scale, new proportioned among themselves, change the mode of the music, and yet all continues regular and in tune:" which one may guess to be the *then* state of the elements, ἐκ τῆς τῶν γεγονότων ὄψεως ἀκριβοῦς· *i. e.* from an accurate view and examination of what then happened; for so I would choose rather to render with Junius, than to understand ἀκριβῶς adverbially, and apply it to εἰκάσαι, as our translators do, with which it does not properly accord. I shall only observe farther, that as the ancient philosophers frequently compare the symmetry of the world to a concert of fine music, (see Plut. in lib. De Mus. Macrob. in Som. Scip.) which, though of a compound nature, and admitting of a great variety of notes and changes, is nevertheless ravishing and beautiful; so this writer manifestly adopts here the same thought, and applies it to what happened in Egypt and in the desert, and from hence illustrates God's dealings with the Israelites and the Egyptians, whose miracles, whether displayed in the way of judgment or mercy, though they overruled the powers of nature, yet no ways disconcerted the regular and beautiful order of it.

Ver. 19. *For earthly things were turned into watery, and the things that before swam in the water, now went upon the ground.*] *i. e.* Both the Israelites and their cattle passed through the Red Sea itself, as safe as on dry ground, and the frogs leaving the waters, not only overspread the land of Egypt, but entered into the houses of the Egyptians, and even into their *kings' chambers.* (Psal. cv. 30.)

Ver. 20. *The fire had power in the water, forgetting his own virtue; and the water forgat his own quenching nature.*] This refers to the plague of rain, hail, and fire mixed with it, mentioned before. It is observable that in this plague, God made use of three of the elements at one time, as his instruments of vengeance. For as the Egyptians had a conceit that there were many local deities, some presiding over the air, others over the waters, some celestial, and others ruling over the earth; hence Jehovah, the only true God, thought it necessary to assert his own unity, and shew the immensity and universality of his dominion and power, by commanding at the same time so many of the elements to fulfil his will in chastising this rebellious people. (See note on xvi. 16—18.)

Ver. 21. *On the other side the flames wasted not the flesh of the corruptible living things, though they walked therein.*] *i. e.* The flames were mitigated, that they might not burn up the beasts that were sent against the ungodly, as the author expresses himself in xvi. 18. According to the description here given of the corruptible living things, it seems most agreeable to understand the *locusts* in particular (though even these cannot strictly be supposed *then* existing, nor does the Mosaic account countenance any such long continuance of them; see note on the place referred to), which are described as a nation by the prophet Joel, and their march like that of an army, for desolation. The Syriac version seems to confirm this sense, *bestias vastatrices flamma non exussit*, which suits with the character given in history of these mischievous and destructive creatures.

Neither melted they the icy kind of heavenly meat that was of nature apt to melt.] *i. e.* The fire had no power over the same manna, which the sun could easily dissolve in the field. Manna is here called icy, not only from its resisting the fire, but from its being generated in or by the air, or from its resembling in smallness the hoar frost on the ground; the Geneva Bible renders, *Neither melted they that which seemed to be ice, and was of a nature that would melt, and yet was an immortal meat.* As ambrosia was supposed to be the food of the gods, so manna, as coming down from heaven, or, according to others, as being the bread of angels inhabiting there, is called ἀμβροσία τροφὴ by this writer, and by Philo ἡ οὐράνιος τροφή. (See notes on chap. xvi.) From the use of this word, and some others drawn from the heathen writings, Calmet infers our author's acquaintance with them. The LXX. and the Vulgate have taken the same liberty of borrowing words from the poets, even in parts of the inspired writings. Thus Job ix. 9. they insert the names of *Pleiades Hyades*, and *Arcturus.* And in xlii. 14. they call the name of Job's third daughter, κέρας Ἀμαλθαίας, *the horn of Amalthæa*, alluding to the Grecian fable, which arose long after Job's time.

Ver. 22. *For in all things, O Lord, thou didst magnify thy people, and glorify them, neither didst thou lightly regard them: but didst assist them in every time and place.*] What our author here adds of God's having magnified and glorified the Israelites in all things, and assisted them in every time and place, is another instance of Jewish opiniatry and conceit. (See note on x. 15.) It is according to the sentiment of that people, who imagined themselves to be the only beloved of God, that they had an unchangeable interest in him, and that no neglect or undutiful behaviour of theirs could alienate them from his favour, or make him become their enemy, and reject them; that God would never punish his own people, in covenant with him, and who were called by his name, in any such severe manner, as to make them examples to all other nations, and nothing could ever persuade them that their city or temple should actually be destroyed: but notwithstanding their boasted interest, fancied alliance, and fond dependance upon their adoption and privileges, God at length thought fit to reject them, and has set a mark upon them, like the curse of Cain, as St. Austin expresses it, (Com. in Psal. lviii.) to let others see, what a difference in the same people the love or displeasure of God can make, and that his favour to any nation is not absolute, unconditional, and hereditary. The very learned Dr. Jackson observes, (tom. iii. p. 210.) that our author in this work proceeds upon right principles in making the Egyptians, as well as the Canaanites, to be an accursed seed from the beginning, as being the offspring of Cham; and the children of Israel to be a seed doubly blessed, as being the progeny of Shem and of faithful Abraham: but that he is guilty of a twofold error in his inference and consequences, first, in presuming that the curse derived from their father Cham should be perpetually upon the Egyptians; secondly, that the blessing derived from Shem and Abraham unto their seed, should be absolutely everlasting, and go along with them in every time and place. For, continues he, the calendar made by this learned author, of the opposite fates or destinies of the Egyptians and the Jews, began in his own time to vary, and shortly after our Saviour's resurrection to be out of date, and even quite inverted: for the lot or destiny which this

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good author assigned unto the ungodly Egyptians, *That wrath should come upon them without mercy unto the end,* (xix. 1.) did at length fall upon his presumed holy ones, upon the Jews his countrymen, of whom St. Paul gives this melancholy account, and very indifferent character; *That they both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and persecuted the apostles, being contrary to all men, and displeasing to God; forbidding to speak to the gentiles that they might be saved, filling up the measure of their sins, so that wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.* (1 Thess. ii. 15, 16.) But this induration, which through their own fault hath happened to the seed of Shem and Abraham in a greater measure, and for a longer time, than that which befel the seed of Cham, or the Egyptians, will not, we have reason to think, be a perpetual curse upon that people, nor their rejection be absolute and final; but continue only until the fulness of the gentiles shall come in, when *the natural branches, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed again into their own olive-tree.* (Rom. xi. 23.) Grotius and Calmet imagine this book, as we now have it, imperfect and unfinished; but others have commended it as concluding properly with a just reflection and instructive moral, *viz.* That the righteous are more particularly the care of heaven; that God provides for their safety and happiness, and is ready to assist his chosen, and such as continue steadfast in his covenant, in every time and place. A consideration the most effectual and engaging to recommend the study and practice of true wisdom and piety, which was the great and laudable end proposed by the author of this book; and, when sincerely intended, and happily accomplished, is the glory of all other works and undertakings.

ADDENDA.

To the end of the note on chap. i. 4. *add*—It is observable, that the author here insists upon purity both in body and spirit; nor is wisdom, as understood by this writer, to be attained without such a perfect integrity. The body itself indeed, as such, cannot be the habitation of wisdom; but through the strict union which is between it and the soul, the actions and passions of one necessarily affect the other. Hence the pollutions of the soul communicate themselves to the body, as the defilements of the body vitiate and infect the soul; with great reason, therefore, it is required as a necessary means towards obtaining wisdom, that we should glorify God both in our bodies and in our spirits, which is the advice of the inspired writer, 1 Cor. vi. 20.

Chap. i. 15. *Add to the end of the note*—Calmet gives another sense of this place, That righteousness has always existed, and shall never cease to be; for there have been from the beginning, and will ever continue to be, some good persons, in every age, who are as shining lights amidst a perverse and crooked generation; so that, as Christ assures us, (Matt. xvi. 18.) *the gates of hell shall not* absolutely *prevail against* the church. As righteousness is a blessing not originally foreign to our nature, one cannot say that it entered into the world at a particular time only, as death did, and therefore is very properly described to be, "peregrinum et adventitium malum." (Faust. Rheg. de Grat. Dei.)

Chap. ii. 2. *After these words,* "The Vulgate also, with Junius, renders it in like manner by *sermo," add*—By which we are to understand reason, or the soul: that this is the true reading appears undeniably from a parallel passage in Lucretius, whose philosophy is the same with that of these false reasoners,

"Consilium quod nos animum mentemque vocamus,
Idque situm media in regione pectoris hæret." (Lib. iii.)

And from that of Empedocles,

Αἷμα γὰρ ἀνθρώποις περικάρδιόν ἐστι νόημα.

Chap. ii. 6. *Let us enjoy the good things that are present.*] Ἀπολαύσωμεν τῶν ὄντων ἀγαθῶν. The writer of the τῶν Ἐθικῶν μεγάλων, supposed to be Aristotle, makes a just and proper distinction between καλὰ and ἀγαθά. The former includes virtues, and the good and commendable actions proceeding from thence; the latter, power, riches, glory, pleasures, and the like: Καλὰ μὲν, οἷον, τὰς ἀρετὰς, καὶ τὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν πράξεις·—ἀγαθὰ δὲ, ἀρχὴν, πλοῦτον, δόξαν, τιμὴν, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα.

Chap. ii. 19. *Let us examine him with despitefulness and torture, that we may know his meekness, and prove his patience.*] The Vulgate renders, *interrogemus eum; i.e.* Let us make proof of his patience, and treat him like a criminal that is put upon the rack. The verb ἐτάζειν, *interrogare,* in this book and Ecclesiasticus, signifies *to chastise* or *punish.* (See i. 9. vi. 3. xi. 10. Ecclus. xvi. 22. xxiii. 10.) Such a resolution in wicked men is not to be wondered at. We may observe, that the best men among the heathens were generally, through their enemies' malice, the most unfortunate and unhappy. Socrates, Aristides, Cato, Seneca, are all instances of this truth, suffering either persecution, banishment, or death. See Plato, de Rep. lib. ii. where he enumerates the punishments to which a good man stands exposed, which Tully has copied, and expresses thus, "Bonus ille vir vexetur, rapiatur, manus denique ei auferantur, effodiantur oculi, damnetur, vinciatur, uratur." (Lib. ii. de Repub.)

Chap. ii. 22. *As for the mysteries of God, they knew them not, neither hoped they for the wages of righteousness, nor discerned a reward for blameless souls.*] Not unlike this is what St. Paul says of the wicked, *That the god of this world blinds the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine unto them;* (2 Cor. iv. 4.) and it is very observable, that a course of sin and a state of darkness are reciprocal terms in Scripture. With great propriety, therefore, the wicked are here represented as blinded to such a degree, that they had no regard for any thing serious, much less did they concern themselves about revelation, or the great and mysterious truths contained in it; they considered not God's proceedings, nor were affected by any of his judgments or threatenings; and as they believed not another life, they did not expect any great day of account, and could have no grounds or reason to hope for future rewards, which are the wages of righte-

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ousness, and the blessed portion of blameless and undefiled souls.

Chap. ii. 24. *Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world.*] *At the end of the note on these words add*—But St. Bernard is more explicit than St. Chrysostom, or the other fathers, upon the true cause of the devil's envy: according to him, "The malice and conspiracy of the devil against the happiness of man proceeded principally from the honour which he foresaw was designed to be conferred upon the human nature, by the hypostatical union of the Λόγος with it: he flattered himself, that so great a mark of distinction belonged to the angelic order preferably to man, and from hence arose his jealousy, which determined him upon mischief and revenge." (Bern. Serm. in Cantic.) And to this sense some other writers have interpreted Isa. xiv. 14.

At the conclusion of the second chapter add—And thus Fulgentius understands this passage, "Mors est impietatis quam non fecit Deus, quæ per diabolum introivit in orbem terrarum; huic uni morti, quam peccator sibi per contemptum Divinæ jussionis arcessivit, duplam Deus mortem retribuit, primam in separatione animæ et corporis, secundam in æterna cruciatione animæ et corporis." (Ibid.) If such then as hold on the devil's side, *i. e.* imitate and copy after him, shall have a part in the second death, (Rev. xxi. 8.) let the libertine and free-thinker, who are equally the subject of this chapter, consider and tremble, whose detestable ambition and inglorious triumph is, to confound the simple, seduce the innocent, pervert the unwary, and, by propagating loose notions and irreligious principles, to make converts to vice and infidelity, and enlarge the kingdom of darkness.

Chap. iii. 3. *At the end of the note add*—The word σύντριμμα, which our translators render *utter destruction*, is a metaphor taken from potters' ware, which, when broken by some casualty to pieces, cannot by any skill or ingenuity be reunited, as vessels of silver and of other metal may, by being melted again, be in some measure restored. See Psal. ii. 9. Rev. ii. 27. where the word is thus applied. It is designed here to denote by a figure annihilation and extinction, or an absolute and entire ruin of the human body beyond all possibility of recovery from its dust, which the comparison drawn from an earthen vessel will better suit: and this indeed was the sentiment of the Epicureans, and as such maintained by the libertines here introduced, that when the soul quitted the body it was dissipated into air, "in tenues evanuit auras;" and thus Calmet explains this term as meaning, "suivant le Grec, un brisement, une dissipation entiere, comme une chose qu'on brise, et qui s'en va en poussiere." (Com. in loc.)

Chap. iii. 4. *To the end of the note add*—It was even the opinion of the wiser heathen, that a good and virtuous life was the surest way to immortality. Thus Antisthenes in Laertius, Τοὺς βουλομένους ἀθανάτους εἶναι δεῖν ζῆν εὐσεβῶς καὶ δικαίως, i. e. *those who aim at immortality ought to live justly and righteously.*

Chap. iii. 6. *As gold in the furnace hath he tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering.*] According to the best explanation which the commentators and Jewish writers give of the burnt-offering, the victim's throat was to be cut, its body dissected into quarters, and the bowels taken out, and afterward it was to be burnt to ashes, that, if possible, there might be nothing of it left. It is a very strong and beautiful image which this writer has chose to represent the great variety and intenseness of sufferings, which the saints undergo for righteousness' sake: for as in the oblation of the holocaust, the victim was entirely consumed in the flames by the appointment of God, and in honour of him, *so right dear and precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints,* when, *enduring a great fight of afflictions,* they expire in the cause of virtue; for martyrdom is of all others a sacrifice the most perfect and pleasing, that a creature is capable of offering; it is an instance of the most consummate fortitude; in the language of Seneca, "Spectaculum Deo dignum, ad quod respiciat Deus intentus operi suo." His description of suffering innocence, as I find it cited by Lactantius, comes nearest to that of the inspired writers, and is indeed a surprisingly fine sentiment from a heathen philosopher: "Hic est ille homo honestus—qui sive toto corpore tormenta patienda sunt, sive flamma ore recipienda est, sive extendendæ per patibulum manus, non quærit quid patiatur, sed quàm bené." (Ap. Lactant. lib. vi. Instit. cap. 17.)

Chap. v. 21. *At the end of the note add*—I shall only observe farther, that the comparison of lightning to arrows, as applied by this writer, is not unusual in some of the Greek poets:

Κελαδησόμεθα βροντὰν, καὶ πυρπάλαμον ΒΕΛΟΣ
Ὀρσικτύπου Διός— (Pind. Pyth. Od. x.)

Ἀλλ' ἦλθεν αὐτῷ Ζηνὸς ἄγρυπνον ΒΕΛΟΣ
Καταβάτης κεραυνός— (Æschin. Prom. 358.)

Chap. x. 4. *At the end of the note add*—Nor is Aratus to be understood as designing to cast any reflection upon the ark, or its structure, when he calls it in what follows ὀλίγον ξύλον, a term as diminutive as that used by our author,—

Οἱ δ' ἔτι πόρσω
Κλύζονται, ὀλίγον δὲ διὰ ξύλον, ἄϊδ' ἐρύκει.
(Phænom. p. 32. ed. Oxon.)

Chap. x. 10. Dr. Grabe thinks that εὐπόρησεν, which is the reading in all the editions, should be ηὐπόρισεν, because the former signifies only *to grow rich,* but the latter *to make rich,* which is the sense of the author in this place; and thus εὐπορίζειν is used in Lucian, Quomodo Hist. scribenda sit, tom. ii. p. 395. edit. Basil. though all the lexicographers omit this sense. (Grab. Proleg. tom. ult. cap. 4.)

In chap. xiv. 3. *After the words* "of the inscription upon the Pharos built by Sostratus," *insert*—Gruter has an inscription upon the same occasion to Castor and Pollux,

ΘΕΟΙ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΙ ΔΙΟΣΚΟΡΟΙ ΚΑΒΕΙΡΟΙ.

CASTORI ET POLLVCI DIIS MAGNIS.

(Grut. Inscript. xcviii. p. 13.)

But the most remarkable is that of Jupiter Urius Bosporanus, published at first by Wheler and Spon, and afterward more correctly by Chishul, who engraved a copy of the stone, which was brought from the Bosphorus into England in 1731, and is now among the curiosities of Dr. Mead's library. The age of it appears from the name of

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the statuary; Philo, son of Antipater, being mentioned in it, who lived under Alexander the Great. (See Plin. Nat. Hist. xxxiv. 8.) And the statue likewise is taken notice of in succeeding ages by Cicer. in L. Pisonem, in Verrem, and by Dionysius Byzantinus, and other ancient geographers. The inscription, in the common way of writing, is as follows:

Οὔριον ἐκ πρύμνης τις ὁδηγητῆρα καλεῖτο
Ζῆνα, κατὰ προτόνων ἱστίον ἐκπετάσας.
Εἴτ' ἐπὶ Κυανέας δίνας δρόμος, ἔνθα Ποσειδῶν
Καμπύλον εἰλίσσει κῦμα παρὰ ψαμάθοις,
Εἴτε κατ' Αἰγαίην πόντου πλάκα νόστον ἐρευνᾷ,
Νείσθω, τῷδε βαλὼν ψαιστὰ παρὰ ξοάνῳ.
Ὧδε τὸν εὐάντητον ἀεὶ Θεὸν, Ἀντιπάτρου παῖς,
Στῆσε Φίλων, ἀγαθῆς σύμβολον εὐπλοίης.

Thus rendered by Dr. Ashton:

Urion inclamato Jovem comitemque ducemque
Navita, cum ventis pandere vela parat.
Sive ad Cyaneas immani in vortice petras
Tendat, ubi horrificis æstibus unda fremit;
Sive iter Ægæi scopulosa per æquora tentet,
Tutus, ubi huic statuæ liba sacrarit, eat.
Huncce Deum hîc posuit nautis lætabile signum,
Præsidiumque Philo, filius Antipatri.

Chap. xv. 9. Dr. Grabe thinks instead of ἀντερείδεται, which is the common reading, ἀντερίζεται would be more expressive, and agree better with μιμεῖται, which follows after. (Prolegom. tom. ult. cap. 4.)

Chap. xvi. 20. Dr. Grabe thinks ἰσχύοντα, as the common editions have it, should be ἴσχοντα, *habentem*, which is confirmed by the old Latin translations. (Proleg. ult. cap. 4.)

Chap. xvii. 10. Instead of προσείληφε, Dr. Grabe puts προείληφε, *præsumit*, which seems properer. Badwell agrees in this conjecture. (Proleg. tom. ult. cap. 4.)

Chap. xviii. 18. Instead of προσκαλεσάμενος, Dr. Grabe puts παρακαλεσάμενος, *consolatus*, as suiting the place better. (Proleg. tom. ult. cap. 4.)

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A

CRITICAL COMMENTARY

UPON

THE BOOK

OF

THE WISDOM OF JESUS THE SON OF SIRACH.

Ecclesiasticus, qui 'Sapientia Jesu F. Sirach' inscribitur, pleraque cum Proverbiis Salomonis habet communia, nisi quod hic noster copiosior est, et minus habet difficultatis. Ex eo certius, et minore cum periculo discent moralem Philosophiam studiosi, quàm ex ullo Platone, aut Aristotele. *Bullinger. Præfat. in Vers. Leo. Judæ.*

Παιδείαν συνέσεως καὶ ἐπιστήμης ἐχάραξεν ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Σειρὰχ Ἱεροσολυμίτης, ὃς ἀνώμβρησε σοφίαν ἀπὸ καρδίας αὐτοῦ. μακάριος ὃς ἐν τούτοις ἀναστραφήσεται, καὶ ὁ θεὶς αὐτὰ ἐπὶ καρδίαν αὐτοῦ σοφισθήσεται. ἐὰν γὰρ αὐτὰ ποιήσῃ, πρὸς πάντα ἰσχύσει. (Cap. 50.)

Ἴδετε, ὅτι οὐκ ἐμοὶ μόνῳ ἐκοπίασα, ἀλλὰ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσι σοφίαν. (Cap. 24.)

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A

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

JOHN,

LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN.

My Lord,

THE great regard which you have always shewn for whatever may tend to promote the cause of virtue and goodness, and the affection which you were pleased to express for your clergy, encourage me to hope for a favourable acceptance of the following sheets.

The excellent morality of The Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, and the justness of its observations, which have stood the test, and gained the approbation, of so many successive ages, have deservedly recommended it to general esteem. A celebrated metropolitan,* in particular, one of the early lights of the Reformation, had such a high opinion of its worth, and the great usefulness of its being thoroughly understood, that he purposely engaged the learned Drusius to undertake an illustration of it, under his patronage and encouragement.

Though I might, after the example of our author, in celebrating such famous men, as *are leaders of the people by their counsel, wise and eloquent in their instructions, and by their knowledge of learning meet for great purposes,* be induced to attempt a parallel between his favourite character, (chap. l.) and that of your Lordship, yet I choose religiously to adhere to the advice of this wise writer, not to offend in the presence of great men, nor to court favour by the mean artifice of flattery.

May the same good providence of God, which, from a calamity that threatened your life, reserved your Lordship for the happiness of this diocess, still continue to watch over you for the future benefit and service of his church.

I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most dutiful and obedient servant,

RICHARD ARNALD.

* Archbishop Whitgift.

PREFACE.

THE book of Ecclesiasticus, according to some writers, is so called, because the ancients divided the books of the Old Testament volume into four sorts; the first contained the Pentateuch, the second the Prophets, the third the Hagiographa, the fourth the Ecclesiastical or Apocryphal Books, as not being in the Jewish canon. Among the Ecclesiastical Books, this of Jesus, the son of Sirach, being most remarkable and useful, it was κατ' ἐξοχὴν called Ecclesiasticus, whilst the rest of the same class have lost their name. According to others, this title was given by the Latins to it, to denote its use in the church, its being read for the sake of edification in the public religious assemblies; or, lastly, because, like Solomon's Ecclesiastes, which it resembles in name, as well as matter, it teaches and instructs such as attend to it by the admirable precepts which it delivers, and the earnest and frequent exhortations therein to wisdom, which in these sapiential books is another word for religion. In the printed Greek copies it is improperly styled *The Wisdom of Sirach,* which is an abbreviation made with great absurdity; for it ascribes the book to Sirach, who was neither the author nor the translator of it, and therefore could neither way have any relation to it. It is more usually and properly called, *The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach,* because wisdom, in some branch or other of it, is the subject of the whole book.

The author opens his work with the eulogium of wisdom in general; then he enters into a variety of useful particulars, and continues to deliver many important precepts and instructive lessons, for the right conduct of life, to chap. xxiv. where wisdom is supposed to speak herself in person, and by the most engaging persuasive motives, which are continued to chap. xlii. 15. invites men to the practice of virtue, and the pursuit of what is lovely and of good report; where his collection of wise sentences and proverbs ends. He then, by way of epilogue, solemnly enters upon a pious hymn, wherein he extols the works of God, his infinite wisdom and power displayed in them, and, in dwelling upon his praises, his rapture and transport are so great, that he exceeds himself, and almost what is human,

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in the sublimity of his sentiments: and at length finishes the whole with a panegyric, or solemn commemoration of the most celebrated worthies of his own nation, illustrious instances in their respective generations of the several virtues he has been recommending. Manifestly copying in this division, says Valesius, the method and order of Solomon, and exhibiting, like him, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, not in separate books indeed, but as parts of the same work. (Not. ad Script. Eccl. Euseb. lib. iv. cap. 22.)

The ancients styled this book by the Greek name Πανάρετος, signifying that it treats of and comprises all sorts of virtues. And indeed it is a system of morality so full and comprehensive, as that there is scarce any virtue which this excellent piece does not recommend, and lay down rules for obtaining it; nor a vice, or indecorum, which it does not expose and discourage; it forms the manners of persons of all ages, sexes, and conditions, by an infinity almost of useful maxims and instructions. One learns from it all the duties of religion and civil life, both what piety commands, and politeness and good manners expect. Every one may here discover, so full and obvious is it, what he owes to God, to his country, his neighbourhood, his family, and to himself; how to behave in the different relations of life, either to superiors or inferiors, friends or enemies; and so it may be thought, as indeed some have represented it, to comprise all the duties of both tables: for the precepts which it delivers, and the principal matters which it treats of, may be divided into four sorts: 1. Theological. 2. Political. 3. Economical. 4. Ethical; or rules respecting all sorts of men indifferently, however placed or circumstantiated. These four heads take in most, if not all, the maxims of this book, so that what lies dispersed in the great volumes of philosophers and moralists, is collected into a short compass, and to be found here as it were in miniature: in short, the author has given us at once a whole treasury of wisdom, and with great profusion has intermixed reflections, counsels, exhortations, reproofs, examples, prayers, praises, &c. so that truth appears in different attitudes and forms, but beautiful and engaging under each, and shines with so complicated a lustre, as cannot but draw attention, and command respect and admiration. But besides the excellent moral instructions here given, some learned men have discovered in it certain vestiges of a more deep and recondite wisdom, and judge it to contain the more secret *Solomoniac wisdom;* (see Lee's Dissert. on the second book of Esdras, p. 32.) which probably was taught in the schools of the prophets, and, after the cessation of them, in those of the great doctors of the law, and interpreters of the sacred writings.

It was composed originally for the use and advantage of those, who were disposed to regulate their lives agreeably to the laws of God; with this view the grandson rendered it into Greek, and with the same design has it been translated into many other ancient and modern languages. On the same account, as being an instructive manual, and good for the use of edifying, has it met with general esteem, especially in the western church, and introduced by our first reformers, and the venerable compilers of our articles, into the public service. Nor can it fail of producing, in such as are well-disposed, those fruits, which one never fails of gathering from the knowledge of truth, when searched after, not merely as matter of speculation or curiosity, but with an honest intention to practise what it teaches. For this reason, as well as to enforce the author's precepts, and make his design more useful and extensive, I have sometimes ventured beyond the common and literal sense, and have accommodated a more exalted and spiritual one, extracted either from the valuable comment of Messieurs of Port-Royal, or what occurred to me, and seemed naturally to arise from the text itself, and might, without violence, be inferred from it: by this means I have brought home to Christians what, by this writer, was originally directed to the Jews, and have assisted the reader to find out the duties of the *new* law, in the letter and precepts of the *old* one.

There is one more excellency which I must not omit, which is common to this with the book of Proverbs, that the maxims are delivered in a way the most useful and beneficial, in such short and weighty apophthegms, as may most strongly affect the mind, and yet not overcharge the memory; a method in which the wisdom of the ancients thought it most proper to deliver the rites and mysteries of religion, as well as their civil laws and constitutions. For truths which depend upon demonstration and a long and abstruse chain of reasoning, are not so obvious to all capacities, as those which are couched in short memorial sentences, in expressive aphorisms, in single and often independent propositions, as all collections of proverbial and sententious truths are, which being founded upon experience, and authorized by the observation of others, are admitted as just and approved maxims, and as such successively handed down to posterity; and every age confirms, and finds the benefit of them.

Though it is indubitably certain, that this book was not written by Solomon, who lived many ages after, and there are in the work itself internal marks to disprove such a claim, yet it hath been ascribed to him on account of the great resemblance of matter and style, and made by the Latin church, to be one of his five books, as they are called, and is so quoted by several of the fathers, and as such in most copies joined with them, and like them wrote stiche-wise in the Alexandrian MS. and supposed, according to Epiphanius, to be written originally in metre. St. Jerome says, that he himself saw a Hebrew copy of this work, not under the name of Wisdom, but of Parables, or Proverbs. (Præf in Prov.) Munster also and Fagius mention others; but Scaliger, Drusius, and Huetius, think none of these to be the original, but either Ben-Sira's alphabet, or some late Hebrew version made from the Greek, such as that which appeared of the book of Tobit, which Fabricius mentions. (Bibl. Gr. tom. ii.) And indeed it must be acknowledged, that this book is composed very much in imitation of the Proverbs of Solomon, and very frequently alludes to and copies from them; hence by Athanasius, or the author of the anonymous Prologue, this writer is said to be ὀπαδὸς τοῦ Σολομῶντος, with this difference only, that the sentences of the book of Proverbs are not so closely connected, especially from the tenth chapter of that work, as those of this writer, who more frequently ranges, under distinct heads, what he observes upon the same subject, and in the Roman edit. and some MSS. titles are occasionally prefixed to some chapters, denoting the contents of what follows, though even this of

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our author might have been more perfect in this respect, as his reflections upon similar occasions lie too much dispersed, and the distribution of chapters not regular, being probably different collections by him, and not sorted so orderly by the translator, as one might expect, and as is intimated in the first Prologue.

We are therein informed, that the Hebrew Sirachides, gathered many grave and short sentences of wise men that had been before him, some scattered ones, or remains probably, of Solomon's *three thousand proverbs*, (1 Kings iv. 32.) successively delivered down. (See Bartoloccius, Bibl. Rabbin. tom. i. p. 249. Huetius, Dem. Evang. prop. 4.) Nor is it to be doubted, but that many useful maxims of other learned men, as well as some of his own, were added by the last Jesus, the son of Sirach, to his grandfather's book, or from marginal additions of other men's sayings of the like nature; which being too few to fill a book of themselves, and as other fugitive pieces liable to be lost, if not collected together, they were joined to this larger work of the same kind, to be ready at hand, when occasionally looked for. Thus Solomon's Proverbs were augmented with a new collection, by the men of Hezekiah, taken, as some imagine, from copies of Solomon's Proverbs, with these sayings added, which therefore passed under the name of Solomon. Be that as it will, such books of apophthegms were made, as it were, heads of a common-place book, to which things of the same nature were reduced. So the ancient vocabularies have come to be enriched with many new words, by their possessors in different successive ages. We cannot otherwise account for the variations in the several Greek copies of Ecclesiasticus, and the translations of it, nor for the entire sentences which are found in some and wanting in other copies. And I have sometimes been inclined to think that text, vi. 22. *Wisdom is according to her name, and is not manifest unto many*, is one addition of the translator, where he derives the Greek word σοφία, from a Hebrew one, which signifies *covered*, or *hid*, which the elder Jesus, who wrote in Hebrew, could not do, but his grandson might, who was skilled in that and the Hebrew tongue. And the like probably may be observed of xliii. 8. as the reading is in all the present Greek copies.

The Hebrew Sirachides wrote his book in the language of the Jews of Jerusalem, such as was used after their return from the captivity, probably either in the Chaldee dialect, or Syriac, as a manual for the Jews in Egypt. The learned suppose the original work itself to have come down imperfect, either through the author's death, or the loss of some part of it in Egypt: (see Bishop Chandler's Vindic. of Def. p. 81—85.) which may perhaps account for the great incoherence and abrupt transition in many places. We have no authentic monument whereby we can know how long the original was preserved; it is supposed to have been lost, either in troublesome times, or dropped through disuse. The Greek is the present and only original, and is the most early and authentic translation of this work, made for the use of the Jews in Egypt in their dispersion, who had then almost all forgot their native tongue; and so this, as well as other books, not canonical in that language, might easily be lost. It seems to have been too literal a translation, which often occasions the sense to be either obscure or deficient. The translator himself has the modesty to acknowledge, that he doubts he has failed in expressing the full spirit of the then language, whether it was the ancient and pure, or more modern and corrupt Hebrew, and ingenuously apologizes for not coming up to the exact propriety and expressiveness of the original; which might indeed easily happen, as it has to the law and the prophets, which lose much of their energy, when attempted in another language, as is well urged in his favour in the second Prologue. It is well if inaccuracy be his only fault; Drusius seems to think, that he has sometimes actually mistaken the meaning of the original in some of the more obscure and intricate passages; and no wonder that this too should happen, for even the Greek version of the canonical books has often stumbled on seemingly-plain ground.

There is a strange transposition of chapters in the best Greek copies of this book, from chap. xxx. to xxxvi. to say nothing of whole sentences or verses so transposed, on which account the printed editions, as may well be expected, greatly differ from one another; these, with the number of various readings, which Hœschelius has collected with much exactness, and are chargeable chiefly on the carelessness of transcribers, shew the present state of it to be corrupt and mutilated. And with respect to the Greek translation itself, I am far from contending that the language is beautiful, or altogether correct. On the contrary, it does not always seem agreeable in construction to the received rules of grammar; and especially the uncommon use of the Greek particles, so frequently to be met with in it, has been objected to, as harsh: but these particularities I conceive mostly owing to the idiom of the Greek Macedonian language, and are not so properly faults, as modes of that adopted tongue. But that it abounds with solecisms, as Camerarius and others have charged it with, I cannot admit. For the Alexandrine Greek, in which dialect this book, as we at present have it, undoubtedly was written, however wide from the common and received way of writing, has yet, by some men of learning, been observed to concur with it very surprisingly, where one would not expect it. Hebraisms indeed often occur in the text, and so they do in the Greek one of the Old and New Testament; but they are not reckoned by the judicious faults or blemishes. Philo, I believe, is not oftener guilty of solecisms than other Greek writers, nor the Christian fathers, who wrote in Egypt, nor do the LXX. often transgress in this way, unless when the perplexity of the original, or their defect of understanding it, drove them accidentally so to do, which perhaps may be the case of the translator of this book.

I have before intimated, that in his version, he often uses the Macedonian Greek language; for from the time of Alexander the Great, it is certain, the Jews began to hellenize, and that the Greek tongue, spoken by the Macedonians, became more common among them. And indeed, it is no wonder that the Jews of Alexandria, to whom that monarch, and Ptolemy Soter after his death, granted the same privileges with the Macedonians, and other Greeks, should, by their constant intercourse with the other citizens, among whom they were there mingled, be necessitated to learn and constantly use the Greek language, and that *that* should happen to them here, as did before at Babylon on the like occasion; I mean that, by ac-

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customing themselves to a foreign language, they should forget their own. And this will appear the more probable, as we learn from Philo, Josephus, and the apocryphal writings, particularly the books of Maccabees, Wisdom, and this of Ecclesiasticus, in which frequent allusion is made to Grecian rites and customs, that the Jews had learned their philosophy, and embraced several of their opinions, ever since their conversing with that people under Alexander the Great, the Ptolemies, and Seleucidæ his successors, who reigned in Egypt and Syria.

The old versions, particularly the Syriac and Arabic, are sometimes so wide from the Greek, that one scarce knows how to believe that they were made from it, often inserting long paraphrases foreign to it, and in other places omitting as much; and yet there is no good reason to think that they translated from any Hebrew copy: if that indeed was certain, they would stand on an equal foot with the Greek, excepting its being translated so early, and by so near a relation. Nor do the oriental versions agree any better with the Latin. As to the Vulgate in particular, it is uncertain what copy it follows, or of what authority that copy was: it sometimes adds whole sentences, which have nothing to answer them in the Greek: possibly the translator, to be more explicit, gave two renderings of the same sentence, or, as Huetius conjectures, inserted some parallel maxims from some other work. It does not appear to have been interpolated, except some marginal annotations should accidentally have crept into the text, much less to have been corrupted with design by an officious hand: and there is still less reason to assert, that any alterations have been made by the pious fraud of some Christian, to make it conform to and countenance some favourite sentiments and opinions, as Grotius has, without any warrant or proof, more than once intimated. Bossuet, Calmet, and the other commentators, follow the Vulgate too implicitly and securely, and make that version the foundation of their annotations, and no wonder that the popish expositors should adhere religiously to it, which the council of Trent has confirmed and ratified. It may be observed of all these, and of Grotius himself among the rest, that by commenting from this, instead of the Greek, which serves now for the original, a sense is often given either superfluous or foreign to the author's meaning.

The old English versions, as Coverdale's and the Bishops' Bible, generally copy the Vulgate too closely, imitating and transcribing it in many [faulty] instances: the Geneva often departs from it for the better. Our last translators are not so servile, nor do they follow any one Greek copy invariably, as it is difficult, I may say, impossible, to fix upon any one copy as the true standard of the rest; but they seem chiefly to have regarded the Complut. which, though it lies under a suspicion of conforming its Greek to the Vulgate; yet Dr. Grabe (Prolegom. cap. 3. §. 1.) says, it exhibits a text in this book, "Non nuper fictum aut interpolatum, sed jam olim a Patribus ita lectum." But they scruple not occasionally to prefer the Latin before the Greek, where they think it gives a better sense, and sometimes even to adopt conjectures, unsupported by any copy, for the same purpose. But upon the whole, either not attending sufficiently to the scope of the context, or not expressing fully the spirit and propriety of the Greek, their rendering is in very many places inaccurate and obscure, and in some faulty and mistaken. These defects are indeed discernible in many translations, made immediately from the original; but they must necessarily be more numerous, where translations are made from one another, as most of our English ones probably are; which holds true of the canonical books (see Boyle on the Style of the Holy Scriptures), as well as of the apocryphal writings.

The learned are divided in their sentiments about the time of writing this book. The first opinion is of those, who refer it to the reign of Solomon, and make that prince to be the author of it. But to the reasons before hinted at against this notion, we may add, that this writer speaks of Solomon himself, very much to his discredit; of the kings his successors; of prophets, and other famous men, who lived before and after the Babylonish captivity; of the twelve minor prophets, and cites the very words of Malachi, the last of them. He mentions also Simon the high-priest, whose time, whether we understand it of the first or second of that name, will by no means synchronize to the era of Solomon's reign. And the author in some passages (as xxxiv. 11, 12. li. 6.) discovers certain particulars of his own life, which cannot be applied to that prince. The second is of such as place this writer under the pontificate of Eleazar, and in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelph, between A. M. 3711. the supposed year of Simon the Just's death, and A. M. 3783. the year of Evergetes the First's death, according to Usher, and other chronologers. This opinion is in part admissible, and may be true so far as it relates to this writer's going into Egypt, but not as to the time of his writing this book of Ecclesiasticus, which was under another reign, and in his more advanced age. The third is of those, who place him either under the pontificate of Simon II. of whom they understand chap. l. or of Onias III. before Christ. cir. 171 years, and make him (the grandfather) to go, or rather flee into Egypt, on account of the persecutions and distresses which the Jews suffered under Antiochus Epiphanes, to whose troublesome times they refer chap. xxxiv. xxxv. xxxvi. li. This opinion is as much too late for the author's writing his original work, and agrees not with his seeing Simon the Just officiate, mentioned chap. l. nor does it allow a sufficient distance of time between the two Sirachides, the author and the Greek translator, the latter of whom translated, as he himself says, under Evergetes, which must mean the second of that name. The new hypothesis advanced in the following Discourse of the irrespective times, makes the grandfather to have written Ecclesiasticus sometime under Evergetes I. about 232 years before Christ, and the grandson to have translated in the first year of Evergetes II. or rather of the joint reign of the two brothers. Which date is proposed as most probable, because otherwise the life of the translator would be carried beyond the age of man, as will appear distinctly from the chronological table annexed; for the favour of which I am obliged to the singular goodness of a very learned prelate, to whom religion and the republic of letters are greatly indebted, and whose sentiments on all occasions are so just, that every the least work of his is truly valuable.

Some disputes have been raised concerning this writer,

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from his being called *Jesus, the son of Sirach.* From the first some have contended, that the author of this book was Jesus, son of Josedec the high-priest, mentioned Hag. i. 1. as we meet with several of this name in the Jewish history; but as that Jesus lived in the times of Zachary, Malachi, Ezra, and Nehemiah, he must have been some centuries before our author; for these holy men flourished under Darius Hystaspes, who preceded even Alexander the Great two hundred years: but this writer lived after prophecy had ceased, after the time of Ezra, and the perfecting the canon, even after that of Simon the Just, the last, as is generally supposed, of the men of the great synagogue, from whose family, by Eleazar, probably this writer was descended. From the second, *viz. son of Sirach,* it has been alleged by some rabbins and Christian writers, that, as the Jews have now a book among them which they call the book of *Ben-Sira, i. e.* the book of the son of Sira; and this book containing a collection of moral sayings, this *Ben-Sira,* or the son of Sira (of whose proverbs Fagius has given two alphabets in Hebrew and Chaldee, with a Latin version), is the same with *Ben-Sirach,* or the son of Sirach, and his book the same as that of Ecclesiasticus. But this surmise seems to be founded only in the similitude of the names of these authors; for there is so far from being a perfect agreement or a conformity of sentiments between them, that *Ben-Sira's* alphabet has many things which the other has not, and some quite contrary to it, (see note on xxv. 26.) and others trifling, ridiculous, or indefensible, as will appear from a comparison of the sentences, which Corn. a Lapide, to prove them different persons, has prefixed to his commentary. Those few parallel ones which we meet with, possibly Jesus might adopt, and insert into his own work, as there is a very considerable difference betwixt them in point of time likewise. For this *Ben-Sira,* according to some Jewish writers, was the son or nephew of Jeremiah, and not long after his time, and had a son named Uziel, and a grandson Joseph (names which suit not either the author or the translator), and so must have lived in the time of the captivity, or soon after the return from it; but the author of Ecclesiasticus flourished after the time of Alexander the Great, and the establishment of the Greek monarchy. (See Buxt. and Bartolocc. Bibl. Rabbin.) With as little reason is Jesus, the writer of this book, supposed by others to be one of the LXX. interpreters; for though it is probable he went into Egypt in the time of Ptolemy Philadelph, yet that he was sent thither, or assisted in that translation, or took the hint from questions proposed to those interpreters, to set about his own work of moral sentences and apophthegms, is all conjecture. This notion took its rise probably from Aristeus mentioning one of that name amongst those interpreters, which, suppose it true, though his account is generally reckoned fabulous, is not sufficient to determine that Jesus, the son of Sirach, was the person.

I have, in the comment on the book of Wisdom,* considered and examined the principal councils, on the sanction of which the Romanists ground the canonicalness of this, and the other apocryphal writings, to which I beg leave to refer the reader: at present I shall take notice of and confute another pretence, which is urged by some of that communion,* *viz.* that besides the first canon of Scripture, made in the time of Esdras, there was another added in the time of Eleazar the high-priest, by a council then assembled at Jerusalem, when they sent their seventy-two interpreters to Ptolemy, king of Egypt, for the translating their Hebrew Bible into Greek, in which council they canonized the books of Tobit, Ecclesiasticus, and some others. In answer to this, I observe,—1. That it does not appear by any evidence that the Jews ever had any such second canon among them. 2. Had there been any such, they were too tenacious of their laws, and the traditions of their elders, ever to have parted with it. 3. To what purpose should they afterward reject such a canon, or what would they have gained by it? Possibly they might have been willing to abolish or mutilate those Scriptures, as Isaiah and Daniel, which prophesied of the coming of Christ, at the time when they rejected him; but what should induce them to attempt an alteration as to these books in which there are no such prophecies against them? 4. Had these, now called *apocryphal* books, ever been made parts of the canonical Scriptures, it would have been a wicked sacrilege in the Jews after to have rejected them; nor would Christ, that so often and sharply reproves them for taking away the true sense of Scripture, have failed to have condemned them more severely for renouncing whole books of it. As there is then no such canon any where to be produced, nor any probability that the Jews should receive any such, who religiously adhered to the first as delivered to them by the prophets, and still less reason to imagine that they ever should part with it afterward, if once authorized, it is as clear as any evidence can make it, that there never was any such second canon of Scripture made by a council of Jerusalem. (See Cosin's Schol. Hist. p. 14, &c.) Calmet indeed says, that it is a received opinion of the catholic church, that this book was placed in the canon of Scripture; and that it may be demonstrated by the testimony of several fathers, and by the tradition of all Christian churches, and by its being quoted by a great number of ecclesiastical writers, as a work inspired by the Holy Ghost. To the first assertion I answer,—that if, by the catholic church, he means the church universal, it is not true. Episcopius, to shew the agreement of Christian churches with the Jews in this point, enumerates the decisions of nine of the eastern, nine of the western, and two of the African churches, determining for the canon as we now have it, and excluding all other, but the twenty-two books received by the Jewish church, and contained in the Hebrew Bible. (See Joseph. cont. App. lib. i.) If, by catholic church, he means that of Rome in particular, her judgment cannot outweigh the decisions of a larger number, and churches of greater authority, *viz.* those of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople, to the contrary. As to the second pretence, that the fathers revere and quote this book as Scripture, it may be replied, 1. That the term *scripture* is often taken laxly, to signify any ancient ecclesiastical writings, containing excellent and pious instructions in them; in

* Annotat. on Calmet's Preface.

* Genebrard, Maldonate, Serarius, Perron, &c.

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regard whereof this book, and the other of Wisdom, may have been called holy writings, and Divine books, and sometimes canonical ones, but not in so true and strict a sense as the other uncontroverted books are. 2. That when either the Greek or Latin fathers make a more honourable mention of them, and attribute to them the title of holy writings; yet this does not place them higher than in the second rank of scriptures, which are of a lesser, imperfect, and doubtful authority.

I shall, in a third and last part, which will finish my whole design, attempt to illustrate in the same manner the books of Tobit, Judith, Baruch, &c. to which I shall add some strictures and observations on particular passages in the books of Maccabees and Esdras. And this, God willing, shall follow with all convenient speed.

PROLOGUE.

ALMOST after all the prophets.] Either this is a mistake, or they mistake who make Malachi the last of all the prophets; for should we understand this of Jesus the grandfather (to carry the matter as high as possible), though undoubtedly the grandson is meant here, as the learned have very justly observed that this book was wrote in the third century before Christ, and translated about a hundred and thirty-three years before his advent; (see Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 41.) we cannot reconcile the assertion here with the time in which chronologers have fixed the death of Malachi, and the completing of the canon; which Helvicus, Prideaux, Usher, place about anno 428. Artaxerxes 37. except the word *prophet* is to be taken in a more lax and extensive sense. (See following Discourse.)

PROLOGUE II.

FOR in the eight-and-thirtieth year coming into Egypt, when Evergetes was king, &c.] The learned are greatly divided how to settle this difficulty: they are not agreed whether the words should be understood of the thirty-eighth year of the translator, or of the years of the reign of Evergetes, or of the thirty-eighth year of jubilee, or of the thirty-eighth of the Dionysian era, or of the thirty-eighth year of the Jews' deliverance from slavery under Ptolemy Philadelph, or of the thirty-eighth year from the grandfather's writing his book in Hebrew, or of the thirty-eighth year from the grandson's coming into Egypt. See following Discourse, where these opinions are discussed, and the difficulty cleared up.

I found a book of no small learning; therefore I thought it most necessary for me to bestow some diligence and travail to interpret it.] Our translators suppose the book he translated to be the same that he found: but can this be? was he a stranger to his grandfather's work till he happened to meet with it in Egypt? The account in the former prologue is, that the original work was transmitted from father to son; *viz.* by Jesus the elder to Sirach, and by Sirach to Jesus the translator; and no doubt but it was preserved by them as a most valuable work in their family. Of this, indeed, Jesus the translator gives some account above; and yet by this expression it seems as if he met with his grandfather's work by mere chance in Egypt, which is not an easy supposition. May not ἀφόμοιον here stand for, and relate to, some other book, the meeting with which was his inducement to translate his grandfather's work in like manner? for they seem to be plainly distinguished, as two different works, but of the same nature and kind: ἀφόμοιον, which is properly rendered here, from the Greek, *exemplar* in the Polyglot Bibles, does not signify a copy or transcript of the original book (nor is it usual, speaking of a copy, to say, *exemplar non parvæ doctrinæ*), but means a learned and ingenious performance of the like kind, which moved him to an imitation of it in a similar case, to translate the work he had before spoken of, and to publish it for the sake of his countrymen in dispersion. Though ἀφόμοιος is *dissimilis*, ἀφόμοιον here must be understood in the sense of ἀφομοίωμα, *similitude* or *likeness*. And what book so likely to be this ἀφομοίωμα, as one of the τῶν πατρίων Βιβλίων written after the prophets? and among these what so probable, says a very learned friend, to whom I am not a little indebted in the following work, "as the Wisdom of Solomon in particular, the translation of which into Greek he might first meet with in Egypt, after he had made some stay there; and which, being done with great skill, and proving very instructive, might be his motive to think of doing the like with his grandfather's collection of sentences, which were of the same kind, and partly on the same subject? (See first Prolog.) This likewise might be his inducement to entitle his work in the same manner, *Wisdom*. For the first Prologue says, *he gave it this name*, and that Jesus did imitate Solomon, which perhaps was the reason why one is tacked or joined to the other. Our translation, therefore, of the above-said passage (he conceives) should run thus: *For in the thirty-eighth year* (of my age) *being in Egypt, in the reign of Evergetes, and staying there some time, I met with a learned and instructive tract or instance of this kind; and thereupon I myself* [αὐτὸς] *thought I was bound to apply myself with close study and diligence, to the rendering into Greek this same book,* τήνδε τὴν βίβλον; *viz.* his grandfather's, which he before recommended as a most useful book. This makes his whole Prologue consistent with itself, and to be easy and natural, and likewise conformable to the account given in the anonymous Prologue above." I could not conceal from the reader this ingenious conjecture; how far the circumstance of time, and the era of the respective writers, will confirm it, the learned must determine.

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A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE AGE OF THE TWO SIRACHIDES,

ONE THE AUTHOR, THE OTHER THE GREEK TRANSLATOR,

OF

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS.

WHERE there are intrinsic characters in any author, that shew the age he did or did not live in, or give ground for reasonable conjectures of the time he wrote in, little notice should be taken of any authorities to the contrary from writers of a distant, subsequent age, to the prejudice of the author, whose characters they overlook or contradict. This is the case of the prologue of St. Athanasius, which is joined with the prologue of the Greek translator of the book Ecclesiasticus. It is probable he is the same Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, as Euthalius dedicated his edition of the Acts and Epistles to, who flourished between the years 458 and 490, as is proved by Zacagny the editor: and if so, he was above a century at least from the age of the great Athanasius, and at too great a distance from the age of the translator of Ecclesiasticus, to be regarded in any historical or chronological point, wherein he differs from that translator.

This I take to be the shortest way of getting rid of the first difficulty in the prologue of Athanasius the younger. The age of Malachi is too well settled to be shaken by so modern an authority; and for the author of the Hebrew Ecclesiasticus, he is in several places express against the assertions or deductions that may be drawn from any expressions in the prologue aforesaid. For instance, the Hebrew Sirachides speaks in the praise of the twelve minor prophets, xlix. 10. *And of the twelve prophets let the memorial be blessed.*—So that he not only lived after them, but even after the prophecies were collected into one volume, which went under the denomination of the Twelve Prophets, as did the collection of the five books of Moses under the name of the Pentateuch, and of the Octateuch, when the three other books were added to it.

And to be sure that Malachi, the last prophet, made one in the collection of the twelve prophets, the same Hebrew Ecclesiasticus quotes the very words of Malachi, as a prediction of his, then yet to be fulfilled. For speaking of Elias, who, as Malachi foretold, was to come before the great and terrible day of the Lord, he epitomizes what Malachi had said upon that occasion; (iv. 5, 6.) *Elias* (says he) *was ordained to pacify the Lord's judgment before it breaks forth.* And then quotes the very words of Malachi, (xlviii. 10.) *To turn the heart of the father unto the son.*

But how then are we to understand Athanasius when he says, "The son of Sirach lived almost after all the prophets?" It is of no consequence whether we understand him at all. If he meant almost after the twelve, or any of the minor prophets, he is plainly mistaken. And if he uses the word *prophet* in any other sense, it is foreign to your purpose. Possibly he might learn of the Jews (who esteemed the בת־קול to be a lower degree of prophecy) to call those prophets who are favoured with that gentle voice: or rather, with Josephus, to term some holy men prophets, who lived in the interval between the ceasing of prophecy and the advent of Christ, and predicted a few future events, relating to public or private affairs, which came to pass accordingly, as Josephus affirms.

The same prologue of Athanasius affirms, that Sirachides was no less *famous for wisdom than Solomon*, which, I think, intends no more than that his collection of wise, pithy sayings, was in as great repute, was known and read as much as the Proverbs of Solomon, which were in the highest esteem for their wisdom and learning. As much as to say,—Sirachides was looked on as another Solomon, for his wise, moral, and economical precepts. Eastern comparisons (and herein the Egyptians imitated them) are not to be stretched to every degree of equality. Sirachides might imitate Solomon, and resemble him in many things, without coming up to his full height of wisdom, much less to his spirit of inspiration.

The learned are indeed much divided in opinion, touching the thirty-eighth year, mentioned in the prologue of the Greek Sirachides, but most of their reasons may be answered easily, and methinks I see, in the prologue itself, light enough how to understand it differently from them all. His words are these: Ἐν τῷ λή ἔτει (ἐπὶ τοῦ Εὐεργέτου Βασιλέως) παραγενηθεὶς εἰς Αἴγυπτον καὶ συγχρονίσας, εὗρον οὐ μικρᾶς παιδείας ἀφόμοιον: of which I take the sense to be this, "For in the thirty-eighth year (Evergetes being then king) *after I had come into Egypt and sojourned there* all that whole long time, I met with a copy or exemplar of this book, fraught with no small learning."—To synchronize, is to be equal in time or duration with some other thing: and here is nothing to synchronize with besides the thirty-eight years of his abode in Egypt, which began from the year of his first entrance into that country, and concurred with the succeeding years to the thirty-eighth.

I am aware that ἀφόμοιον or ἐφόμοιον (as some manuscripts have it) is not classical Greek. For though ἀφόμοιος doth usually stand in the Greek writers for *unlike*, taking the particle ἀπὸ in a contrary sense to that I use it in, yet since ἀφομοίωσις commonly signifies *similitude*, I cannot see why ἀφόμοιον may not signify a counterpart of a writing, copied *upon*, *from*, or *after* it. It must be remembered, that in Alexandria, the common people, as yet, spoke Macedonian Greek, and our translator, conversing much with them, might fall into their dialect, or compound Greek words as they did, though not so much in use before him, when he thought them to be most expressive of his meaning.

They that understand this thirty-eighth year of part of the jubilee year, surely did not consider that those years, no more than the sabbatical years, were observed out of the land of Canaan. The design of the jubilee was, to preserve the inheritances of families within their own proper tribes; and therefore when a possessor, through misfortune, or luxurious living, had been forced to mortgage his estate, it was ordained to be restored to him or his heirs, at or after the revolution of fifty years, and so the inheritance was restored to the family that formerly possessed it; but as the Jews had no inheritances in their dispersions, the jubilee year was impracticable, and the observation of such an epoch needless, and next to impossible.

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Nor will recourse to the Dionysian year help those who would accommodate this thirty-eighth year to that epoch; for his era beginning from the first of Ptolemy Philadelph, and Philadelph reigning but thirty-eight years, according to Ptolemy's Canon, at most thirty-nine according to Josephus, the first of Evergetes must be the thirty-ninth or fortieth of the Dionysian era, and consequently exceeds a year or two the thirty-eighth year of the Greek Sirachides.

The year of the Jews' deliverance from slavery, under Ptolemy Philadelph, bids fairest for a Jewish epoch to be remembered in Egypt; but as this deliverance has no other nor better authority than that of Aristeus (for Josephus follows him) the fact is doubtful, especially since this deliverance is said to be purchased with a large sum of money by the Jews, which how they that were slaves, and not long ago led captives into Egypt, were able to amass, is not easy to guess. The year of this deliverance is not mentioned by Aristeus. Eusebius (upon what authority I know not) places it in the second or third year of the reign of Philadelphus; but that is most improbable, that a wise king, just come to the throne of a newly-conquered kingdom, should make it one of his first acts to do the most provoking thing possible to a superstitious, changeable, seditious people, *viz.* the procuring the publication of a book that rallied their religion and their gods, and exposed the tyranny and cruelty of their ancestor kings, and perpetuated the history of the shameful destruction of their nation, in the cause of those very Jews that were now again their slaves. Scaliger, therefore, from the reckoning of Julius Africanus, places it in the latter end of his reign. By the computation therefore of Julius Africanus, this version was not made under Evergetes the First, for he reigned but twenty-four years; and add to those twenty-four years the five or six years of Philadelph, after the Sirachides had made this pretended Greek version, and you get no higher than five or six years more, which fall short of the thirty-eight years in the prologue.

Indeed, by Eusebius's computation, the Greek Sirachides might come into Egypt, and begin his translation the second or third of Evergetes; but then there are other circumstances that overthrow this opinion also; for the Hebrew Sirachides writ his book under a king of Egypt, who persecuted the Jews, and from whom he was in danger of his life after many sufferings by false accusations, &c. This could not happen in Ptolemy Lagi's reign, because the elder Sirachides was scarcely born at that time, at least he was too young to repair into Egypt to get wisdom and knowledge, which, as he himself seems to intimate, was the end of his going thither, much less was he of an age capable of writing a book of such wise instructions and observations. Nor is it likely that he or his people should suffer such grievous things under Philadelph, a prince of a most humane temper; and particularly favourable to the Jewish nation, according to the same Eusebius: if then we bring the Hebrew Sirachides into Egypt, not sooner than the reign of Evergetes the First, the Greek Sirachides could not in his reign translate this book; for a proper interval must be allowed between the writing and the translation, much longer than the reign of Evergetes, or even of his successor. It must be considered the Hebrew Sirachides wrote his book in Hebrew, or in the language of the Jews at Jerusalem, as a manual for the Jews in Egypt, who must therefore be supposed able to read and understand well that language: but the Greek Sirachides therefore translated this book out of Hebrew, because the Jews had then almost all forgot their native tongue. Thus the Greek prologue of the translator; "Having found a copy of no small learning, or instruction, I thought it most necessary for me to bestow some diligence and travail to interpret it with great watchfulness and skill, in my leisure hours, to bring the book to an end, and set it forth or publish it for their use, who, in this Egyptian dispersion or peregrination, were given to study or learning, being before prepared in manners to live according to the law." This was the very end proposed by his grandfather in writing the book; "to the intent (says the translator, in the same prologue) that those which are desirous to learn, and are addicted to these things, might profit much more in living according to the law." Such a change in language in the same people might easily happen within the compass of three generations, or of a hundred and twenty years, and not much sooner; consequently the Greek translator did not tread too quick upon the heels of the Hebrew writer, but his age must be brought down to the reign of a later Ptolemy; and if he did translate, as he says he did, under Evergetes, he must be under Evergetes the Second, and at a good distance from Evergetes the First.

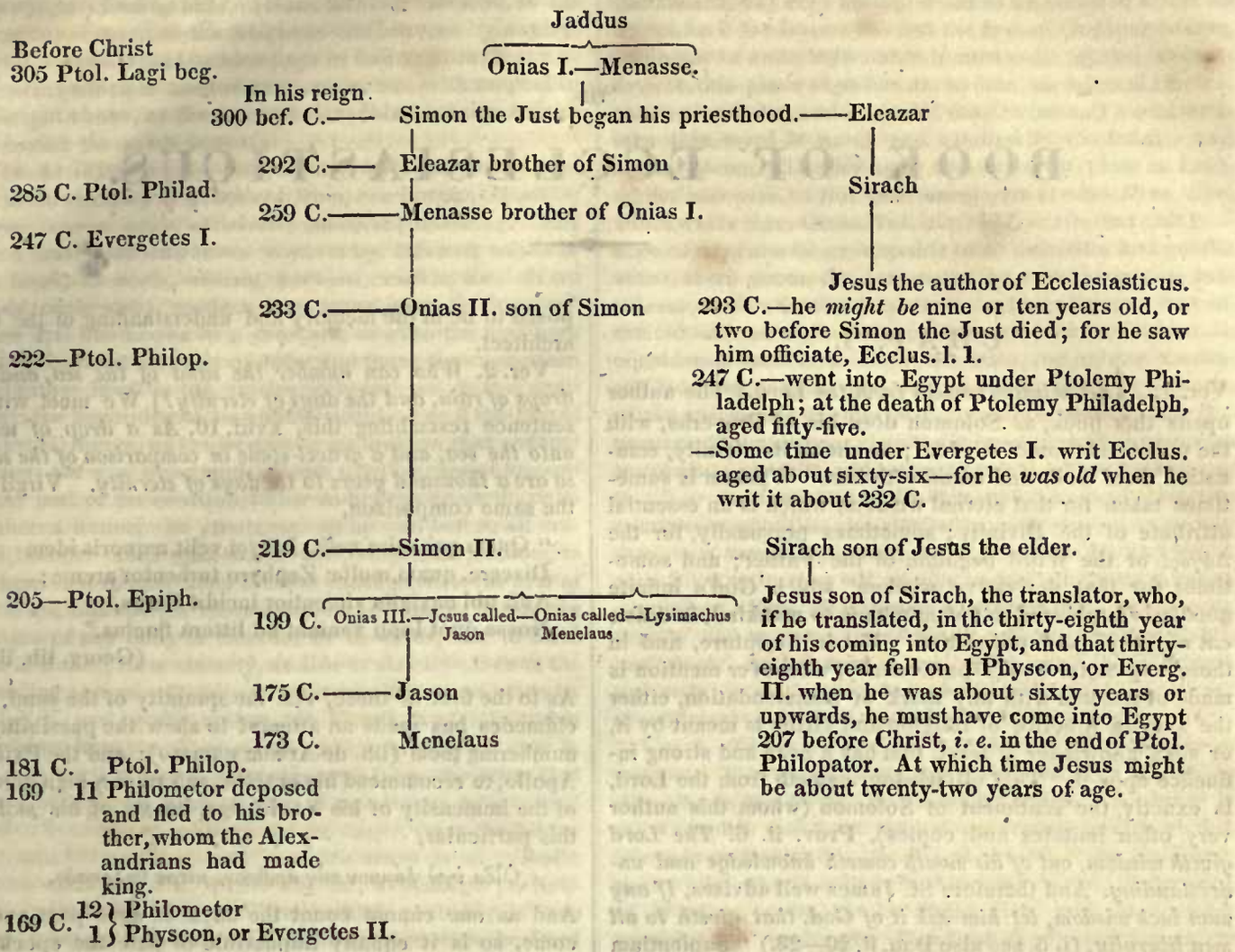
The opinion of those (which is the general opinion of learned men) who make this thirty-eighth year to be the year of his life, is liable to few or no exceptions; but it seems to be too vague an expression, without some word, expressive of his age, to restrain it to that sense, unless it should appear that such omissions are not unfrequent in this translation: the mention of his own age at all does not seem to be of any importance towards raising the value of the work itself; but the long stay in Egypt before he undertook it, implies that he was well qualified for such a work, and fully acquainted with the want his countrymen were in of such a translation.

The following genealogical table may contribute to strengthen what I have advanced above concerning the age the translator lived in; at least it will shew that Jesus the younger could not translate his grandfather's book under Evergetes the First.

I think it may be collected from several passages of Ecclesiasticus, that Sirachides the writer was of the priestly line, and if we may credit the reading in some Greek MSS. Ecclus. l. 3. he was descended from Eleazar, the brother of Simon Justus, the high-priest; and should that be allowed, I make Jesus, the son of Sirach the younger, to have translated thirty-eight years sooner than Archbishop Usher doth, *viz.* in the first year of Evergetes the Second, ante Chr. 169. and not in his thirty-eighth year, 132. which would protract the translator's life too long.

I would not be thought in the table to fix the year precisely, when each priest entered on his office. It is sufficient for our purpose, that it is near the time specified, allowing about thirty years to each priest's continuance in his office.

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But, whether the elder Sirachides was of the family of Simon the high-priest by Eleazar or not, it is certain he was of a competent age to remember Simon's graceful performing of the duty of high-priest: that he was not of sufficient age and experience, before the reign of Evergetes I. to write his book, *in old age:* and that the reign of Evergetes I. was too short (twenty-four years) for his grandson in advanced years to translate this book under the same Evergetes: as, on the other hand, the grandson must have lived beyond the usual period of men, to begin this translation in the thirty-eighth of Evergetes II. according to Usher, or his father Sirach must have exceeded the like period, did he, the son, at the thirty-eighth year of his life, reach the reign of Evergetes II. and yet his grandfather Jesus be acquainted with Simon the First.

E. Duresme.

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THE

BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *ALL wisdom cometh from the Lord.*] The author opens this book, as Solomon does his of Proverbs, with the commendation of wisdom; he shews its eternity, emanation from God, and union with him. Wisdom is sometimes taken for that eternal wisdom, which is an essential attribute of the Divinity; sometimes personally, for the Λόγος, or the Word begotten of the Father; and sometimes for that derivative wisdom, which God's infinite goodness is pleased to communicate to mankind, in different measures and proportion. But in Scripture, and in these sapiential books particularly, whenever mention is made of wisdom with any mark of commendation, either the sincere practice of religion and virtue is meant by it, or such knowledge at least, that has a near and strong influence upon it. That all wisdom cometh from the Lord, is exactly the sentiment of Solomon (whom this author very often imitates and copies), Prov. ii. 6. *The Lord giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.* And therefore St. James well advises, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all men liberally,* (i. 5. see also Dan. ii. 20—23.) "Sapientiam homini tribuit Deus (says Lactantius) quam terrenus Pater dare nullo modo potest;" (de Opificio Dei, cap. 19.) distinguishing God in this particular from an earthly parent; who, though he can give temporal good things for the comfort of life, yet cannot he give wisdom for the conduct of it. This observation of our author should excite us to adore God with a respect and duty worthy of him, and to acknowledge with the profoundest humility, that God, in giving us wisdom, has given us the greatest gift that he can bestow, even a gift in some sense equal to himself.

And is with him for ever.] The Vulgate renders, *Et cum illo fuit semper, et est ante ævum.* The first clause is not in the Greek. The meaning of the latter is, that wisdom, considered as the Λόγος, or a Divine attribute, is always present with God, as his joint-counsellor, and the partner of his throne. See Wisd. viii. 3. ix. 4. Prov. viii. 22. 27. 30. to which agrees the Tigurine version, *et eidem semper conjuncta est.* Rabanus Maurus, understanding it of the Logos, says, this author opens his book as St. John does his gospel, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,* &c. If with the Vulgate and some other Latin translations we understand it in the *præteritum,* the sense then may be,—that God had from all eternity a perfect idea of his future works; that the design and order of the creation, with the whole series of providence, were always present in the eternal mind, in a manner infinitely more perfect, than the scheme of any work can be supposed to be in the memory and understanding of the best architect.

Ver. 2. *Who can number the sand of the sea, and the drops of rain, and the days of eternity?*] We meet with a sentence resembling this, xviii. 10. *As a drop of water unto the sea, and a gravel-stone in comparison of the sand, so are a thousand years to the days of eternity.* Virgil has the same comparison,

> "Quem qui scire velit, Libyci velit æquoris idem
> Discere, quam multæ Zephyro turbentur arenæ;
> Aut, ubi navigiis violentior incidit Eurus,
> Nosse quot Ionii veniant ad littora fluctus."
>
> (Georg. lib. ii.)

As to the first of these, *viz.* the quantity of the sand, Archimedes has made an attempt to shew the possibility of numbering them (lib. de Arenæ numero); and the Pythian Apollo, to recommend his oracles, and raise a high conceit of the immensity of his knowledge, boasts of his skill in this particular,

Οἶδα ἐγὼ ψάμμου τὸν ἀριθμον, μέτρα θαλάσσης.

And as one cannot count the days of ages past and to come, so is it equally impossible to date the epocha of wisdom, to fix the time when she first began to be, or to determine her certain period. The impossibilities here referred to (for such they must be acknowledged with respect to human power) God only can effect, who, as the prophet sublimely describes him, *measures the waters in the hollow of his hand, and metes out heaven with a span, and comprehends the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, whose Spirit none hath directed, nor shewed to him the way of understanding.* (Isa. xl. 12—14.)

Ver. 3. *Who can find out the height of heaven, and the breadth of the earth, and the deep, and wisdom?*] See vi. 22. and note upon it. As in the former verse wisdom is compared to three things that cannot be numbered, so in this it is compared to as many as cannot be measured; intimating, that as these cannot be measured or numbered by any but God, so neither is wisdom known to, or can be perfectly comprehended by, any being else. Thus Job, speaking of the unsearchable wisdom of God, and his unfathomable perfections, puts these inquiries, and illustrates the absurdity of the attempt by some of the like instances: *Canst thou search out the Almighty to perfection? It is higher than the heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? the measure of it is longer than the earth, and the breadth of it than the sea,* (xi. 7—9.) And the apostle cries out, *O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and*

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his ways past finding out! (Rom. xi. 33.) Hesiod, in his Theogony, describes the height of the heavens by saying, a smith's anvil would be nine days in falling from thence to the earth; which is as random a conjecture with respect to the height above, as the attempt of Archimedes was rash of numbering the sands beneath.

Ver. 4. *Wisdom hath been created before all things, and the understanding of prudence from everlasting.*] Προτέρα πάντων ἔκτισται σοφία, καὶ σύνεσις φρονήσεως ἐξ αἰῶνος. The Greek translator expresses wisdom by different words in this book, as σοφία, σύνεσις, φρόνησις, παιδεία, &c. If we should understand wisdom here personally, it does not follow that the Logos is a creature, or even the first-born of every creature in point of order and time; the expression here rather implies his existence before all things, even before the beginning of the visible world. For if the Logos created all things, as the Scripture assures us, that *without him was not any thing made,* (John i. 3.) he cannot himself be any part of the creation, either in heaven or earth, or be numbered among the creatures, as he was before all created beings. It is well worth observing, that wisdom is not here said to have been created πρώτη πάντων, *the first of all things,* but προτέρα πάντων, *before all things;* before the creation of any thing in heaven, or in earth, and to have been ἐξ αἰῶνος, from eternity, as αἰὼν is strictly taken in the preceding verses. Πρότερος is used in this sense often by the LXX. and by this author, xii. 17. xli. 5. xlvi. 3. and is equivalent here to πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἔκτισέ με, xxiv. 9. See note on that place, where the verb ἔκτισε, the same that is here used, must mean an eternal generation, as it is said to have been πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος, and ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, from the beginning, and before the world: in which sense most catholic writers understand it, Prov. viii. 22. a passage particularly resembling this, and from which probably it was taken, where wisdom is said to have been with the Lord *before his works of old; i. e.* before the works of the creation, from everlasting, or ever the earth was. It is observable, that our translators render, *The Lord possessed me from the beginning,* following a copy which read ἐκτήσατο, as the Hebrew word is translated by Aquila, and Philo, de Temulentia. But allowing ἔκτισε to be the true reading, which is disputed, it may be used both by Solomon and the son of Sirach in the sense of *generated,* and thus Athanasius, Serm. 3. cont. Arian. Cyril. lib. v. Thes. cap. 6. Hil. lib. de Synod. understand *creation.* And indeed the terms *generation* and *creation* are often used promiscuously in the best authors. Thus Cicero, "Quoniam plurima beneficia continet Patria, et est antiquior Parens quam is qui, ut aiunt, creaverit, major ei profecto, quam Parenti, debetur gratia." (Lib. i. de Repub.) And in this sense we find it used by Virgil, Æneid. lib. x. 517. 543. And on the other hand *generation* is sometimes used for *creation;* thus Psal. xc. 2. πρὸ τὰ ὄρη γεννηθῆναι, *before the mountains were brought forth;* i. e. *created,* or *existed.* And when such strong terms as beforementioned, expressive of eternity, are added to κτίζεσθαι, it then means *eternal generation.* In like manner, when Homer calls the gods ἀειγενέτας, we cannot suppose that he means any reflection upon them, or intends any lower sense than that of αἰὲν ἐόντας. Indeed, Apoc. iii. 14. the Logos is said to be, ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the beginning of the creation of God;* an expression, according to the inaccuracy of our translation, not very unlike, *Wisdom was created before all things,* as if the Logos was but the first of God's creatures, made use of as an instrument to create all others; whereas ἀρχὴ in this place signifies an author, an original efficient cause or creator, and so in all the Divine and moral writings this word is used, and applied to the infinite and eternal Being. The Ethiopic version of the place in Latin agrees herewith, *et fuit ante omnia quæ creavit Deus.* (See Blackwall's Sac. Class. vol. ii. p. 177.) So that this passage of St. John being capable of so orthodox and good a sense, there seems the less occasion to alter κτίσεως into κτήσεως, as Dr. Grabe has done in his edition. But all difficulties and objections will be avoided, if wisdom be considered here as a Divine attribute, the infinite wisdom of God, displayed in and poured forth upon all the works of the creation. In this sense Grotius understands this passage of our author, *Creata dicitur divina Sapientia, cum se operibus prodidit,* and refers to ver. 9. as explanatory of it. Nor is it unusual with this writer, to apply the term *creation* to qualities and attributes, as it does here to wisdom, in a secondary sense. (See vii. 16. x. 18. xxxviii. 4. xliv. 2.) Lastly, may not προτέρα express the pre-eminence of wisdom above all things and persons, in point of worth, dignity, and essence, far *above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come?* (See Heinsii Aristar. Sac. in Joh. i. 15.)

Ver. 5. *The Word of God most high is the fountain of wisdom.*] This verse is omitted in most Greek copies, as it is also in the Syriac and Arabic versions; it occurs in the Complut. and from thence our translators inserted it. We may understand by the Word of God, either the Logos personally, who is called the Almighty Word, in the book of Wisdom, xviii. 15. by Philo also, and the Chaldee paraphrasts; or by the Word of God, may be meant the Holy Scripture, which is the source of wisdom, and a rich treasury of heavenly knowledge; and that the commandments therein contained are the way to wisdom, according to the observation in ver. 26. (See Deut. iv. 6.)

And her ways are everlasting commandments.] Coverdale's and the Geneva versions are more clear and explicit, *The everlasting commandments are the entrance unto her.* The sense is much the same as in the former sentence, though the phrase is somewhat varied, as may be observed almost throughout this, and the book of Proverbs; *viz.* that the keeping of the commandments, or the observance of the precepts of the Decalogue, which Moses styles everlasting, from their unchangeableness, in opposition to human laws, that are alterable at pleasure, is the way which leads to wisdom. Like that, Prov. i. 17. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;* and that in Job xxviii. 28. *The fear of the Lord is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.* The words of Baruch very happily express the sense of our author: *Hear, O Israel, the commandments of life, give ear to understand wisdom. Thou hast forsaken the fountain of wisdom, for if thou hadst walked in the way of God, then shouldest thou have dwelled in peace for ever,* (iii. 9. 12, 13.)

Ver. 6. *To whom hath the root of wisdom been revealed?*] Thus Baruch iii. 15. *Who hath found out her place, or who hath come into her treasures?* (See also ver. 29—32. and Job xxviii. 20. 23.) If by *the root of wisdom,* we hereun-

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derstand religion, then the sense may be, "that the right knowledge of God, and the true way of worshipping him, were discovered but to a few nations:" *God shewed his statutes and ordinances unto Israel, but the heathen had no knowledge of his laws*, as the Psalmist expresses it, Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20. Thus again Baruch, chap. iii. *No man knoweth her way, nor thinketh of her path; but he that knoweth all things knoweth her, he hath found out all the way of knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob his servant, and to Israel his beloved.* Or if we understand this of God himself, as the root and fountain of wisdom, the meaning then will be, "Who can fathom the depth of infinite wisdom, unravel the mysteries of Providence, and the secrets of God's judgments? Or who can fully explain the nature and essence of the Deity, or know the whole of his will, and the true and perfect manner of his worship, which can only be discovered in his word, and as far as he has been pleased to reveal himself, and make the counsels of his will known?" Πανουργήματα is used by Solomon and this writer in a good sense, though oftener, I believe, taken in a bad one. The next verse is omitted in many Greek copies, and by the Arabic and Syriac interpreters. It seems only an explanation of this, and perhaps crept into the text from the margin. By πολυπειρία in it seems to be understood wisdom's manifold way of acting, and the diversity of her gifts and operations, which is but indifferently rendered by our translators, *experience*.

Ver. 8. *There is one wise and greatly to be feared, the Lord sitting upon his throne.*] There is one only wise, *i. e.* God: all others have wisdom through and from him. St. Paul styles him the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God; (1 Tim. i. 17.) and so Clemens, Σοφὸς ὁ μόνος Θεὸς καὶ τέλειος μόνος. *God alone is wise, he alone is perfect:* (Strom. 2. and 4.) and Philo, ἀψευδῶς αἱ τελειότητες καὶ ἀκρότητες ἑνός εἰσι μόνου, *the heights and perfections of excellency are only proper and peculiar to one.* (De Sacrif. Cain et Abel.) Plato in like manner appropriates wisdom to the Deity: Τὸ μὲν σοφὸν καλεῖν, ἐμοίγε μέγα εἶναι δοκεῖ, καὶ Θεῷ μόνῳ πρέπον. (In Phæd.) Or may not this be considered as an answer to the foregoing questions and interrogations, ver. 2, 3. 6, 7.—that how difficult soever these instances may seem in themselves, or to our capacity, yet to God's wisdom they are open, as well as possible; that he alone knows the original, deep designs, and infinite worth, of wisdom, who has possessed her from all eternity, and gives her to whom, and in what proportion, he pleases? Our translators, and the Geneva version, to make the sense clearer, and to particularize who is meant, insert, *the Lord*, in the text; and so does Junius in his translation, though the Greek copies begin the next verse with Κύριος, except the Alexandrian MS. The Vulgate rendering of this passage is very lofty, *Unus est altissimus Creator omnium, omnipotens, et rex potens, et metuendus nimis, sedens super thronum illius, et dominans Deus.*

Ver. 9. *He created her, and saw her, and numbered her, and poured her out upon all his works.*] *i. e.* God hath made all things in number, weight, and measure: (Wisd. xi. 20.) in the most exact order and proportion, and by the marks of wisdom on all his works, hath brought her forth, displayed, and revealed her excellency. For so κτίζεσθαι may be understood here and ver. 4. and thus the oriental versions explain ἔκτισεν, the Syriac by *patefecit eam*, and the Arabic by *retexit*. (See Psal. civ. 24. and Philo, Περὶ κοσμουργίας.) Calmet likewise understands by *numbering her*, that "God knew her from all eternity, and the time of her first appearance upon the earth, or any part of it."

Ver. 10. *She is with all flesh according to his gift, and he hath given her to them that love him.*] Having shewn the original of wisdom, that it was from all eternity, he proceeds beautifully to shew its production, or gradual appearance in the world, and that its effects and signatures are displayed upon the creation in three particulars; first, in general, as his wisdom is plentifully shed, and poured out upon all his works, and is universally and in all respects to be admired. *It reaches from one end of the world to another mightily, and sweetly does she order all things.* (Wisd. viii. 1.) Secondly, That though there are tokens and traces enough of wisdom discernible in all inanimate things, yet it is most visible in animal bodies, and distributed to all of them in some degree or other; for in all of them there is a principle of instinct, something analogous to reason, and much resembling it. Thirdly, That the gift and high privilege of reason belongs chiefly to men, and even to them is communicated in different degrees and proportions; to one is given *the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of them.* (1 Cor. xii. 8. 10.) Wisdom is divided severally to every man, as God pleases, and as is most necessary for each to receive it. (Ephes. iv. 7.) Such as are religious and fear the Lord she is most conversant with, and to them ἐχορήγησεν, he hath distributed her graces most liberally. Accordingly the angels, a higher order in the scale of being, whom the Psalmist calls God's servants, continually doing his will and pleasure, are most perfect in knowledge; and even among these intelligences, *one star differeth from another star in glory.* From this principle, as Solomon does in the book of Proverbs, the author takes occasion to enlarge upon and recommend the fear of the Lord.

Ver. 11. *The fear of the Lord is honour, and glory, and gladness, and a crown of rejoicing.*] An awful sense of God, a devout affection to him, and a fear of offending him, such a religious frame of mind, is not only a great credit and ornament to a man, but is the cause of much joy and happiness to him. It fills the soul with a holy confidence, with inward satisfaction, and complacency. And though the world has not often a just consideration of, and regard to, the good man's merit, yet is he not the less honourable or glorious in himself; his glory is as much above common applause, as piety is preferable to ambition. According to vulgar opinion, indeed, to inspire men with the fear of God, is to fill them with melancholy and sadness; but the wise man here assures us, that this is the only true source of joy. To fear God, is not to startle at and tremble before an all-powerful Being, made up of severity and cruelty, intent upon man's destruction, as the devil often dresses up and represents God to pious souls, to cast them into horror and despair, and raise in them jealousy and distrust. If any thus describe God with such marks of abhorrence and terror, it is not the true God they are representing, who is plenteous in goodness, and has more tenderness for his creatures than the most indulgent father.

Ver. 12. *The fear of the Lord giveth . . . a long life.*] See ver. 20. A strict course of piety is most likely

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to prolong a life in a natural way; whereas sin, sometimes by natural causes, sometimes by the anger and just judgment of God, is the cause of a sudden, untimely, or violent death. Thus the Psalmist: *The blood-thirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.* (Psal. lv. 25.) But wisdom says of herself, *By me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.* (Prov. ix. 11. and iii. 2. 16.) It is also the surest way to procure God's blessing, and to preserve men from all evils and calamities; for the *angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* (Psal. xxxiv. 7.) And in some following verses, to the inquiry, *What man is he that lusteth to live, and would fain see good days?* the answer is, *Eschew evil and do good, seek peace and ensue it.*

Ver. 13. *Whoso feareth the Lord, it shall go well with him at the last, and he shall find favour in the day of his death . . .*] Some copies read with the margin, *He shall be blessed.* The Syriac has, *Colentis Deum prosper erit exitus, et in fine dierum suorum benedicetur;* and the Arabic, *Timentis Deum optimus erit finis, et in extrema ætate sua benedicetur.* The sense in either rendering is, that the good man in his last hours shall not be tormented with the worm and sting of conscience, with sad reflections upon a past ill-spent life, but shall have a sweet foretaste of approaching happiness, and a joyful expectation of entering into a better state, and receiving the reward of his piety. He shall die with a quiet and easy conscience, and, like good old Simeon, depart this life in peace. Thus Gal. vi. 16. St. Paul says, *They that walk according to this rule, i. e.* the rule of righteousness, *peace is on them, and on the Israel of God;* for as the verb is not expressed in the Greek, we may as well expound the passage as an affirmation of what is, as a wish of what may be. I refer it to the learned to determine, whether this writer,—laying down so many fine rules of righteousness and moral conduct, which the study of the law furnished him with, and precepts of inward and spiritual obedience, and a sincere service of God from the heart, which occur through the whole work, and withal the great and certain reward which attends good men at all times, and at their death more particularly,—can be supposed to be without a firm belief of a life to come; and whether the reflection here, and many other expressions to the like purpose, can be separated from the hopes of it without violence.

Ver. 14. *To fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*] *A good understanding* (says the Psalmist) *have all they that do thereafter, the praise of it endureth for ever;* and thus Job, *Unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding,* (xxviii. 28.) The observance of the commandments of the Lord, is the principal point or fulness of wisdom, (see ver. 16.) the practice of which gives men a better understanding of what is most conducive to their happiness, than any maxims of human learning can infuse; for without piety, or the fear of the Lord, wisdom is falsely so called, and degenerates into a vicious cunning. Plato has an observation like this, ἡ Θεοῦ γνῶσις, σοφία ἐστὶ, καὶ ἀρετὴ ἀληθινή. The expression here, by the infinitive, ἀρχὴ σοφίας φοβεῖσθαι τὸν Θεὸν, is very elegant and classical. Thus Cicero, "Ipsum quidem peccare, quoquo te verteris, unum est:" (Paradox.) and Persius, "Scire tuum nihil est;" and St. Austin, more strongly, "Honorifico te debito sacrificio laudis, pro scire et posse." (Meditat. cap. 12.)

And it was created with the faithful in the womb ...] The faithful from their infancy have a fear and dread of God, and enter very early on a course of piety and religion, and are no sooner conceived and born into the church, say Messieurs du Port-Royal, but the fear of God is formed in their heart, and it continues with them to their lives' end. Or it may mean, that a good disposition and a religious temper are born and brought into the world with the faithful, and accompany them after. This is what the author of the book of Wisdom means, when he says, that *being a witty child, and having a good spirit, he came into a body undefiled,* (viii. 19, 20.) *i. e.* not disposed or naturally inclined to evil. And thus Job says, that, from his mother's womb, he had a natural compassion for the poor and fatherless, (xxxi. 18.) And the contrary temper is well described by the Psalmist, *The ungodly are froward even from their mother's womb; as soon as they are born they go astray, and speak lies,* (Psal. lviii. 3.) *i. e.* they are naturally addicted to such vices. Or we may understand this of some peculiar and singular gift of God to the faithful, as was the case with the prophet Jeremiah, of whom God says, *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth from the womb, I sanctified thee,* (i. 5.) The like may be observed also of John the Baptist. There is a remarkable pleonasm in the Greek here, μετὰ πιστῶν ἐν μήτρᾳ συνεκτίσθη αὐτοῖς, which is a Hebraism: there are frequent instances of the like construction in this book, in the LXX. (see Jer. xx. 14.) and in approved authors.

Ver. 15. *She hath built an everlasting foundation with men...*] *i. e.* In just men more particularly, such in whose heart the fear of the Lord is strongly rooted, the impressions and good effects of which will not be easily effaced in them or their children. As wisdom was from everlasting, so her delights have ever been with the sons of men, *rejoicing* (as it is expressed Prov. viii. 31.) *in the habitable parts of the earth.* And as she delights in the children of men above all others, as being the image of God, among whom she has fixed her residence, so will she abide, especially with such as fear the Lord, and do not, by sin, deface his image. (Wisd. i. 5. John xiv. 23.) What wisdom says of herself, Prov. viii. 23. πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέ με, exactly expresses θεμέλιον αἰῶνος here, which is rendered more beautiful by the metaphor, ἐνόσσευσεν, *fundamentum æternitatis nidificavit,* as Junius renders. And what she observes of the Jewish nation, xxiv. 8. that *the Creator of all things caused her dwelling to be in Jacob, and her inheritance in Israel,* is equally applicable to all true Israelites, whom she favours above all others. The Vulgate here adds three verses, which are not in the Greek copies.

Ver. 17. *She filleth all their house with things desirable.*] In the foregoing verse it is μεθύσκει αὐτοὺς, according to the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, which expresses a satiety or fulness by *ebrietas,* or *inebriation.* (See St. Jerome, Quæst. in Genes.) Plautus has the like expression, "Unde saturitate ego sæpe exii ebrius." (In Captiv.) The reading of the Complut. οἶκον αὐτῶν, which our translators here follow, seems more agreeable than οἶκον αὐτῆς, which the Vulgate and many Greek copies have. What follows in the next sentence, καὶ τὰ ἀποδοχεῖα ἀπὸ τῶν γεννημάτων αὐτῆς, seems also corrupt. It would be better read, τὰ ἀποδοχεῖα αὐτῶν

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γεννημάτων αὐτῆς, and so I find Dr. Grabe has inserted in his edition from conjecture. (See Proleg. cap. 4. tom. iii.) The Vulgate also is faulty here in rendering γεννημάτων by *generationibus*. The sense of the passage is, "The fear of the Lord not only fills men with spiritual joy and comfort, but enriches those that have it." The Psalmist observes the like of the faithful, that *riches and plenteousness shall be in their house*, (cxii. 3.) Solomon represents the satisfaction and advantages arising from wisdom, under the resemblance and image of a most elegant and delicious feast, where the τὰ ἐπιθυμήματα generally abound. (Prov. ix.)

Ver. 18. *The fear of the Lord is a crown of wisdom, making peace and perfect health to flourish...*] Besides inward content and satisfaction, which is the usual sense of *peace*, it has several other senses among the Jews, applicable also to this place. Thus, Gen. xxix. 6. *Is he well?* in the Hebrew is, *Is there peace to him?* (See also xxxvii. 14.) It signifies also *prosperity;* and the usual salutation of wishing peace to any one, or his house, always included prosperity. (See Matt. x. 12, 13.) So Numb. vi. 26. *The Lord give thee peace, i. e.* make thee happy and prosperous; and xxv. 12. *I give unto him my covenant of peace, i. e.* to make him and his family prosperous. (See Psal. lxxii. 3. Isa. xxxvii. 17. Lam. iii. 17.) According to Grotius, the sense is, "That the fear of the Lord is of service, both to soul and body, giving εἰρήνη to the former, and ὑγίεια ἰάσεως (a strong expression, denoting the perfection of health and soundness) to the latter." The conclusion of the verse, *and it enlargeth their rejoicing that love him*, is omitted in the Vatican and Vulgate, and is probably an interpolation from ver. 12. to which it agrees exactly in sense.

Ver. 19. *Wisdom raineth down skill and knowledge of understanding.*] Our author uses ἐξώμβρησε in the same metaphorical sense, x. 13. The meaning is, "Wisdom or the fear of the Lord is the source of true knowledge and prudence; without this, knowledge is falsely so called, is proud, presumptuous, and overbearing; and prudence degenerates into craft and cunning. Persons of great abilities and attainments, without a sense of piety and religion, are infinitely more dangerous to society, to the church or state, than even the most wicked men, who have less or but ordinary skill and talents. The latter can scarce hurt any but themselves, in matters at least of a higher concern; but the former are capable of unsettling, perverting, and ruining, numbers of thoughtless and unguarded souls, and too often succeed, by their sophistry and address, in their mischievous attempt." Upon the next verse both the Syriac and Arabic translations paraphrase very largely, and insert a great deal, omitting all that follows, either in the Greek or Latin copies, to ver. 28. as the Chaldee paraphrase often inserts very large portions, without authority from the Hebrew, in many parts of the Old Testament.

Ver. 21. *The fear of the Lord driveth away sin, and where it is present, it turneth away wrath...*] *i. e.* The fear of the Lord and his judgments, when it is strongly rooted in the soul, inclines men to and encourages them in the performance of their duty, and thereby keeps them from sin and punishment, its sure attendant. (See Prov. xvi. 6.) It either puts them upon observing a prudent circumspection and caution in their actions, or to atone for sin committed, by contrition and repentance. Tertullian says, excellently, "Qui præsumit, minus veretur, minus præcavet, plus periclitatur: timor fundamentum salutis est." (De Cultu Fœminarum.) This verse is wanting in the Roman edit. and some others: Dr. Grabe has inserted it from the Complut. which our translators generally follow, which copy, he observes, is of singular use to supply the hiatus in others. (Proleg. tom. ult. cap. 3.) Our version renders, παραμένων δὲ ἀποστρέφει ὀργὴν, *where it is present it turneth away wrath;* but Grotius understands by παραμένων, the meek and patient man, whose behaviour and temper are such, that they are not easily inflamed, his reason interposes against a rising storm, its cool judgment either prevents or assuages wrath, and insensibly disarms its fury. This interpretation, though countenanced indeed by the context, seems to want an article to confirm it. Instead of this latter clause, the Vulgate, Grabe, and Clemens Alexandrinus, (Pædag. lib. i. cap. 8.) insert, ἄφοβος δὲ οὐ δυνήσεται δικαιωθῆναι.

Ver. 22. *A furious man cannot be justified, for the sway of his fury shall be his destruction...*] Our translators follow a copy which read θυμώδης ἀνὴρ, as the Complut. that of Camerarius, and some other copies, have it. The Vat. and Alex. MS. which Hœschelius here agrees with, have θυμὸς ἄδικος, *unjust anger*, such as is without sufficient and good reason, or is immoderate in its degree. St. Paul acquaints us, that we may sometimes be angry, and yet sin not, (Ephes. iv. 26.) and there is a resentment which is highly commendable; such, for instance, is a zeal for the service of God and the cause of religion, where unconcernedness and indifference are culpable and sinful; such a lukewarmness as is condemned in the Laodiceans, Rev. iii. 16. Anger, without some such just occasion, cannot be justified, nor free from censure or fault. The sense is pretty much the same with that of St. James, (i. 20.) *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God; i. e.* it puts a man upon saying and doing things contrary to his duty, and is a breach of that perfection, which renders him acceptable to God. Anger proceeds upon a wrong principle, it springs generally from pride, and is moderated and vanquished most effectually by the fear of the Lord, according to St. Paul's observation and advice, *Be not high-minded, but fear.* (Rom. xi. 20.) Our author speaks by the figure litotes, when he says, Anger cannot be justified, for more is intended than is here expressed; it means, that it is highly criminal, and to be condemned, and shall not escape punishment, according to the marginal reading. It is generally attended with mischief to others, or to the furious person himself, the impetuosity or violence of whose passion proves often fatal to him in its consequences. The Greek expresses this by ῥοπὴ θυμοῦ, a metaphor taken from the balance, and literally means, that the excess or preponderancy of passion will overturn a man. This, in a larger sense, may be understood of other irregular lusts and passions, which, if criminally indulged, will be the certain ruin of a man.

Ver. 23. *A patient man will bear for a time, and afterward joy shall spring up unto him.*] Ὕστερον αὐτῷ ἀναδώσει εὐφροσύνη. A meek man will bear with injuries for a long time, and not disturb the calm of his mind, nor forfeit the reward of his patience. According to Calmet, the sense is, that the good man is often exposed in this life to evil treatment, persecution, and reproaches; but is not dejected or discouraged by his present affliction: he will wait

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awhile, *jusqu'au tems destiné*, until the appointed time, for his deliverance. In the mean time he rests himself upon God's promises till death; and then he will find himself not only delivered out of his troubles, but filled with joy and glory in a better state. (See Wisd. iii. 1—3. and v. 1—3.) God often permits the righteous to be afflicted in this world, that, having approved themselves to him by their patient enduring of tribulations, they may at length enter into joy and happiness. The Scriptures furnish many instances of this, especially in the history of the patriarchs and apostles. St. Paul thus describes the state of himself and fellow-Christians: *We are troubled on every side, but not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* (2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.) The reading of this verse, as it is in almost all the Greek copies, seems corrupt; that of the Alexandrian MS. seems preferable, ἕως καιροῦ ἀνθέξεται μακρόθυμος, καὶ ὕστερον αὐτῷ ἀναδώσει εὐφροσύνην· *i. e.* God will give unto him *beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness*; (Isa. lxi. 3.) or the reading may be ὕστερον αὐτῷ· ἀνάδοσις εὐφροσύνης, according to the copy probably which the Vulgate followed, *et postea redditio jucunditatis.* This observation is particularly true with respect to Job, who was an equal pattern of suffering and patience; and therefore we read, that God made his latter end as prosperous as the beginning.

Ver. 24. *He will hide his words for a time, and the lips of many shall declare his wisdom.*] As applied to the meek man, the sense is, "He will stifle his resentment, and not break out into indecent and outrageous expressions: he will keep silence, especially from hasty and injurious words, though such a command of his temper be pain and grief to him; and his moderation and conduct in this particular will be both admired and commended." If understood of the good man struggling under adversity, the meaning is, "that he will not openly complain of the Almighty, but silently bear the discipline of affliction, and wait God's own pleasure, knowing that the *Lord is good unto all that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him,*" Lam. iii. 25. The description of this religious resignation in ver. 26. 28, 29. of that chapter, is very fine, and close to the present purpose, *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord: he sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him: he putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope.* The Psalmist gives the same excellent advice of submission to the Divine will, *Hold thee still in the Lord, and put thy trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass,* Psal. xxxvii. 7. which whole psalm, a learned prelate observes, is summed up in this and the foregoing verse of this chapter. (Patrick's Comment. in loc.) This trust in God for deliverance is very beautifully called by St. Paul, ἔργον τῆς πίστεως and ὑπομονὴ τῆς ἐλπίδος, (1Thess. i. 3.) *The work of faith, and patience of hope.* Osiander understands this of calumny in particular, which the good man is loaded with for a time, while his innocency is suspected, which he takes patiently, suffering wrongfully; but that afterward his righteousness shall be acknowledged and confessed before men, and his just dealings be as clear as the noon-day. (Com. in loc.) This may be farther understood of prudent silence, and modest reservedness, which is not hasty to speak, nor forward to boast or extol itself; which instance of wisdom shall not go without its due praise, nor suffer for its own backwardness. Some copies read, χεῖλη πιστῶν, the *lips of the faithful;* but πολλῶν is the more general reading, which the Vulgate and our translators follow; *i. e.* his silence shall be recompensed with the praise of all men. Our author has the like expression, xxxix. 9.

Ver. 25. *The parables of knowledge are in the treasures of wisdom; but godliness is an abomination to a sinner.*] *i. e.* In the treasury or bosom of a wise man, are many useful reflections and observations upon men and things, which he understands the most proper season to bring forth and publish. For the true mark of a wise man is to know how to keep his thoughts and words to himself, and not to talk at random, and speak confidently about every thing, or unseasonably of any thing. *Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you?* says St. James, iii. 13. *Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.* Or the sense may be, "Many good lessons of instruction and morality are delivered by persons of great piety and understanding, which are disagreeable to the wicked, and, as so many reproofs, are disregarded by him." (See Wisd. ii. 12. 14, &c.)

Ver. 26. *If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee.*] See ver. 5. The author of the book of Wisdom accordingly observes, *That into a malicious soul wisdom will not enter, nor dwell in a body subject unto sin,* (i. 4.) Some copies read the beginning of this verse with an interrogation, as the Roman in particular, ἐπεθύμησας σοφίαν; *Dost thou desire wisdom? keep the commandments.* And thus St. Austin, *Concupisti sapientiam? Serva mandata:* and he makes this observation upon it, *Prior est in recta hominis eruditione labor operandi, quam voluptas intelligendi quæ vera sunt.* (Adv. Faustum.) The sense of this passage is not unlike that of St. John, vii. 17. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.* And thus the Psalmist, *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant,* (Psal. xxv. 14.) Job has determined the matter when he says, *Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, is understanding,* (xxviii. 28.)

Ver. 28. *Distrust not the fear of the Lord when thou art poor.*] Μὴ ἀπειθήσῃς φόβῳ Κυρίου. According to the marginal reading, "Be not disobedient to the fear of the Lord, *i. e.* to the commandments of the Lord, when thou art poor or distressed." The Tigurine version renders, *Religioni Domini parere ne recuses inops.* The sense is, "Do not distrust God's goodness in the time of thy adversity or low estate, as if he either could not or would not succour thee, and so be induced to use unlawful means, or fly to forbidden arts, or trust too much upon any human help, for preservation." For this reason, says the Psalmist, *the Lord will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous, i. e.* subject them to their scourge and tyranny, *lest the righteous put their hand unto wickedness.* (Psal. cxxv. 3.) And upon account of the temptation and dangers, attending the extremes of each state, the prophet Agur prays equally against poverty and riches. (Prov. xxx. 9.) The words ἐνδεὴς ὤν, *when thou art poor,* are not in the Vat. Alex. MS. nor Vulgate. The oriental ver-

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sions too omit them. Dr. Grabe has inserted them from the Complut. which our translators here likewise follow.

Come not unto him with a double heart.] *i. e.* With affections divided betwixt God and the world; for God requires the whole heart, and to be served with uniform obedience and sincerity. Or the sense may be, "Do not offer thy devotions with a doubting spirit." Accordingly St. James advises to *ask in faith, nothing wavering;* because a person of such a distrustful disposition has no grounds to expect that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. (James i. 6, 7. Matt. xxi. 21. Mark xi. 23, 24. 1 Tim. ii. 8.) The Arabic takes it in this sense, rendering, *Neque accedas, dubius existens in corde tuo.* The same apostle calls such a one, a double-minded man, ἀνὴρ δίψυχος, and describes him as divided and distracted in what he goes about, and unstable in all his ways. *Quomodo præstabit Deus* (says Lactantius) *precanti quod oraverit, cum ad precandum neque ex animo, nec observanter accedit?* (lib. v. 20.) The wicked are described by the Psalmist, as flattering with their lips, *and dissembling with a double heart,* (Psal. xii. 2.) which the Hebrew expresses by *leb valeb,* a heart, and a heart. See also 1 Chron. xii. 33. where it is said of the children of Zebulun, that they were not of double heart, which, according to the marginal reading from the Hebrew, is, They were without a heart, and a heart; *absque corde et corde,* as some old Latin versions have it.

Ver. 29. *Be not a hypocrite in the sight of men, and take good heed what thou speakest.*] Μὴ ὑποκριθῇς ἐν στόμασιν ἀνθρώπων. Grotius understands this of lying, *ne mentiaris coram hominibus,* and says, that ὑποκρίνεσθαι is so taken in several parts of Scripture. (Job xxxiv. 30. Matt. xxiv. 51. James v. 12.) And indeed this hath some countenance from the following sentence, *Take good heed what thou speakest,* which the Arabic expounds of veracity, *Sit sermo labiorum tuorum æquus, et verax.* There may also another interpretation be given of this place, "Act not the hypocrite before men, by putting on the mask of religion, or boasting of thy perfection in it, when thy actions speak the contrary;" one of them, *qui Curios simulant, et Bacchanalia vivunt.* And thus the Syriac seems to understand it, *Neque de Religione Dei glorieris;* or, act not the false friend, with an intention to deceive others, by the specious show and appearance of friendship. Lastly, the sense may be, "Do not play the hypocrite by pretending to be what you are not, commending yourself before others, and extolling your merit, to gain their good opinion and applause." And thus the Geneva version takes it, *Be not a hypocrite, that men should speak of thee.* Junius has still a new interpretation, *Ne simulatus esto, ut si ora humana habeas,* which the margin explains, "Do not play the hypocrite, by acting different parts, and assuming two or more persons, and speaking with two or more mouths;" but this seems forced. Probably ἐν στόμασι is a Hebraism literally rendered, and means no more than *coram.*

Ver. 30. *Exalt not thyself, lest thou fall, and bring dishonour upon thy soul, and so God discover thy secrets.*] *i. e.* Do not think to deceive and impose upon God, as thou hast upon thy friends and neighbours; but avoid dissimulation and spiritual pride, lest God humble thee, and discover the hypocrisy and naughtiness of thy heart, and expose thee to public shame and contempt, by publishing thy secret wickedness; which is the moral of the proud pharisee in the gospel. (Luke xviii.) This the Lord threatens also by his prophet; *This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the Lord: because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood, and I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations on the hills; therefore will I discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may appear:* (Jer. xiii. 25—27.) and τὰ κρυπτὰ σοῦ means here τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰσχύνης, as it is expressed 2 Cor. iv. 2. Plato finely observes, δεῖ θεραπεύειν θεὸν οὐ σχήμασι τεχνάζοντας, ἀλλὰ ἀληθείᾳ τιμῶντας ἀρετήν.

Cast thee down in the midst of the congregation.] This refers to the custom of bringing criminals to a public hearing, and punishing them openly for their faults. See Ecclus. xxiii. 31. Prov. v. 14. xxvi. 26. where Solomon, speaking of such a deceiver says, ἐκκαλύπτει τὰς ἑαυτοῦ ἁμαρτίας, εὔγνωστος ἐν συνεδρίοις, *revelabitur malicia ejus in concilio.* (Vulg.)

Because thou camest not in truth to the fear of the Lord.] Ὅτι οὐ προσῆλθες τῷ φόβῳ Κυρίου ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, *i. e.* sincerely and heartily, without hypocrisy, contrary to the double heart, (ver. 28.) for our love to God must be entire and undivided; and sincerity is the formality or soul of it. Some copies read, ὅτι οὐ προσῆλθες ἐν φόβῳ Κυρίου, *because thou camest not in the fear of the Lord.*

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation.*] Corn. a Lapide thinks that the occasion of this advice was, that at this time the Jews were grievously afflicted under Ptolemy Lagus, who took Jerusalem, and used the Jews with great severity, and sent many thousands captive into Egypt; which change of state, it was apprehended, might incline many to forsake Judaism; to confirm whom, and keep them steady to the religion of their fathers, the author gives them this seasonable advice. (Com. in loc. see also Du Pin's Prelim. Dissert. p. 23.) All temptations may be referred to two sorts; either they proceed from God, or the devil and his agents. God tempts men for the trial and manifestation of their faith, he proves the sincerity of their virtue by occasional afflictions; his design is to make them better, more vigilant, more resolute, and more humble; to train them up to victory, to prepare them for a crown, and to increase their glory and reward; and he gives them, for this purpose, force and strength proportionable to the combat he suffers them to be exposed to. The devil tempts men, when he solicits them to sin; when he invites them by offers of imaginary wealth or greatness to fall down, and worship him; when he is busy with men's thoughts, and by false suggestions would gain over their affections; when he insinuates the difficulties and discouragements of religion, and the pleasures of vice and licentiousness: his temptations are always to be dreaded, they are designed to impose upon and cheat men, to rob them of their innocency and peace, to make them fall from one wickedness to another, to disregard the fear of God, to be indifferent about matters of religion, and, in consequence of that, to fall from the faith, and at length to sink them into perdition—the portion of libertines and unbelievers. To be tempted in the former sense, is the portion of all God's faithful servants and children. (See Heb. xii. 6.) Thus Moses had a great trial of variety of afflictions, when he was appointed to serve the Lord in

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Egypt; he met with contempt and ill usage, not only from the Egyptians, but from the ungrateful Israelites, whose deliverance he was soliciting and labouring for, and was often in danger of his life, from the malice of Pharaoh and his people, but he was not frighted from executing the commission he was entrusted with, by any threats or hardships he endured: for *he had a respect unto the recompence of the reward* from him that sent him. (Heb. xi. 27.) So under the gospel, when the sons of Zebedee coveted places of trust and honour in an imaginary kingdom, our blessed Lord told them, that the preferments of his court did not consist in the vanity of precedence, in sitting at his right hand, or at his left; but in drinking of his bitter cup, and being baptized with his bloody baptism. (Matt. xx. 21.) And when St. Paul was called to an apostleship, the Lord told Ananias in a vision, that his mission was not designed to triumph over the gentile world, nor should his revelations discover to him, what kingdoms he should convert; but *I will shew him* (says God) *what great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* (Acts ix. 16.) And this that apostle well understood: for when he reckons up the signs of an apostle, he begins with his patience under afflictions, as if that greatness of mind which slighted the tribulations which attended upon preaching the gospel, was a more eminent and surer sign of his apostleship, than all his power of working signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. (2 Cor. xii. 12.) St. Chrysostom's observation upon this notice to prepare for temptations, is both pertinent and entertaining; καλαὶ αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι ἐκ προοιμίων εἰς πειρασμοὺς ἐμπεσεῖν· μεγάλη προτροπὴ καὶ παράκλησις ἐναργὴς τῆς δουλείας κινδύνων εὐθέως ἀπογεύσασθαι, κ. τ. λ. *Bella vero promissio in tentationes incidere! Egregia verò exhortatio et consolatio ejus servitutis pericula statim degustare! plane egregia simul et admiranda, et maximum lucrum adferens. Audi quæ sequuntur, sicut Aurum igne examinatum, purius redditur, pari modo etiam anima, quæ inter afflictiones versatur et pericula, splendidior per illa evadit, omnemque peccatorum maculam abstergit.* (Ser. 23. tom. v.) Nor is the following less worthy of notice and regard; *Qui Deo placere cupit, ante omnia longanimitatem apprehendens ac patientiam, debet fortiter obvias quasque sufferre tribulationes, angustias, atque necessitates, sive corporales morbos ac passiones, sive improperia, atque injurias ab hominibus, sive etiam diversas invisibiles anxietates, quæ a spiritibus malignis inseruntur animæ.* (S. Ephrem. Tract. de Patientia.) The Vulgate adds, *Accedens ad servitutem Dei, sta in justitia et timore,* which is not in the Greek copies; but St. Austin, (de Speculo) St. Cyprian, (Tract. de Mortal.) and St. Bernard, all retain them; probably they were in some ancient copy which they used, the same which the Vulgate follows.

Ver. 2. *And make not haste in time of trouble.*] Καὶ μὴ σπεύσῃς ἐν καιρῷ ἐπαγωγῆς· Ἐπαγωγὴ here signifies the evils which God is pleased at any time to visit his servants with: (see ver 4.) and thus it is used in very many places by this writer, (iii. 28. v. 8. xxiii. 11. xl. 9. xlvi. 3. xlviii. 2. see also Pet. ii. 5.) The sense is, When tribulation and anguish are upon thee, patiently depend upon God, wait till he graciously vouchsafes the times of refreshment and deliverance, and do not, through distrust of his mercy, betake thyself to any unlawful means of extricating or saving thyself; for God knoweth when and how to bring his afflicted servants out of their temptations. (2 Pet. ii. 9.) The expression is the same with that, Isa. xxviii. 16. *He that believeth, shall not make haste;* i. e. He that believeth God's promises, made to his faithful servants, will not shew any distrust, nor fly or hasten to any base and unlawful means, such as those mentioned to be made use of in that chapter, (ver. 15.) by some, *who made lies their refuge, and hid themselves under falsehood;* which sense is preferred by the learned Vitringa. (Com. in loc.) The virtue recommended in the words before us, is what the Greeks call σωφροσύνη, and is, according to the Roman orator, "Non perturbari in rebus asperis, nec tumultuantem de gradu dejici." (De Offic. lib. i.) And in the Scripture language it is to tarry, to wait the Lord's leisure, and to possess the soul in patience; and in the phrase of this writer, to set the heart aright, to endure constantly, and to wait for his mercy. St. Chrysostom's comment upon the words is, ἐν νόσῳ καὶ πενίᾳ ἐπ' αὐτῷ πεποιθὼς γίνου. (Hom. 39. adv. Jud. Orat. 6.) According to Calmet, it is to shew no signs of anger and impatience at any trying or severe dispensation we may labour under, nor to let any hasty word foolishly escape us, as if we questioned or disputed God's right, wisdom, or goodness, in so visiting us.

Ver. 3. *Cleave unto him and depart not away, that thou mayst be increased at thy last end.*] *i. e.* That thou mayst receive the just recompence of thy patience. The Port-Royal comment understands this of increasing to perfection; that nothing so much displays and improves men's virtue as submission and constancy in sufferings; that the harvest, which will at last be reaped from thence, after patience has had its perfect work, springeth up unto eternal life. Some copies accordingly read the former part of the verse thus, μεῖνον τὴν ἀναμονὴν, κολλήθητι αὐτῷ, καὶ μὴ ἀποστῇς, which is agreeable to the context, and invigorates the sense; or the meaning may be, that in thine old age, thou mayst abound with such good things as may make thy latter end comfortable. Under the old law God rewarded the faithful services of such as cleaved unto him with long life, victory over enemies, and such-like temporal blessings. Junius renders, *ut augearis ad finem usque tuum,* that thou mayst always thrive and prosper, even to thy latter end. Instead of apostatizing or revolting from God, in whom alone the happiness of man centres, make the Psalmist's resolution your own, and devoutly say, *It is good for me to hold me fast by God, and to put my trust in the Lord God.* (Psal. lxxiii. 28.)

Ver. 4, 5. *Whatsoever is brought upon thee, take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate: for gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity.*] Some copies have, ἐν καμίνῳ ταπεινώσεως σωθήσονται, alluding probably to the deliverance of the three holy children from the fiery furnace. The Arabic rendering of δέξαι ἀσμένως, is much to be admired and approved, *id in quo te Deus tentaret, sustine cum gratiarum actione;* the rendering of what follows, καὶ ἐν ἀλλάγματι ταπεινώσεώς σου μακροθύμησον, is neither literal nor full; the true rendering is, *be patient in hoping for a change of your present low estate;* and so Grotius takes it, *Patiens esto in mutatione depressionis tuæ speranda:* and Junius, *Et ad commutationem dejectionis tuæ sperandam esto longanimus.* The Geneva version, *Be patient in the change of thine affliction,* is literal indeed, but reaches not the sense. The Psalmist seems better to express it, (Psal. xxxvii. 7.) *Hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him.* (See

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James iv. 7. 1 Pet. v. 6.) Pythagoras gives the same advice in the like circumstances,

Ὅσσά τε δαιμονίῃσι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
Ἣν ἂν μοῖραν ἕλῃς, ταύτην φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει.
Χρυσ. επη. v. 16.

In suffering, or bearing afflictions, God enjoins not an apathy, he neither expects nor wills an utter insensibility; he intends a feeling when he scourges, and allows a proper concern to be expressed, provided it be with moderation, submission, and resignation. St. Chrysostom thus illustrates the sense in ver. 5. ὥσπερ τὸ χρυσίον τῷ πυρὶ βασανιζόμενον, καθαρώτερον γίνεται, οὕτω καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ θλίψεσιν ὁμιλοῦσα, καὶ κινδύνοις, φαιδροτέρα, καὶ λαμπροτέρα, ἄνεισι, καὶ πᾶσαν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀπορράπτεται κηλίδα· *i. e.* by temptations and afflictions a man is brought, as it were, to the touchstone; by these his intrinsic excellency and goodness is discovered, and the greater the improvement and proficiency is under them, the more acceptable is the sufferer to God, and the brighter lustre is added to his virtue.

Ver. 7. *And go not aside, lest ye fall.*] *i. e.* Have not recourse to any unlawful means for succour, which men of little faith and great impatience are apt to fly to. Many in time of tribulation are tempted to fall away after different sorts, some take to evil courses, and the hidden works of dishonesty to get a living: others have denied the faith, and, for fear of persecution or the sword, have turned to a false religion. Some have applied to and trusted in evil arts, as sorcery or magic, to help them in their losses and distress, as was the folly of Saul, in consulting the witch of Endor. The precept of fearing the Lord, and waiting for his mercy, is, though the phrase is somewhat varied, often repeated in this chapter, and yet there is no tautology in this respect; it is only, says Osiander, to keep our faith awake, that we should not be tempted to think God had forgot us, if at any time, in our opinion, God seems slack concerning his promise, and defers for awhile answering our expectation. (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 9. *Ye that fear the Lord, hope for good, and for everlasting joy and mercy.*] Ἐλπίσατε εἰς ἀγαθὰ, καὶ εἰς εὐφροσύνην αἰῶνος, καὶ ἐλέους· probably the true reading is ἔλεος· ἐλπίζειν, in this construction, signifies to expect, wait for, or trust to or in any thing or person. The Geneva version takes it in this latter sense, *Ye that fear the Lord, trust in good things, and in the everlasting joy and mercy.* (See the use of this phrase, Psal. cxxx. 5, 6. cxlv. 16. Isa. li. 5. according to the LXX.) By ἀγαθὰ we may understand the good things of this life, which such as fear the Lord have the greatest reason to expect. For did the Lord rain bread from heaven upon his faithful Israelites, and shall any doubt whether he can at all times nourish his people, or send food to those that stand in need of it, and trust in his goodness for it, though even the fields should fail, and the earth itself grow barren? God is not tied to ordinary means, nor our maintenance to the fruits of the earth, or other common supplies. The ravens shall find meat, and bring it to Elijah, if God so commands, (1 Kings xvii. 6.) and a little oil as long as he pleaseth shall continue running, and not fail, (ver. 14.) Infinite is his power, and infinite are his methods and ways, to reward and comfort them that cleave to and depend upon him.

Ver. 10. *Look at the generations of old, and see, did ever any trust in the Lord and was confounded? Or did any abide in his fear, and was forsaken? Or whom did he ever despise that called upon him?*] Run over the histories of all ages and nations, consider that of the patriarchs and prophets in particular, which affords many and shining instances of the regard God has for his faithful, and of his care and protection of them in all straits and dangers. The Psalmist had observed, and was convinced of an extraordinary providence watching over those that led a godly life, and says, *I have been young, and now am old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor their seed begging their bread.* (Psal. xxxvii. 35.) To the same purpose is that, Job iv. 7. *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent; or where were the righteous entirely cut off?* This observation is confirmed by an enumeration of particulars, 1 Macc. ii. 51—61. where the writer instances in Abraham, Joseph, Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, David, Elias, Daniel, and the three children; and then concludes, in terms not unlike our author's, *Thus consider ye throughout all ages, that none that put their trust in him shall be overcome.* On the contrary, did ever any rebel, and fight against heaven, and prosper? Consider the Jewish nation in particular; they promised themselves upon the death of the righteous heir, that the inheritance would be their own, and yet how were their very hopes blasted! Instead of securing their title, they ruined it; instead of an expected greatness, which they thought would last for ever, their power and jurisdiction had a quick and fatal period; their supposed and boasted right to the Divine favour, was swallowed up of vengeance; their patrimony was alienated, and transferred to the gentile world; and this probably by a wise providence, that the gentiles might dread the like ingratitude towards God, which made the Jews so deplorable an instance, and such a dreadful spectacle, of the Divine vengeance. And hath not the same indignation seized upon many churches of the gentiles too, for their disobedience, which before fell so heavy upon Jerusalem? For in what a sad and deplorable condition are the once famous churches of Carthage, and the rest of Africa? And hath not antichrist fixed his seat in the temple of God, even in the once venerable seven churches of Asia? If therefore no favourite church or people, however they might presume upon, were protected by their privileges, none ought to think themselves secure of the Divine favour any longer than they are careful to do his will, and obey his commandments. What a fine reflection is this of our author's! and what a noble encouragement does it contain in the light we have considered it in, to invite men to obedience, and the fear of the Lord! Can there be a stronger inducement to piety in successive generations, than his confident appeal, for the success of it, to the happy experience of all former ages?

Ver. 11. *For the Lord is full of compassion and mercy, and forgiveth sins, and saveth in time of affliction.*] As afflictions are generally occasioned by sins, so it is observable here, that the ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, or God's forgiving and remitting sins, is mentioned first in order, before his releasing or delivering in time of affliction. And so in Hezekiah's sickness, when the prophet is sent unto him, the method of his recovery is the same, Isa. xxxviii. Thus 2 Macc. iii. 32. and following verses, when Heliodorus had been scourged for his sacrilegious enterprise, the priest is

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first said to have made an atonement, and God thereupon to have granted him life. (See also Eccl. xxxviii. 9. and the note on that place.) And in the cures wrought by Christ himself, we find that the forgiving the sick man's sins, *Son, thy sins are forgiven thee,* is the ordinary preface to his recovery. (See Psal. ciii. 3.)

Ver. 12. *Woe be to fearful hearts.*] *i. é.* Such as fall away in time of persecution. As fear is often recommended, so we find it as often forbidden. Unbelief is so commonly the cause of fear, and fear so commonly leads to unbelief, that we find them often linked together. See ver. 13. and Rev. xxi. 8. where δειλοὶ καὶ ἄπιστοι occur together. When St. Peter was affrighted upon the sea, and cried, *Lord, save me,* as he was just sinking; although it was a good prayer, yet, because it proceeded from carnal fear rather than faith, our Saviour presently rebuked him, *Wherefore didst thou doubt, O thou of little faith?* And as faint-heartedness argues want of faith, so patience in adversity, the fear of God, and a constant reliance upon his promises and mercy, are inspired and strengthened by faith. Some copies read, οὐαὶ καρδίαις διπλαῖς; and such a one the Vulgate seems to have followed, rendering *væ duplici corde;* but the present reading seems preferable, as the other is expressed in the latter part of the verse. By *faint hands* here, we may understand such as are negligent and slothful in the work of the Lord. The writer to the Hebrews, using the same expression, advises to *lift up the hands that hang down,* τὰς παρειμένας χεῖρας, and the feeble knees, and to make straight paths, *i. e.* to go straight forward in the paths of holiness. (See also Jer. xlviii. 10.)

And the sinner that goeth two ways.] *i. e.* Such sinners as are for serving two masters, God and mammon, God in outward appearance and profession, but the world in reality, and at the bottom of their hearts. God abhors such hypocrisy and insincerity, he demands the whole heart, and undivided affections; he hath bought us, says St. Austin, at so great a price, to make us his own, and to exclude any partner, "tanti emit, ut solus possideat." (Tract. ix. in Johan.) And thus God declares, Zephan. i. 5. that *he will cut off them that worship the host of heaven, them that worship and swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham.* Such a double heart had the people of Sepharvaim, who at the same time feared the Lord, and served their own gods. (2 Kings xvii. 28, 29.) It was this double-mindedness which Elijah reproved, when he said to all the people, *How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.* (1 Kings xviii.) The inconsistency of serving two such objects, or even their subsisting together, is intimated in Dagon's falling down before the ark, and in Moses's refusing to sacrifice the abominations of the Egyptians unto the Lord. (Exod. viii. 26.)

Ver. 13. *Woe unto him that is faint-hearted, for he believeth not, therefore shall he not be defended.*] The Vulgate is more explicit, *Væ dissolutis corde, qui non credunt Deo, et ideo non protegentur ab eo;* i. e. such as either disbelieve God's promises, or that their prayers shall be heard and answered, and so do not ask in faith without wavering, such have no good reason to expect God's protection, nor will they be so happy to find it; whereas *the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, yea all such as call upon him faithfully.* (Psal. cxlv. 18.) But the promise is still stronger to them, Psal. xxxvii. 40, 41. *The salvation of the righteous cometh of the Lord, who is also their strength in the time of trouble; and the Lord shall stand by them and save them, he shall deliver them from the ungodly, and shall save them, because they put their trust in him.* Where the repetition is not idle nor superfluous, but is purposely introduced to confirm the truth of the observation. The Greek is still more observable and full, καὶ βοηθήσει αὐτοῖς Κύριος, καὶ ῥύσεται αὐτὸς, ἐξελεῖται αὐτοὺς ἐξ ἁμαρτωλῶν, καὶ σώσει αὐτοὺς, ὅτι ἤλπισαν ἐπ' αὐτόν. If even the fathers of our flesh think an injury done them, when their children either distrust, or refuse to apply to, or depend upon them, how much greater affront is offered to God, when, after so many tokens of his goodness to his creatures, and of his readiness and power to assist them, they fix their dependance elsewhere, and seek a foreign help and protection? Or the meaning may be, that such as, through a distrust of God, have recourse to unlawful means for their safety, or place too much dependance upon any, shall find themselves disappointed, and be taken in their own craftiness. And thus God by his prophet threatens the rebellious children, that, *instead of taking counsel of God, strengthened themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and trusted in the shadow of Egypt; that the strength of Egypt should be their shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt, their confusion.* (Isa. xxx. 2, 3.)

Ver. 14. *Woe unto you that have lost patience! and what will ye do when the Lord shall visit you?*] i. e. *Visit your offences with the rod, and your sin with scourges?* The Vulgate reaches not the force of ἐπισκέπτεσθαι, when it renders it by *inspicere.* The version of the Arabic is far preferable, *Quid facturi estis, quum vos invaserit judicium ejus?* And Junius, I presume, means the same, when he renders, *cum animadvertet Dominus.* The sense may either be, If in smaller evils, which men here at any time brought upon you, ye have betrayed great impatience, and have with difficulty been kept from revenge, how will ye be able to support yourselves under the mighty and avenging hand of God, or stand in his sight when he is angry, and is a consuming fire? Or, according to Calmet, What answer will ye be able to make him, who have disbelieved his word, and disobeyed his commandments, when inquisition shall be made about your faith and practice? The Port-Royal comment understands it in this farther sense, of being weary in well-doing, not going on with or finishing a course well and happily begun; the suffering the good seed, which fell neither by the way-side, nor on stony ground, nor among thorns, to bring no fruit at length, with all these advantages, to perfection, through a want of perseverance, and a patient continuance in well-doing. Such are doubly unhappy, as they not only lose the benefit of all the good they formerly have done, but will moreover be punished for their apostacy in abandoning God, and being ashamed of his service.

Ver. 16. *They that love him shall be filled with the law.*] The Vulgate has, *replebuntur lege ipsius,* which the Geneva version follows, *they that love him, shall be fulfilled with his law:* where there seems a small mistake; the rendering probably was designed to be, *they that love him, shall be fully filled with his law.* Syriac, *Diligentes eum addiscunt legem ipsius.* Arabic, *Amici ejus exequuntur voluntatem ipsius:* and Coverdale is to the same effect, *They that love him, shall fulfil his law; i. e.* they will search into and study his

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law to know and find out his will from thence; and the Holy Spirit shall engrave on their hearts the knowledge of the word of God, because they sought it not merely for speculation, but to practise it; not for amusement only, but to be improved by it; not slightly or superficially, but to be filled with it.

Ver. 17, 18. *They that fear the Lord will prepare their hearts, and humble their souls in his sight, saying, We will fall into the hands of the Lord, and not into the hands of men: for as his majesty is, so is his mercy.*] The author seems to have had the words of David in his view, who had the melancholy option of three great evils which threatened him, 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. *I am in a great strait; let us fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let us not fall into the hands of men,* especially as the context relates to adversity. The Vulgate renders, *Si pœnitentiam non egerimus, incidemus in manus Domini; i. e.* into the hands of an angry God. In this sense the words respect Heb. xx. 31. and indeed, ἐμπεσούμεθα, which is more properly rendered *incidemus* than *incidamus,* gives some countenance to this. But the reflection in the following part of the verse, with which the chapter concludes, plainly determines for the first. The sense of the whole, as it stands connected, is,—that as terrible as God is, clothed with majesty and power, yet there is this pleasing consideration, that his power is tempered with equity; that he is full of mercy and loving-kindness; and therefore, to rely upon his goodness, and submit to what he shall appoint by way of visitation and punishment, is far preferable, than to trust to the injustice, malice, and revengeful passions of men, whose mercies themselves, as they are falsely called, are often cruel. Whereas all the dispensations of God are full of tenderness; when he spares us, it is through his mercy; when he threatens or punishes us, it is with a merciful intent of doing us good, the comfortable consideration of which glorious attribute, in some measure disarms his thunder, and makes it a less fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It was the dreadful majesty of God, and an apprehension of his future wrath, which determined Susanna, when straitened on every side, and in imminent danger of death or sinning, to make this pious resolution—to fall into the hands of the elders, rather than sin in the sight of the Lord, ver. 22, 23. The power of God, considered abstractedly, may fill us with terror; but that the mercy of God is as infinite as his majesty, is a never-failing spring of comfort. The author of the book of Wisdom will help us to conceive aright in this matter; see Wisd. xii. 16. where he observes, that that power, which in men is the foundation of injustice and oppression, in God *is the beginning of righteousness; and because he is the Lord of all, it makes him to be gracious unto all.* (See also ver. 18. and the note upon both.)

CHAP. III.

Ver. 2. *THE Lord hath given the father honour over the children, and hath confirmed the authority of the mother over the sons.*] *i. e.* He hath enjoined honour to be paid them by their children, or made them honourable with regard to them; and thus the Tigurine version, *Dominus patrem liberis honorabilem reddidit.* His will is, that their children should render them reverence, honour, and obedience, having made them as it were his representatives on earth; and his supreme authority is in some sort vested and lodged in them to instruct, command, reprove, or punish them. Hence some have asserted an almost absolute authority in parents. It is certain, that anciently, and even under the old law, the parents had a power to sell their children, (Exod. xxi. 7.) if they themselves were reduced to extreme poverty; and in some cases had a jurisdiction of life and death over them. Κρίσις μητρὸς, which the margin renders *judgment,* and the Vulgate *judicium,* and our translators more properly, *authority,* is a Hebraism, for *shaphat* in that language signifies both *to judge* and *to rule.*

Ver. 3. *Whoso honoureth his father, maketh an atonement for his sins.*] Our version follows a copy which read ἐξιλάσκεται, as the Alexandrian MS. also has it; but in most editions it is ἐξιλάσεται, *peccata expiabit; i. e.* shall obtain remission and forgiveness of his own sins when he prayeth: and thus St. Ambrose, quoting these words, expounds ἐξιλάσεται, *in die orationis suæ exaudietur,* as in ver. 5. The Tigurine version has *votorum quotidianorum composerit,* which perhaps is the meaning of the Vulgate, *in oratione dierum exaudietur.* Some understand this of the father's sins; that a dutiful son will pray for the forgiveness of his father's sins. But the first sense I think preferable.

Ver. 4. *And he that honoureth his mother, is as one that layeth up treasure.*] *i. e.* He layeth up a store of good deeds to recommend him to God's favour and blessing. See 1 Tim. vi. 19. Tob. iv. 9. where ἀποθησαυρίζων is used in the same sense. It has been observed by learned men, that human laws generally provide only that due regard and honour be given by children to their fathers, but take no notice of the mother; as may be seen in some Persian laws mentioned by Aristotle, the Roman ones recited in the Digests and Constitutions, and in several passages of the Greek philosophers, which occur in Epictetus and Simplicius; all which consult only the honour of the father. But God in his law takes care to preserve a just reverence to both the parents equally, as the persons whose ministry he uses, to bring a young generation into the world. (See Grotius in Decal. Prov. i. 8.) And this wise author, like another Solomon, bred up under the same Divine institution, presses the duty owing to both very largely in the first sixteen verses of this chapter.

Ver. 5. *Whoso honoureth his father, shall have joy of his own children. . .*] *i. e.* God shall bless that man with a numerous posterity, who pays the reverence and respect due to his own parents; and thus the Arabic takes it, *Qui patrem suum honore affecerit, multos habebit filios;* or, God will give such a one obedient and dutiful children, who, by their discreet conduct and religious behaviour, will be a joy and comfort to him. The Greek has only in general, εὐφρανθήσεται ἐπὶ τέκνοις; our translators properly enough insert the words, *his own,* and the Syriac confirms their sense, *jucunditatem percipiet e filiis suis.* They will prove to him such, as he himself was to his own parents; "Upon the same account and grounds (says a very learned prelate) that any one expects obedience from his own children, he must know that he ought to pay it to his parents likewise. And where is the parent that does not think it reasonable that his children should obey him even against their inclinations, and prefer his wisdom and experience to

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their own wills and weak understandings, and trust to his affection, love, and favour, rather than pursue their own humours?" (Fleetwood's Rel. Dut. p. 26.) It was a wise saying therefore which is recorded of the philosopher Thales, "Such a behaviour as you shew to your parents, such expect from your own children," οὓς ἂν ἐράνους εἰσενέγκῃς τοῖς γονεῦσι, τοὺς αὐτοὺς προσδέχου καὶ παρὰ σῶν τέκνων. (Apud Laert. lib. i.)

Ver. 6. *He that honoureth his father shall have a long life.*] This may either be strictly taken according to the promise in the fifth commandment, *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee;* or it may mean, Since long life is promised to the observance of God's other commandments likewise, that dutiful children shall in general be blessed. Long life being counted a blessing, is therefore in Scripture frequently used for it. And the Jews understood it no otherwise, than of being in general blessed.

And he that is obedient unto the Lord, shall be a comfort unto his mother.] *i. e.* He that obeys God's commandment in this particular, will comfort, support, and succour, his mother under any or all the burdens and necessities of life, particularly will be tender of and provide for her in her old age, when she is helpless: for so I would understand ἀναπαύσει μητέρα αὐτοῦ· and in this sense ἀνάπαυσις is probably taken, Philem. ver. 20. Or it may mean, that a virtuous good child will be a blessing, and occasion much joy to his mother. Thus Homer introduces Hector embracing his son Astyanax, and praying that he may prove virtuous, and be a comfort to his mother, χαρείη δὲ φρένα μήτηρ. The oriental versions understand the place of the reward which attends such obedience: Syriac, *Optime meretur de Deo, qui matrem honorat;* and Arabic, *Optimum erit præmium ejus propter obedientiam matri impensam.*

Ver. 7. *He that feareth the Lord——will do service unto his parents, as to his masters.*] *i. e.* He will behave himself towards them with the fear of a servant, as well as the reverence of a child. (See Luke xv. 29. Mal. iii. 17. Gal. iv. 1. Phil. ii. 22.) Fathers and mothers have a right over their children by giving them birth, superior to what masters have over their slaves by purchase. The one is founded on force and necessity; the other on nature, and those numberless obligations, which children owe to them that were the cause of their coming into the world; for next unto God they are the authors of their being and existence, health, power, and all the advantages either of body or soul which they possess. A slave, in the language of Scripture, (Exod. xxi. 21.) is the money of his master; but children are the blood and substance of their parents. A slave owes his labour and service to his master; but children reverence, love, gratitude, succour, and all the kind returns which it is possible for them to make. (Calmet in loc.) Anciently the authority of the parent over the child was almost absolute; the Roman lawgivers put children, while in the parents' power, in the same capacity with slaves; the parents were masters of them, and all they had, till they were emancipated, as slaves are, and had not only power to expose or sell them, but in certain cases to put them to death. (Simplicius in Epict.) "But these are privileges which do not naturally or reasonably attend the parents' authority and relation; and therefore there is great abatement to be made from all arguments that conclude only from customs and usages, though of wise and civilized people. The custom and practice of the Jews, and all the eastern nations indeed, sufficiently evidence the power and authority that parents exercised in the disposal of their children; but they do not shew the reasonableness of such authority, nor is it of the law of nature so to do." (Fleetwood's Rel. Dut. p. 45.) Lactantius's observation is close to the present purpose, "Dominum eundem esse qui sit pater, etiam Juris Civilis ratio demonstrat; quis enim poterit filios educare, nisi habeat in eos Domini potestatem?" (Lib. iv. cap. 3.) And thus St. Jerome to Gaudentia, concerning the education of her child, "Amet te ut Parentem, subjiciatur ut Dominæ:" so Plautus, "Mater tu, eadem et hera es." And in another place, "Tuis servivi servitutem imperiis, Pater." (Asinar.)

Ver. 8. *Honour thy father and mother both in word and deed, that a blessing may come upon thee from them.*] The Vulgate adds, *et in omni patientia; i. e.* by submitting patiently to their animadversions and chastisements. Καὶ τὴν μητέρα is omitted in many Greek copies, as it is also by the Vulgate and oriental versions; the Complut. has it, which our translators follow, and Grabe has inserted it from thence. And very properly is the mother not only mentioned, but joined as to equal reverence, that she may not seem to be slighted or overlooked on account of her sex, which inclines them generally to more tenderness for their offspring. The Scripture in many places, Exod. xxi. 15. 17. Deut. xxi. 18. xxviii. 16. Exod. xx. enjoins the same duty to be paid to the one as the other. And there is indeed equal reason in most cases why it should be so, and in some greater. The mothers undergo most sorrow and pain for them, bear all the fatigue and trouble of their infancy and childhood, attend and do all they can for them in that helpless state, and have the same interest in their good and welfare; and therefore in reason and gratitude the children are obliged to make no difference between the parents in their obedience to them. (See note on vii. 27.) Τιμᾶν, which our translators here render *honour*, signifies more when applied to parents; it comprehends likewise the duty of maintaining them, and in this sense it is used by St. Paul, 1 Tim. v. 3. 17. And what St. Matthew expresses, οὐ μὴ τιμήσῃ τὸν πατέρα; in St. Mark is, οὐκέτι ἀφίετε αὐτὸν οὐδὲν ποιῆσαι τῷ πατρὶ, where ποιεῖν answers to ἀγαθοποιεῖν.

Ver. 9. *The blessing of the father establishes the houses of children, but the curse of the mother rooteth out foundations.*] The prayer of a parent procures the blessing of God upon such dutiful children as have been careful to pay that honour and reverence which religion and nature require from them; their blessing is an inheritance, or an estate to their children, though they should have nothing else to leave them. But such as by their disobedience provoke their parents, and thereby draw down their curse upon them, have felt the terrible effect of it upon them, and their posterity. History furnishes but too many examples of misfortunes brought upon children by the imprecation of parents. The most ancient we meet with is that of Noah upon his younger son, Canaan; *Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren;* which was accordingly fulfilled, as the learned agree, many ages afterward; and of how great importance a good and dutiful behaviour towards parents is, we may learn from

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the happy consequences of the patriarchal benedictions, which God so confirmed by his providence in the event, that it might powerfully prevail upon children to honour and obey their parents, and not do any thing whereby they may come in danger of incurring their displeasure and imprecation. With this expectation and view Isaac blessed Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs. Jacob's care in particular not to offend his father, and thereby bring on him his curse, is very remarkable, and is an example to all children not to make light of a parent's displeasure. *My father* (says he) *peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver, and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.* (Gen. xxvii. 12.) And is not the parent's curse, which Jacob so much dreaded, when forced from a parent by undutifulness and ill usage, as strong and fatal now as formerly, and our author's observation as applicable to all persons at this time, as heretofore to a Jew and his children? St. Austin mentions a most melancholy instance of ten children, who were cursed by their mother, all of whom for many years felt the effect of her imprecation, by a continual trembling of all their limbs. (De Civit. Dei, lib. xxii. cap. 8.)

Ver. 10. *Glory not in the dishonour of thy father, for thy father's dishonour is no glory unto thee.*] St. Chrysostom, quoting this passage, illustrates it by the instance of Cham, who exposed his father's shame and nakedness. "Children ought to be exceeding careful to conceal the faults and miscarriages of their parents; the same piety would have endeavoured to cover Noah's cruelty or injustice, had he been guilty of them, that was so careful to conceal his nakedness and folly; for they are also the shame and nakedness of a man's understanding; and such infirmities being no less dishonourable than those of the body, the like caution should be used in not discovering or exposing them." (Fleetwood's Rel. Dut. p. 77.) Much less should any assume the liberty to throw reflections upon a parent, to render him little and despicable in the esteem of others. We meet with and detest this behaviour in Absalom, who laboured to depreciate David his father in the sight of his people, and to undermine and weaken him in their good opinion and favour; *For when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment; Absalom said to him, There is no man deputed of the king to hear thee; O that I was made judge in the land, I would do to every man right and justice!* And by this intriguing and insinuating address, he stole the hearts of the men of Israel. (2 Sam. xv. 2. 6.) This in any other was criminal, in a son quite unnatural. There is that near relation and intimacy between parents and children, that nothing can affect the welfare or honour of the former, without being communicated to and descending upon the latter; the branches will in proportion share in the good or ill condition of the root; if this sickens, they of course wither. Or the sense may be according to Calmet,—Be not ashamed of thy birth and original, for this is a reflection upon thy parents, and in consequence a blot upon thine ownself. Alexander the Great thought himself more than mortal, and was ashamed to pass any longer for the son of Philip; but when he claimed Jupiter Ammon for his father, he paid so indifferent a compliment to the honesty of his mother Olympias, as to render even his own birth tainted and suspicious.

Ver. 12, 13. *My son, help thy father in his age, and grieve him not as long as he liveth: and if his understanding fail, have patience with him.*] Though old age is generally attended with a number of infirmities, yet neither any weakness of body, nor decay of sense and reason, gives any right to a child to despise his parents. With regard to their children, they always sustain a character that demands respect, which neither age, nor its attendant evils, can or ought to diminish. And particularly in the last stage of life, when they are helpless, and as it were infants a second time, they demand all that care, compassion, and tenderness, at their children's hands, when they are going out of the world, which they themselves happily experienced from their parents at their first coming into it. All the ancient philosophers give the same lesson as our author; Plato says, that he that has in his house a father or mother enfeebled with age, ought to regard them as a treasure, and to be assured that he can never want a tutelar deity so long as they continue with him, and are taken care of by him. (De Legibus.) Hesiod observes, that the gods will certainly punish the ill usage of an aged parent by some great calamity inflicted on the child. (Ἐργ. καὶ Ἡμερ. ver. 29.) Messieurs du Port-Royal, in their comment on the place, properly observe, that what is said by our author of the fathers of our flesh, is very applicable to our spiritual ones—we should respect their persons, revere their authority, and cover even their personal defects and failings.

And despise him not, when thou art in thy full strength.] Ἐν πάσῃ ἰσχύϊ σου. We have a remarkable instance of reverence to an aged parent in the behaviour of Joseph to an old blind decrepit father, when he himself was in the highest point of strength, glory, and power. (Gen. xlviii.) Nor is the behaviour of Jacob, then in his prime, towards his aged sire, Isaac, his pains and quickness to oblige him, by getting the venison, and making savoury meat, such as his father loved, thereby to win his favour and obtain his blessing, less to be admired. (Gen. xxvii.) Calmet understands by ἰσχὺς, riches and power; and then the sense is,—If thou art more rich, more powerful, more honoured, more vigorous and healthful, than thy father, despise not his weakness, obscurity, or poverty. The marginal reading, *in all thine ability*, may seem to comprise all these, but the first seems favoured by the context. That ἰσχὺς is often taken in this book in the sense of riches, see ix. 9. which our translators render, *Give not thy soul unto a woman to set her foot upon thy substance*, ἐπιβῆναι ἐπὶ τὴν ἰσχύν σου, &c. (xiv. 13. xxviii. 11. xliv. 6. xlv. 8. 12.) and then the sense and expression here will be equivalent to that in xxxvii. 6. μὴ ἀμνημονήσῃς αὐτοῦ ἐν χρήμασί σου, *be not unmindful of him in thy riches.* Grotius thinks that there is an ellipsis here, and makes the sense to be—Endeavour ἐν πάσῃ τῇ ἰσχύϊ, with all thy power, and as much as possible, not to despise, or any way bring thy father into disgrace, nor through any misconduct be the occasion of grief to him, by slighting his advice, and acting contrary to it. And so Junius, *Honorem habe omnibus viribus tuis*, and refers to Gen. xxxiii. 10. as a parallel ellipsis; and the Tigurine version is to the same effect, *Illum aspernari summo cave studio.*

Ver. 14. *For the relieving of thy father shall not be forgotten.*] Ἐλεημοσύνη πατρός. Syriac, *Benignitas in patrem præstita.* The kind and charitable relief of a parent, by

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attending upon him in his feeble estate, or, if need so require, occasionally supplying him with necessaries, will be so far from being overlooked or forgotten by God, that he will bear the good deed in remembrance to reward it suitably. Homer mentions it as a calamitous circumstance in the death of a young hero, that he was cut off in his bloom, before he had made any retribution to his parents for their care and support of him,

Οὐδὲ τοκεῦσι
Θρεπτὰ φίλοις ἀπέδωκε.

And it was a wise and noble institution of Solon, the great Athenian lawgiver, which decreed, that any child that refused or neglected to support his parents, when their age or infirmities called for assistance, should be branded with infamy, and deprived of all the privileges of society.

And instead of sins, it shall be added to build thee up.] Καὶ ἀντὶ ἁμαρτιῶν προσανοικοδομηθήσεταί σοι. Our translators have rendered this passage very imperfectly and obscurely; ἀντὶ signifies here *for* or *against*, rather than *instead*. They have made the like mistake in the rendering of this preposition, Wisd. vii. 10. (See note on that place.) By *sins*, some understand here the punishment due to them, and thus it is used, Isa. xl. 2. And, indeed, I the less incline to understand this of sins properly so called, as they are mentioned ver. 3. and 15. of this chapter, and such a tautology could not be justified. Others by *sins*, understand the imperfections and failings of the parents; and thus the Vulgate, *Pro peccato matris restituitur tibi bonum; i. e.* for the peevishness, impatience, and moroseness, of your mother, which you have passed over and submitted to, a proportionable and adequate compensation and recompence shall be made you by God. Others expound it of the personal sins of the children themselves, that, by such acts of kindness and charity done to their parents, they shall cover and blot out the multitude of their sins; which seems to be the meaning of the Arabic, *Beneficium in patrem non deletur, imo, deletur per illud multitudo peccatorum.* According to Grotius the meaning is, His (the dutiful child's) house shall be built again: God shall bless him with a numerous and flourishing posterity, who shall be a comfort through their piety and good conduct. In Scripture, building a man's house, is a known metaphor for raising up children. (See Gen. xvi. 2. Exod. i. 21. Deut. xxv. 9. Ruth iv. 11. Psal. cxxvii. 1.)

Ver. 15. *In the day of thine affliction it shall be remembered; thy sins also shall melt away as the ice in the fair warm weather.*] *i. e.* Such an instance of piety shall be remembered to thy advantage; or, God himself ἀναμνησθήσεταί σου, shall remember thee. He will not only bless obedient children here, but he will bless them with heavenly blessings, of which the land of Canaan, with all the beauty and fertility thereof, was but a faint type and shadow. The latter clause, ὡς εὐδία ἐπὶ παγετῷ, is not literally nor indeed rightly translated. The true rendering of the Greek either is, Thy sins shall be no more, as the mildness of the weather ceaseth in a hard frost; and thus Drusius translates: or, Thy sins shall melt away, as ice does when fine weather comes upon or after a frost; and so Junius takes it. The sense also of the Arabic is full and clear, *In afflictione erit tibi adjutor, pelletque a te mala, quomodo pellitur frigus vehementiâ caloris.*

Ver. 16. *He that forsaketh his father, is as a blasphemer.*] By some of the ancient lawgivers, parents are styled a sort of earthly gods, and by Philo they are expressly called so, de Decal. And therefore, to offend against their authority, and much more to disregard, desert, or injure them, is not improperly here made a species of blasphemy: or the sense may be, according to that of the old Greek poet, He that reviles or injures his father, shews a disposition wicked enough to blaspheme even the Deity.

Ὁ λοιδορῶν τὸν πατέρα δυσφημεῖ λόγῳ,
Τὴν εἰς τὸ θεῖον προμελετᾷ βλασφημίαν. (Menand.)

Our author uses a variety of arguments to enforce the duty of reverence to parents; Tirinus reckons up no less than thirteen urged by him in these few verses.

Ver. 17. *Go on with thy business in meekness, so shalt thou be beloved of him that is approved.*] Ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπου δεκτοῦ. *i. e.* By all worthy and good men, such as are themselves, for the like good qualities, beloved both of God and men. The Vulgate renders, *Super hominum gloriam diligeris*, from a copy, probably, which had ὑπὲρ· which the oriental versions seem also to have followed, and to have mistaken the sense of δεκτὸς, when they expound it by *præ viro munera largiente.* That of our translators is more just and proper. We have ἄνθρωποι δεκτοὶ to the same sense, ii. 5. see also Luke iv. 24. and Acts x. 35. ὁ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην, δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστιν· which differs not much from the expression before us. As the author begins here a new subject about modesty and humility, some copies begin here a new chapter.

Ver. 18. *The greater thou art, the more humble thyself.*] Ὅσῳ μέγας εἶ. Vulg. *Quanto magnus es;* which is a literal rendering of the Greek, as that is of the Hebrew, which, having neither comparative nor superlative degree to compare things by, makes use always of the positive. There are two instances of this construction together in the LXX. Psal. cxviii. 8, 9. Ἀγαθὸν πεποιθέναι ἐπὶ Κύριον, ἢ πεποιθέναι ἐπ' ἄνθρωπον,—ἀγαθὸν ἐλπίζειν ἐπὶ Κύριον, ἢ ἐλπίζειν ἐπ' ἄρχουσι, which the Latin interpreter is servile in following; but the Chaldee, St. Jerome, and our version, rightly render by the comparative. See also the like, Matt. xviii. 8, 9. and Glass. Philol. Sac. Can. 18. This fine sentiment is worthy of the gospel, says Calmet. Though the heathen philosophers knew a great number of moral virtues, humility was never well understood or practised by them; they could talk plausibly of despising glory, honours, riches, &c. but found it difficult or disagreeable to exert such self-denial. True humility, which consists in the contempt of ourselves and a deference to others, is no where taught, or so well inspired, as by wisdom or religion. It is this shews us our weakness, imperfection, and nakedness, and the value which we ought to set upon the worth of others. St. Ambrose has well expressed the sense of our author, "Mensura humilitatis cuique, ex mensura ipsius magnitudinis data est." (De Virginit. cap. 31.) The measure of our humility must correspond with that of our elevation, as a tree shoots its roots downwards in proportion to the spreading of the branches upwards. The higher we are advanced, the more have we to fear from pride. "If humility does not go before, accompany, and follow, all the good actions we do; if it is not the end which we propose, the guide we follow, and the weight to balance or rather sink us—pride will take away the merit of our best actions." (Aug. ad Dioscor. epist. 118.) It will ever be the greatest glory of Titus Vespasian above

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the rest of the Roman emperors, that he was moulded by his august station and dignity from the worse to the better, from being a very arbitrary and proud person, to be as eminently mild and humble. The reflection of our author is finely exemplified in the parable of the trees, Judg. ix. 8. The olive, fig-tree, and vine, being desired by the trees to be respectively king over them, content with their native sweetness and fruit, modestly refused the offer, which the bramble was ambitious to accept. The moral of which is, that the more noble any one is by birth or education, the more lowly and contented will he be with his lot and station, the freer from envy, pride, and ambition, the stain of base and mean souls.

Ver. 19. *Mysteries are revealed unto the meek.*] This is a weighty reason for the practice of humility: for the truth of the observation here made, see Psal. xxv. 8. where the Psalmist says, *Them that are meek, those he will teach his way;* and again, ver. 13. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant.* It is particularly true of Moses, that, as nobody was more meek than he, so none had more favours, or more frequent communications with God than he. And our Saviour says to his disciples, upon account of their humility, *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God.* (Luke viii. 10.) And in another place, *Thou hast hid these things* (*i. e.* the mysteries of the gospel) *from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes;* (Matt. xi. 25.) where *babes,* or such as have humble sentiments, are opposed to συνετοὶ, or such as were self-sufficient and wise in their own conceits. The humble soul is God's temple, and the man upon whom he delights to look, and in whom he is pleased to dwell, is one of a poor and contrite spirit, *who trembles at his word.* (Isa. lxvi. 1, 2.) And so St. Paul, *Not many wise men after the flesh,* but the seemingly foolish and base, *the despised things of the world, are chosen of God.* (1 Cor. i. 26.) This whole verse is wanting in several copies, and in the Vulgate and oriental versions.

Ver. 20. *The power of the Lord is great, and he is honoured of the lowly . . .*] All greatness compared to that of God is meanness; but, great as he is, he regards the meek and lowly chiefly, and chooses such to worship him. Kings and potentates take a pleasure in state and grandeur; to see others crouching at their feet is an accession to their glory, and by binding kings in chains, and nobles with links of iron, they aggrandize their triumph. The infinite majesty of God delights not in such pageantry and show, he expects no flattering service, he expects only that every man should humbly own his dependance upon him, and his infinite meanness in comparison of him. All worship, devoid of sentiments of profound humility, is disagreeable to and disregarded by him. Hence the angels consider themselves as nothing in his presence, and on earth the most pious souls are most sensible of their imperfection, and acknowledge their best services to be darkness and sin.

Ver. 22. *What is commanded thee, think thereupon with reverence, for it is not needful for thee to see with thine eyes the things that are in secret . . .*] This is manifestly translated from the Vulgate, *Non est enim tibi necessarium ea quæ abscondita sunt videre oculis;* whereas the Greek only has οὐ γάρ ἐστί σοι χρεία τῶν κρυπτῶν· *i. e.* Thou hast no need of, nor business with, nor will gain any advantage from, intricate and abstruse speculations, and therefore do not exercise thyself in great matters, which are too high for thee, nor rashly pry into mysterious points above the reach of thy understanding. Such a curiosity is criminal, and proceeds from pride and self-conceit. Content thyself with plain and necessary truths, and learn from thence thy duty, in order to practise it. There are a thousand things which we cannot learn, and which it does not concern us at all to know; the ignorance of which will be of no prejudice nor disadvantage to us. It is rather a piece of wisdom, with regard to such things as are really τὰ κρυπτὰ, to sit down contented with our ignorance, and endeavour after such knowledge as becomes us, and will be useful to us. Believe that there is a God, says one of the ancients, and worship him sincerely; but search not into his nature, what he is, and how he acts, for there is nothing more out of thy reach than such an inquiry. Our Saviour came not into the world to teach men swollen and conceited notions, or the pride and vanity of human science, but that men should submit every high thought to the obedience of faith, and think upon what is commanded them. A soul, thirsty and greedy after forbidden knowledge, nothing will content, it knows no ends of its desires and pursuits, its ambition and curiosity pant after unknown worlds, though the contempt of one is its truest glory. A little kowledge will suffice an humble soul; it neither aims at human greatness or admiration, nor to fathom the depths of the wisdom and power of God; it desires such a knowledge only of God, as may create a greater degree of love towards him, and asks only so much light as may be sufficient to direct it in its duty and conduct in the ways of godliness. Our author probably alludes in this verse to Numb. xv. 39. *Seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, that ye may remember and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God.*

Ver. 23. *Be not curious in unnecessary matters; for more things are shewed unto thee than men understand.*] Ἐν τοῖς περισσοῖς τῶν ἔργων σου μὴ περιεργάζου. Some copies have τῶν λόγων σοῦ· the original word doubtless was *debar,* which signifies both the one and the other. The sense is either, Do not endeavour by the strength of thine own parts to search the deep things of God, since even those that are before us we cannot comprehend, if left to ourselves; and such as we do understand, we came not to the knowledge of them merely by our own natural powers: or, Be not *over curious,* for so περιεργάζεσθαι is generally understood, or *over busy* (see 2 Thess. iii. 11.) in things which do not concern thee to kuow, and of which no account will be demanded of thee. The Geneva version renders not amiss, *be not curious in superfluous things.* Grotius understands this of prying into the reasons of God's laws, which God has not thought fit to discover or reveal; and so does Dr. Spencer, (vol. i. chap. 2.) God, it is certain, has enjoined the reach of human apprehension, and must be resolved solely into his will. Many or most of the ritual and ceremonial laws are absolute prohibitions or commands; and no reason of their being forbidden or commanded at all appears: God only says, *I am the Lord which commanded them;* and this, according to the Jewish doctors, is sufficient to stop all doubt and cavilling about the use or importance of such precepts, or too curious a search into the reasons for them. Such are the laws of not eating swine's flesh, not wearing a garment of linen and woollen, discalceation, or pulling off the shoe,

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purification of the leprosy, the scape-goat, and that of the firstling of an ass, and innumerable others. And if we examine the Pentateuch throughout, we shall not perhaps find any reason set down, or annexed to any such laws, as if God, by his silence in this respect, would purposely restrain men from a criminal curiosity. And indeed it is very notorious, that as soon as the scope and intention of a law among the Jews was guessed at, and presumed to be discovered, it abated of its force and authority, and the sense of it was often perverted to the hurt and destruction of such inquirers. So true is the observation in the following verse, that an evil suspicion, founded upon men's vain opinion, *hath led them into* many and great *mistakes;* for so πολλοὺς ἐπλάνησεν should be rendered, and not in the present tense, as our translators give it.

Ver. 25. *Without eyes thou shalt want light; profess not the knowledge therefore that thou hast not.*] The literal rendering of the Greek is, Without the pupil or sight of thine eye thou shalt want light, *Pupillas non habens indigebis luce* (Junius): and if thou hast not knowledge, profess it not; or, according to Drusius, Betray not thine ignorance by pretending to knowledge. The sense of the passage is, It is not only a fruitless undertaking to attempt to explain mysteries, or fathom the τὰ βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ, but is likewise dangerous, and apt to lead such presumptuous inquirers into errors, and sometimes heresies. It highly concerns every one therefore to think soberly of himself, according to the measure of faith and knowledge which God has afforded him; for as the eye has a certain sphere and boundary of vision, beyond which all is darkness and obscurity; so there are certain limits likewise to the understanding, though some may see farther, and understand more than others: but let no man profess or boast of more knowledge than God has really bestowed upon him, or his own finite nature is capable of: see 1 Tim. vi. 4. where a person of curiosity in matters of faith is termed νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις, and evil surmises, ὑπόνοιαι πονηραὶ, the very expression here used, are likewise condemned. The Syriac and Arabic versions understand it, of presuming to give advice as a professor or an adept in any science, when at the same time the person is ignorant and unqualified, *Si doctrinæ careas, ne consilium des hominibus quasi doctus.* This verse is wanting in the Roman edition and the Vulgate.

Ver. 26. *A stubborn heart shall fare evil at the last; and he that loveth danger shall perish therein.*] A hardened and impenitent heart, such as was that of Pharaoh, Antiochus, Judas, and other obdurate sinners, who are deaf to all God's calls, or the warnings of his ministers, shall experience his vengeance, and particularly at the hour of their death, they shall be seized with such a dread, as shall fling them into despair, and too late bewail their unhappiness and sad estate. Such as will fetch neither cattle nor servants into the house, though kindly forewarned; to them for their obstinacy it shall happen, as it did to the Egyptians: vengeance shall come down upon them one way or the other, as thunder and hail, fire and lightning, did upon the despisers of Moses's warning. Or a hard heart may signify, one that is devoid of the sentiments of humanity, that has no bowels of tenderness and compassion: such a one shall have cutting reflections for his past cruelty; and as he afforded no mercy, shall be in despair of finding any: but the first sense is preferable. St. Bernard's description of a hardened and stubborn heart is very just: *Cor durum dicitur, quod non compunctione scinditur, nec pietate mollitur, nec movetur precibus, minis non cedit, flagellis duratur. Ingratum ad beneficia, ad consilia infidum, ad judicia sævum, inverecundum ad turpia, impavidum ad pericula, inhumanum ad humana, temerarium ad divina, præteritorum obliviscens, præsentium negligens, futura non prævidens; i.e.* A hard heart is neither rent with compunction, nor softened with pity, nor moved with prayers; regardeth not threats, is hardened with stripes; in kindness unthankful, in council unfaithful, in judgment cruel; without shame in bad actions, without fear in dangers; in human matters most inhuman, in Divine ones rash; forgetful of things past, neglecting things present, careless of things to come. (De Consider. ad Eugen. lib. i.) According to Calmet, the meaning of the last clause is, that the rash and foolhardy, who tempt danger without any reason, shall at length suffer for their imprudence. He thinks the author here indirectly aims at them who maintain fate or destiny; and on that account face dangers, without any apprehension or concern; persuading themselves, that, if it is appointed that they shall die upon such or such an attempt, or enterprise, it is to no purpose to pretend to guard against it: that the time and manner of our death are fixed by an eternal and irreversible decree, and if the fatal hour is not yet come, no rashness or accident can hasten it. Against this weak and extravagant notion, the author opposes this wise caution, *He that loveth danger shall perish therein;* which in the Roman edition makes the former part of this verse.

Ver. 27. *An obstinate heart shall be laden with sorrows; and the wicked man shall heap sin upon sin.*] Calmet thinks the two members of this verse correspond to each other, and are the same in sense; accordingly he renders, "Le cœur endurci se chargera de crimes, et le pecheur ajoûtera péché sur péché," i.e. *An obstinate heart shall be laden with crimes, and the wicked will heap sin upon sin.* He conjectures, that in the original work, composed by the grandfather Jesus, the Hebrew word signified both crimes and sorrows, which is not improbable. Πόνος, the word here used, has likewise such a double signification, and the translators very frequently mistake it. See Psal. vii. 14. ἰδοὺ ὠδίνησεν ἀδικίαν, συνέλαβε πόνον, καὶ ἔτεκεν ἀνομίαν, which our version, following the Vulgate, *Concepit dolorem et peperit iniquitatem,* wrongly renders, *He hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth ungodliness;* and the like false rendering occurs, ver. 16. in both which places the context manifestly determines it to the other sense; but in Psal. x. they render πόνος differently, and rightly understand it in two places in the sense of wickedness. Thus, ver. 7. *His mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and fraud; under his tongue is* κόπος καὶ πόνος, *ungodliness and vanity.* And, ver. 14. σὺ πόνον καὶ θυμὸν κατανοεῖς, *Thou beholdest ungodliness and wrong;* in both which places the Vulgate expresses it inaccurately by *dolor.* See also Psal. cxxxix. 24. where the Hebrew word rendered by Ar. Montanus, and some Latin versions, *dolor,* is, in the LXX. ἀνομία, and Psal. lv. 10. where πόνος, which is coupled with ἀνομία, would be better rendered by *wickedness* than *sorrow,* as it stands now in our version. The sense then of our author in this place is, That God permits the sinner to fall from one wickedness

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to another, till he fills up the measure of his iniquities. St. Austin aptly compares the habit of sinning to a long chain, which keeps the sinner confined like a prisoner: he is brought into a continual bondage by it, and is unavoidably a slave to it: "Velle meum tenebat inimicus, et indigno mihi catenam fecerat: quippe ex voluntate perversa facta est libido; et dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo; et dum consuetudini non resistitur, facta est necessitas." (Confess. lib. viii. cap. 5.)

Ver. 28. *In the punishment of the proud there is no remedy.*] Ἐν ἐπαγωγῇ ὑπερηφάνου οὐκ ἔστιν ἴασις. The marginal reading is much clearer, The proud man is not healed by his punishment: to which Junius seems to agree, *Quum inducitur superbo afflictio, non est curatio,* understanding by ἐπαγωγὴ *affliction,* as it is often taken in this book; *i. e.* The proud man, one who is strictly such, is not bettered by any thing that befals him: he is so self-sufficient and opinionated, that he is deaf to the admonition of friends for his reformation: he defies and laughs at God's judgments, and is incorrigible under them. The Arabic understands this of the proud scorner in particular, *Irrisoris pœnæ non est remissio, quoniam planta illis pessima plantarum est.* But by the *proud* here I would understand the obdurate sinner; for throughout the book of Psalms, and these sapiential ones, the proud and sinner are synonymous terms. And such great offenders as commit sins with boldness, and with a sort of defiance, are, in the Scripture phrase, called despisers, according to that excellent description of them, Prov. xviii. 3. as it occurs in the LXX. which our version renders very imperfectly, ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἀσεβὴς εἰς βάθος κακῶν, καταφρονεῖ, ἐπέρχεται δὲ αὐτῷ ἀτιμία καὶ ὄνειδος, which Jerome's Bible well renders, *Impius cum in profundum venerit peccatorum, contemnit, sed sequitur eum ignominia et opprobrium.* The sad catastrophe of such hardened sinners is more strongly noted by our author, That when God visits such offenders, he does not dally with them, but strikes a deadly blow: their wounds are mortal and incurable, and past all remedy: there is no balm in Gilead that can do them good. The Vulgate has *Synagogæ Superborum non erit sanitas,* following a copy probably which had ἐν συναγωγῇ ὑπερηφάνου, κ. τ. λ.

Ver. 29. *The heart of the prudent will understand a parable.*] To a hard heart just mentioned, a teachable and docile disposition is here opposed, one desirous of learning, that will make use of the necessary means of attaining it, *viz.* hearing, reading, and meditating. Two things therefore seem here required, a desire and eagerness after wisdom, and the listening to the words of the wise, and their interpretation. Or the sense may be, as applied to the teacher himself, that his wisdom will appear by his apt discourse, and just observations; *Cor sapientis intelligitur in sapientia:* (Vulg.) and the Port-Royal comment, *Le cœur du sage paroistra par sa sagesse; i. e.* the prudent or wise man will distinguish himself, when he opens his treasures: as long as he is silent, and his wisdom confined to his own breast, he appears like other men; but when he thinks proper to speak, the clearness of his conceptions, the justness of his sentiments, and the usefulness of his maxims, stand confessed and admired; and every judicious ear will listen with greediness and pleasure.

And an attentive ear is the desire of a wise man.] Οὖς ἀκροατοῦ ἐπιθυμία σοφοῦ· *i. e.* A wise man will wish to have such disciples as will mind and regard what he says, and treasure up his wise reflections, in order to improve by them. And thus the Tigurine version, *Sapiens aurem attentam expetit;* and Junius, *Auris ejusmodi auditoris a sapiente exoptatur.* (See xxv. 9. and the note on it.) There may also another sense be given,—that the ear, desirous of instruction, longs to hear and attend to the discourse of wise men; and so the Vulgate, *Auris bona audiet cum omni concupiscentia sapientiam;* and the Arabic, *Auris auscultans delectatur sapientibus.*

Ver. 30. *Water will quench a flaming fire, and alms maketh an atonement for sins.*] To this purpose is that counsel of Daniel, *To break off sins by righteousness, and iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor,* iv. 27. (See Luke xi. 41. 1 Pet. iv. 8. Prov. xvi. 6. Tob. iv. 7. xii. 9.) But at the same time that they press this duty, they generally lay down this restriction,—that men must not think, because sins are taken away by alms, that by their money they may purchase a licence to sin; for all alms are too little to atone for a sin, if the person resolves to continue in it. Alms must be accompanied with repentance, for God's justice is not venal, nor the sovereign Judge to be bribed into a toleration of sin. St. Cyprian quotes this passage, and illustrates it by the following comparison, "Sicut Lavacro aquæ salutaris Gehennæ ignis exstinguitur, ita eleemosynis atque operibus justis, delictorum flamma sopitur." (De Opere et Eleemos.) Alms, according to the fathers, is as a second baptism, and has the advantage of it in some respect, as the former can be often repeated, but baptism can be performed but once. (See Ambr. Serm. 2. tom. ii.) St. Chrysostom, speaking of charity, urges the duty upon the same weighty consideration; μὴ παρατρέχωμεν τὸ κέρδος τῶν ἡμετέρων ψυχῶν· κ. τ. λ. *Ne prætereamus lucrum nostrarum animarum et remedium nostrorum vulnerum; hoc enim, hoc maximum pharmacum ita curabit et abolebit ulcera animarum nostrarum, ut neque vestigium neque cicatrix aliqua apparitura sit, id quod in corporis vulneribus non est possibile.* (Hom. 56. in cap. 29. Gen. tom. ii. See also Hom. 43. in cap. 19. Gen. and Apost. Constit. lib. xvii. 13. Lactant. lib. vi. 12.)

Ver. 31. *He that requiteth good turns, is mindful of that which may come hereafter.*] Ὁ ἀνταποδιδοὺς χάριτας μέμνηται εἰς τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα. The Syriac and Arabic understand this of the beneficent and charitable man, who, for his readiness to succour others, shall himself find help in time of need. Others apply ὁ ἀνταποδιδοὺς to God himself, who requiteth all good turns, *i. e.* all instances of loving-kindness shewn to those that are in misery and distress. Accordingly some Greek copies read, καὶ Κύριος, ὁ ἀνταποδιδοὺς χάριτας, μέμνηται, κ. τ. λ. which the Vulgate follows, *Deus prospector est ejus qui reddit gratiam: meminit ejus in posterum;* and Junius, *Dominus qui reddit gratiosa facta, in posterum recordaturus est.* He looks upon what is given to the poor as done to himself, and keeps an account of good and charitable deeds, to return them with increase. God is as the debtor, to speak in the language of St. Chrysostom, of such as give alms; and to assist the poor with our substance, is putting out our money wisely, and on the most valuable and certain security. (Hom. 53. ad Pop.)

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CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *DEFRAUD not the poor of his living.*] Τὴν ζωὴν τοῦ πτωχοῦ μὴ ἀποστερήσῃς· Βίος is used in the like sense by the Greeks, and *vita* by the Latins; thus Terence, "Cui opera vita erat." This is a continuation of the former chapter concerning alms-giving; the Vulgate accordingly renders, *Fili, eleemosynam pauperis ne defraudes; i. e.* refuse not a poor man that charity which you owe him, and is his due; for you commit a sort of robbery or fraud, when you keep from him that which he wants, and you can well spare; "Non minus est criminis habenti tollere, quam, cum possis et abundas, indigentibus denegare." (Ambr. Serm. 81.) To deny a poor man when you can relieve his necessities out of your abundance, is not a less crime than to rob. St. Austin has the like thought, "Superflua diviti, necessaria sunt pauperi; aliena retinet, qui ista tenet." (Psal. cxlvii.) St. Chrysostom quotes the passage, and reasons upon it in like manner; ὁ ἀποστερῶν, τὰ ἀλλότρια ἀποστερεῖ, κ. τ. λ. *Qui spoliat, aliena tollit; nam spoliatio quædam dicitur, cum aliena detinemus: quoties eleemosynam non præstiterimus, pari cum his qui spoliant, supplicio afficiemur.* (De Lazaro, Serm. 2. tom. v.) By *living*, we may understand here his bread, *for the bread of the poor is his life, he that detains it is a man of blood;* (see note on xxxiv. 21, 22.) or, more largely, food in general, raiment, lodging, and all that nature demands, for the preservation and support of life; to refuse such necessaries is the same thing as to take life away; "Hoc est hominem occidere, vitæ suæ ei subsidia denegare." (August. in Psal. cxviii.)

Ver. 3. *Add not more trouble to a heart that is vexed.*] Poverty is of itself a sore affliction enough, without adding to it any fresh occasion of complaint. The soul of a poor man, already uneasy and dejected, and pinched with grief and hunger, is of all others the most sensible of a slight, and more ready to lay every supposed injury to heart. If you give, therefore, give cheerfully; if you refuse, do it without insult or upbraiding, and add not contempt or outrage to your denial. We are hence also instructed not to insult the misery of the unfortunate, whether such by accident, or made so through their own folly or wickedness; not to call even condemned criminals by any harsh or opprobrious names, however undeserving of our regard or pity. We have a remarkable instance of this tenderness towards the afflicted in pious Abraham: when the rich man applies to him, to send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger to cool his tongue; he does not reproach him in any sharp or bitter language for his past life, he does not shew any anger or resentment against him, but speaks to him in terms of kindness, and even vouchsafes to call him son. St. Chrysostom has the like remark, upon this part of the parable, ὅρα φιλοστοργίαν δικαίου· οὐκ εἶπεν, ἀπάνθρωπε, κ. τ. λ. *Vide humanitatem justi: non dixit, inhumane, crudelis, sceleratissime; sed filium illum appellat. Satis est animæ dejectæ suus cruciatus, ut ne illius calamitatibus insultemus.* (De Lazaro Conc. ii. tom. v. See Eccles. vii. 11.) It is observable that our author, in a very short compass, three times repeats the precept of not turning away the eyes from a poor man, to enforce it the more strongly, and make the deeper impression on the memory.

Ver. 6. *If he curse thee in the bitterness of his soul, his prayer shall be heard of him that made him.*] The sense is much the same with that, Prov. xxviii. 27. *He that giveth to the poor, shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes, shall have many a curse.* And Exod. xxii. 22, 23. God says, *Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child; if thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath shall wax hot,* &c. And that, Prov. xxi. 13. is much to the same effect, *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, and shall not be heard.* Homer in a very beautiful manner represents prayers as so many living persons; the daughters of Jupiter, which when slighted and disregarded by men, carry their complaint before his throne, and beg of him, that he would send after such persons the goddess Ate, to revenge the affront and injury done them. (See Iliad. x. ver. 493.) The fine allegory and useful moral couched under it, cannot fail of pleasing every judicious and pious reader. This fiction, says Calmet, represents and illustrates the wise man's meaning here. Though the poor may appear mean and despicable in the eyes of the world, and their importunate requests disagreeable and troublesome, yet are they dear to their Maker, as his creatures, and equal objects of his love. (See Prov. xiv. 31. xvii. 5.) But in their distressed state, when they look for some to have pity on them, and no man will know them, they are then his more peculiar charge, and objects of his pity. The good wishes, the prayers, and the blessing of the poor, we allow to be regarded of God, and their intercession to be powerful with him; if God then favourably hears their prayers and petitions for rewards and blessings upon their friends and benefactors, we may be assured he will not be less disposed to hear their complaints for vengeance, on such as deride, reject, or oppress them, and that their curses will be fatal to the hard-hearted.

Ver. 7. *Get thyself the love of the congregation, and bow thy head to a great man.*] *i. e.* Be courteous and affable to the poor and meaner sort: and thus the Vulgate, *Congregationi pauperum affabilem te facito;* and so the oriental versions, *Concilia tibi amorem turbæ, et principibus urbis adhibe reverentiam.* Study to be popular, complaisant, and agreeable to the common people, and dutiful and submissive to the prince or magistrate, and such as are above thee. According to Drusius, the sense is, Endeavour to get the good opinion of the whole Sanhedrin, and shew a more particular respect and regard μεγιστᾶνι to the *president* of it.

Ver. 9. *Be not faint-hearted, when thou sittest in judgment.*] If thou art in a public post, as a judge or magistrate, hear willingly the complaints of the poor, suffer his defence, weigh his reasons, render justice impartially, and neither through fear of disobliging, nor hope of advantage, be prevailed upon to condemn the innocent, or absolve the guilty. It was one part of Jethro's character of a good magistrate, (Exod. xviii. 21.) that he should be a man of courage. Hence some conjecture, that every step to Solomon's throne of judgment is represented as supported by lions, (1 Kings x. 20.) to teach kings and magistrates, that courage and resolution are necessary for all those that sit on the tribunal of justice.

Ver. 11. *Wisdom exalteth her children.*] Ἡ σοφία υἱοὺς ἑαυτῆς ἀνύψωσε. (See Prov. iv. 8.) The fathers who quote

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this passage, read and understand it very differently. Clem. Alex. has ἐνεφυσίωσε τὰ ἑαυτῆς τέκνα. (Strom. lib. vii.) As if his meaning was, either that of St. Paul, *knowledge puffeth up*, or rather, that wisdom inspires noble sentiments into men; and Tertullian, if in truth he intends this passage, renders more strangely, *Sophia jugulavit filios suos*, (in Scorp.) as if the copy he made use of had ἐνεδυσίασε. The Vulgate has quite the contrary, *Sapientia filiis suis vitam inspirat*, from a copy which probably had ἐψύχωσεν, *i. e.* breathes a spiritual life into them, transforms their nature into a better and more heavenly, and infuses a perfection approaching to that of angels.

And layeth hold of them that seek her.] Ἐπιλαμβάνεται, *i. e.* Helpeth and taketh under her protection them that seek her. She catcheth hold of them, as Camerarius understands the word, and recovers them as from falling, snatching them by the hand out of mischief or danger, as it were out of the fire. (See his Myrothecium, p. 304.)

Ver. 13. *He that holdeth her fast shall inherit glory, and wheresoever she entereth, the Lord will bless.*] See Prov. iii. 35. *The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools*, where the reading of the LXX. is remarkable, οἱ δὲ ἀσεβεῖς ὕψωσαν ἀτιμίαν, *the wicked exalt disgrace* and shame; whereas wisdom, or the practice of religion, exalts such as walk in her ways unto glory and happiness, and makes them blessed in the life that now is, and in that which is to come; which I take to be the meaning of the Vulgate, rendering, *Qui tenuerint illam, vitam hæreditabunt.* The observation in the latter part of the verse, is particularly verified in the history of Jacob and Joseph, whom God's blessing went along with, and prospered their masters' family and substance for their sakes; but probably this writer alludes to God's blessing the house of Obed-Edom, and all that pertained unto him; because of the ark of the Lord, which continued in his house three months. (2 Sam. vi. 11, 12.) In like manner will God bless a soul, into which wisdom vouchsafes to enter, and, by her indwelling, prepares a fit temple for his reception.

Ver. 14. *They that serve her, shall minister to the Holy One.*] Λειτουργοῦσιν ἁγίῳ. The manner of the expression here seems to confine this to the house, rather than the person of God, to the *sanctum sanctorum*, or *holy of holies*, as it was called; and so the marginal reading has it. What may seem to confirm this is, that ἁγίῳ is here used without an article; as it is likewise, Psal. xx. 2. where it means a sacred place; whereas when God himself is meant or referred to, he is the ὁ ἅγιος, the *Holy One*, κατ' ἐξοχήν. (See xxiii. 9.) But in either sense, it furnishes a very useful reflection, that none should minister to the Holy One in the sacred office, or execute the ministerial function, but such as are truly wise and strictly religious, for such the Lord requires only to serve at his altar. The Vulgate will admit this sense, *Qui serviunt ei, obsequentes erunt sancto;* and the oriental versions require it, *Ministri ejus sunt sancti ac puri: Holiness unto the Lord*, is their motto.

Ver. 15. *Whoso giveth ear unto her, shall judge the nations.*] See Wisd. iii. 8. and the note on it, where the like privilege and authority are said to belong to the faithful; and St. Paul affirms the same of the saints, 1 Cor. vi. 2. Or the sense may be, that such as hearken to wisdom, are fittest to rule and judge; accordingly the Syriac renders, *Qui me audit, judicabit veritatem.* And in fact such have been appointed by God to preside over his people, who have been thus qualified, as Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, &c. and in particular the last, with much earnestness and importunity, applied to God, at the beginning of his reign, for the gift of wisdom, as the most necessary help to judge the nations. According to Calmet the sense is, that wisdom is the source of true and solid greatness, and that a wise man shall not only serve as a priest, as mentioned in the former verse, but as a judge and prince of the people; he shall at once merit and wear the honours both of the pontificate and regale. Almost all the editions read, ὁ ὑπακούων αὐτῆς, κρινεῖ ἔθνη, καὶ ὁ προσελθὼν αὐτῇ, κ. τ. λ. The Vulgate, which renders, *Qui intuetur illam, permanebit confidens*, probably followed a copy, which had προσορῶν. The true reading seems to be that which is followed by our version, ὁ ἐπακούων αὐτῆς, κρινεῖ ἔθνη· καὶ ὁ προσέχων αὐτῇ, κατασκηνώσει πεποιθώς, which is a strong expression. See xiv. 24—27. where the like security is promised and described.

Ver. 16. *If a man commit himself unto her, he shall inherit her, and his generation shall hold her in possession.*] Various are the readings of this place; the truest seems to be, ἐὰν ἐμπιστεύσῃ, κληρονομήσει αὐτὴν, καὶ ἐν κατασχέσει ἔσονται αἱ γενεαὶ αὐτοῦ. The sense is, If a man asks of God wisdom, with faith and trust in him, he will give her to him, and his posterity. Or, If a man is faithful and sincere in his inquiry for her, and constant and persevering in his search after her, he shall find and obtain her, and leave her as an inheritance to his posterity; *Sa posterité la possedera*, says Calmet; and the oriental versions make the possession to be perpetual, *in omnes mundi generationes.* Bossuet expounds, that a man's posterity shall be established by her, *Ipsa ejus soboles consistet firmius.* Some have forced the words to another sense, That a faithful inquirer shall inherit her, and her fruits, αἱ γενεαὶ αὐτῆς, as some copies have it, or the advantages which attend upon, and go along with her, shall be in his possession. But I think, though γεννήματα αὐτῆς would give this sense, the present reading will not admit it.

Ver. 17. *For at first she will walk with him by crooked ways.*] *i. e.* The way that leads to wisdom is rough at first setting out, and has several difficulties and turnings to perplex and discourage the traveller. The ancient philosophers have well represented this by the emblem of two roads; that which leads to virtue, which is another word for wisdom, and happiness at the end of it, is described at the entrance as rough and unpleasant; the other, which terminates in a precipice, or destruction, and is the way of wickedness, is wide-beaten and easy. (See Tab. Ceb.) Our Saviour represents the good and evil courses of mankind under the same image of two roads, the one strait and difficult, leading to life, the other opening wide to ruin and destruction. (Matt. vii. 13, 14.) If we understand this of science, Quintilian's observation will hold true, "Liberaliora studia incipientibus aspera, progredientibus onerosa, proficientibus jucunda, perficientibus beata."

She will bring fear and dread upon him, and torment him with her discipline, until she may trust his soul, and try him by her laws.] Wisdom will prove the disciple that addresses her, before she is familiar with, or communicates herself to him; and particularly at the beginning, or at his first approach, when he attempts to woo or gain her, she appears distant to him, and will make trial of his constancy by hard-

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ships and sufferings, and the sincerity of his love to her by his readiness to execute her commands. And thus Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, and all the worthies mentioned Wisd. x. were proved by sufferings, for her sake, and at length saved through wisdom. The design of the author here is to encourage young candidates at their first setting out; and he compares the procedure of wisdom in this particular to a wary man, proving the integrity of a new acquaintance, before he ventures to take him into his bosom, or make him his confidant,—or to a coy mistress, who at first scarce admits her lover into her company, delights to disappoint, tease, and cross him, and often seemingly slights him on purpose to try his temper, and the sincerity of his passion, and how much he is ready to do and undergo for her sake.

Ver. 19. *But if he go wrong, she will forsake him, and give him over to his own ruin.*] Παραδώσει αὐτὸν εἰς χεῖρας πτώσεως αὐτοῦ. Our translation here does not reach the spirit of the Greek. To deliver into the hands of ruin, is a Hebraism, not much unlike that phrase in Scripture, *The hand of adversity, the hand of hell, and of the grave.* So God is said sometimes to give men over into the hands of their own counsel, which is in effect giving them εἰς χεῖρας πτώσεως. The author still continues the metaphor of two roads, that of virtue is called the straight, comfortable, and delightful way; the other crooked, wrong, deceitful, and dangerous.

Ver. 20. *Observe the opportunity, and beware of evil.*] Συντήρησον καιρόν. Here a new subject begins. We may understand this, either as a maxim of prudence only, Be careful to do every thing in its proper time and seasons; or it may mean in a moral sense, Observe the time, *i. e.* be apprized of the badness of the times, and the wickedness of the age, that you be not led away by evil examples, or sinful customs; like that of St. Paul, *See that ye walk circumspectly, because the days are evil.* This sense seems confirmed by the context; and because when the times are bad, and vice fashionable, there is danger, through a false modesty, which often hinders men from doing what a good conscience requires of them, for fear of disobliging, or being thought singular; it therefore follows very properly, *Be not ashamed, when it concerneth thy soul.*

Be not ashamed, when it concerneth thy soul.] The Vulgate adds, *dicere verum,* not improperly. If by ψυχὴ we understand *life,* the sense may be, Be not afraid to speak the truth, even at the hazard of life. (See ver. 28.) Grotius expounds it, "Do not affect an indifference or unconcern for life, or brave death rashly; but when thy life is in danger, use thy own and friends' interest to preserve it;" but this seems harsh and forced. If ψυχὴ be taken strictly, to mean the *soul,* as our translators rightly understand it, the meaning then is, that we must not at any time be ashamed of what is right, nor omit any duty through a faulty modesty, whereby our conscience may be offended, and our salvation endangered. We must not only be ready to confess and bear testimony to the truth ourselves, but also dare to reprove any falsehood or vice in others. St. Chrysostom accordingly applies it to admonishing an offending brother. (Hom. 47. in S. Julian.) There is also another instance of faulty shame, wherein our souls are immediately concerned, which is, when we are ashamed and loath to examine our own consciences, to accuse and condemn ourselves, to confess and bewail our sins, and to entreat for the pardon of them.

Ver. 21. *There is a shame that bringeth sin, and there is a shame which is glory and grace.*] As he that should die of hunger through a foolish shame of asking for necessary food, would be justly thought guilty of his own death, so he that complies with evil company, or sinful customs, out of a vicious modesty of offending, or contradicting others, who, when sinners entice him, sheepishly complies even against his own sentiments and conscience, or, to please them, owns and adopts vices he has never been guilty of, such a criminal compliance in a man is a sin against his own soul. There is also a shame which bringeth sin, when a man is laughed out of his modesty, when he is discouraged from doing any good action, or going on in the way of godliness, through others' raillery or profane jokes, which a soul steadily fixed is resolute enough to despise and withstand. Thus David, *The proud have had me exceedingly in derision, yet have I not shrinked from thy law.* (Psal. cxix.) This was the great commendation of Noah, that he went on in building the ark, and doing what God had appointed him, notwithstanding the sneers of an infidel multitude about him; (see St. Chrysostom, in cap. 6. Gen. Hom. 23.) who produces this example to illustrate the passage before us. An instance of a commendable shame, and which brings credit and glory to a man is, when he blushes to do any base or unworthy action, when he is ashamed of a past mispent life, and shews by his great penitence and contrition, that he is determined not to offend in the like instances for the future; and thus St. Bernard comments upon this place. Our author resumes this subject, chap. xli. xlii. and gives instances himself, when shame is faulty or commendable: see Prov. xxvi. 11. where there is the like division, and the words in the LXX. are exactly the same as here, ἔστιν αἰσχύνη ἐπάγουσα ἁμαρτίαν, καὶ ἔστιν αἰσχύνη δόξα καὶ χάρις.

Ver. 22. *Accept no person against thy soul.*] Those that understand ψυχὴ of *life,* make the meaning to be, When it concerns your life, reputation, or true interest, defend yourself against all opposers, without respect of persons. But the sense seems rather to be, Pay no man so great a compliment as to commit a sin to please him; nor let any man persuade thee, or his authority induce thee, to do any thing against thy duty and conscience; but should even a friend solicit thee to an infamous and wicked action, to engage in a bad cause, to bear a false testimony, to lie in wait for the innocent, &c. prefer the great virtues of truth and justice, and a regard for your own character, before every other consideration.

Ver. 23. *Refrain not to speak when there is occasion to do good.*] *i. e.* When you have an opportunity of doing good, either to religion, if it is attacked, or to thy injured neighbour, or if thou hast hopes to reclaim the guilty. St. Chrysostom extends this brotherly reproof to all that are inconsiderate or faulty in one's family or neighbourhood; he expresses himself very strongly, καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα διορθοῦν, καὶ τοὺς οἰκέτας, καὶ τοὺς γείτονας, καὶ τὸν φίλον, καὶ τὸν ἐχθρὸν αὐτόν· (in cap. 9. Gen. Hom. 29.) And in another place, his concern for a lapsed brother and his warmth to reclaim him are truly noble, ἀδελφὸν εἶπὲ, βούλομαι σῶσαι, κ. τ. λ. *Dic salvum volo facere fratrem, pereuntem animam cerno, neque cognatione junctos possum contemnere; reprehendat qui velit, accuset qui velit; imo vero nemo reprehendet, omnes lau-*

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dabunt, quod apud nos tanta sit vis caritatis. (Hom. 47. in Julian.) We are also obliged to break silence when we may save an innocent man's life or property by speaking seasonably, and when it may do service, ἐν καιρῷ σωτηρίας: though the versions render this, *in tempore salutis*, yet undoubtedly it is a Hebraism, and should be rendered, *in tempore salubri, i. e.* on a proper and fit occasion, the perfection of speech being in the well timing of it. *A word spoken in season, how good is it!* as Solomon observes.

And hide not thy wisdom in her beauty.] Μὴ κρύψῃς τὴν σοφίαν σου εἰς καλλονήν. This whole sentence is wanting in the Roman edition, and Alexand. MS. Syriac and Arabic omit the words εἰς καλλονὴν only, which make the difficulty. The Vulgate turns them to an easy sense, *Nec abscondas sapientiam tuam in decore suo; i. e.* Hide not the beauty of thy wisdom, when it ought to be displayed, and may do service. Grotius takes it in the same sense, but supposes an ellipsis here. Possibly the true reading of the Greek may be, μὴ κρύψῃς τὴν σοφίαν σου ὡς καλλονήν· *i. e.* Hide not thy wisdom *as* beauty, which is carefully guarded from the sun and weather. The author may be supposed here to attack another sort of false modesty, which hinders a man from exerting the skill and learning he is possessed of, even upon occasions when they are really wanted, and will be useful to others, and for his own reputation and honour to display; for though ostentation should be avoided, yet the good of the church or state, a regard for truth, one's own preservation, or the defence of injured innocence, are always reasons sufficient to engage even the most reserved and timorous to speak and act.

Ver. 25. *Be abashed of the error of thine ignorance.*] *i. e.* Ingenuously own those mistakes and falsehoods, and even sins, for so the oriental versions extend it, which thy ignorance, prejudice, or passions, have led thee into, and do not obstinately defend them, or increase their guilt through any lie or equivocation. A pertinacious maintaining of an error is the effect of an immoderate self-esteem, as well as a token of ignorance, and is attended with this bad consequence, that it disqualifies men from the means and even the very endeavours of improvement. It is a wise observation of Cicero, "Multi ad scientiam pervenissent, nisi se jam pervenisse credidissent." To own a mistake and failing, either in matter of science or morality, is the way to amend; and it will ever be remembered to the honour of St. Austin, that he ingenuously acknowledges his errors in many points of doctrine and practice, in his books of Retractations and Confessions.

Ver. 25. *Be not ashamed to confess thy sins, and force not the course of the river.*] The sense of this whole verse, as it stands in the present Greek copies, seems to be, When your conscience is pricked with a sense of your sins, and would vent and ease itself by a confession of them, do not, through a faulty shame, suppress it, or offer violence to it, by stifling its motions, and turning it out of its good course. According to Grotius the meaning is, Acknowledge your sins when you are admonished of them, and do not offer to justify or defend wicked actions, which it would be fruitless in you to attempt. *Force not the course of the river*, probably, is only a proverb for a vain endeavour. The Syriac and Arabic wholly omit this sentence, and instead of it render, *Contend not with a fool;* which perhaps may be a paraphrase of the proverb, Strive not against the stream; for the one attempt is as fruitless as the other, according to that of Solomon, *If a wise man contend with a fool, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.* The Vulgate puts this sentence at the end of the next verse, where indeed it would be better placed, *Noli resistere contra faciem potentis, nec coneris contra ictum fluvii;* which sentences are well connected; for a man has little prospect of success, who contends with one very powerful. And thus all the ancient versions expound μὴ λάβῃς πρόσωπον δυνάστου. St. Jerome's Bible changes the comparison, and renders, *Ne coneris contra ictum fulminis*, which places the folly of engaging with a mighty man in a much stronger light. St. Austin reads in like manner, in Speculo. It is the way to draw upon ourselves some mischief, which is no instance of wisdom. "Frustra niti, et nihil aliud laborando, quam odium quærere, extremæ est dementiæ." (Sallust.)

Ver. 28. *Strive for the truth unto death, and the Lord shall fight for thee.*] Daniel, the Maccabees, and the saints, martyrs, and confessors, under their several trials, are laudable instances of adhering firmly and resolutely to the truth. Calmet observes, that the author adds this by way of restriction of the former sentence, lest the power and authority of the mighty should induce or force us to any sinful compliance against our conscience; for there are certain cases, in which we ought, with a becoming temper and deference, to oppose them; as, when they openly attack religion, or break in upon justice or truth; for this precept may without violence be extended so far as to mean the being zealous for the Lord of hosts, not seeing or hearing with patience, much less with approbation, his honour or ordinances exposed or ridiculed; the shewing a proper dislike and resentment upon such an occasion, even beyond any insult that may be offered to ourselves. St. Chrysostom reasons finely upon this subject, Τὰ μὲν εἰς ἡμᾶς ἁμαρτήματα παραπέμπωμεν, κ. τ. λ. *Si quid in nos peccatum fuerit, remittamus; quando autem ad Deum pertingit, tunc pœnas exigamus.* And then he piously laments, "Sed nescio qui fit, ut peccata quæ ad Deum pertingunt, prorsus inulta esse sinimus; si quis autem parum quid in nos peccaverit, ejus graves sumus ultores." (In cap. 8. Gen. Hom. 26.)

Ver. 30. *Be not as a lion in thy house, nor frantic among thy servants.*] Καὶ φαντασιοκοπῶν ἐν τοῖς οἰκέταις σοῦ· *i. e.* Be not imperious or tyrannical towards thy servants or inferiors, nor affect to appear terrible to them; avoid flying out into intemperate sallies of anger, beating or threatening them, even upon slight occasions: "Ne scutica dignum horribili sectere flagello." A learned critic understands φαντασιοκοπῶν ἐν οἰκέταις, of one that prideth himself in a numerous and magnificent train of servants; and this, he thinks, suits best with the foregoing sentence, *Be not as a lion in thy house;* the pride of the lion and his stately gait being as observable as his terribleness. Grotius prefers φαντασιοσκοπῶν, which he explains of a master, who is jealous and suspicious of his servants, and takes and resents things which exist only in imagination, as if they were real facts and grievances. The Vulgate and oriental versions understand it in the sense of our translators; the Arabic in particular is very full and strong, *Ne sis morosus, clamosus domi tuæ; tetricus, asper in operibus tuis.* The Port-Royal comment applies this advice, not only to masters of families, but spiritual governors, who are hence warned to govern those who are under their charge with a spirit of love

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and meekness, as being part of God's family, and of the household of faith.

Ver. 31. *Let not thine hand be stretched out to receive, and shut when thou shouldst repay.*] Or, as the margin has it, *When thou shouldst give;* and thus St. Cyril expounds, quoting this passage, ἕτοιμος εἰς τὸ ἐργάζεσθαι. Be not fonder of receiving gifts, which betrays an avaricious temper, than of giving to others from a motive of generosity and charity, as it is more blessed to give than to receive. The former lays a man under fresh obligations, the latter procures him new friends. Or, according to the Port-Royal comment, Let not your hand be always open towards God, always ready to receive from him such favours and graces as you have need of, and shut or backward to return to him any proof of your acknowledgment and thankfulness for mercies already conferred upon you.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 2. *FOLLOW not thine own mind, and thy strength to walk in the ways of thy heart, and say not, Who shall control me for my works? for the Lord will surely avenge thy pride.*] As in the first verse an immoderate trust in riches, especially in such as are unjustly gotten, is condemned; in which sense the Vulgate takes it, because riches, especially so procured, are uncertain in their continuance, not having God's blessing attending them; (see Luke xii. 19. James i. 11.) so here pride, and an imagined self-sufficiency upon account of them, the pretending to an independence, and a reliance upon our own power, are forbidden, as dangerous and displeasing to God. Imitate not, says this wise writer, the wicked boasters, nor the tongue which speaketh proud things; nor yet the haughty Pharaoh, in saying, *Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice?* for the Lord will punish such presumption, as he revenged the pride of that prince by a signal overthrow. Neither exalt thyself upon the greatness of your good fortune, or the success of your enterprises; but remember, who gave thee the power to get wealth, honour, or victory. Sennacherib boasted that he had subdued all the nations and their gods, but the true God shewed him his weakness by the prodigious slaughter of his army. (Isa. xxxvi. 37.) The like may be observed of Nebuchadnezzar; *For the kingdom departed from him, because he set himself up for a god, and prided himself in the strength of his works.* (Dan. iv. 31.)

Ver. 4. *Say not, I have sinned, and what harm hath happened unto me? for the Lord is long-suffering, he will in no wise let thee go.*] This is not justly translated; for the long-suffering of God seems rather a reason to encourage the sinner's hopes of an escape, than to imply any certainty of his punishment: it rather means, and should be rendered, *Though the Lord is long-suffering, he will not absolutely spare and acquit thee, but will punish thee at last.* The Tigurine version gives the full sense, *Dominus patiens quidem est, sed impune te non dimittet,* and the Vulgate, though more concisely, by *Patiens redditor.* We have an instance of the like inaccuracy, Wisd. i. 6. (see note on that place.) Many copies omit the last clause, *He will in no wise let thee go,* as the Roman, Alexandrian, and Drusius in his edition. And if we omit this clause, the whole may then be considered as a continuation of the sinner's plea, and as a farther motive for going on still in his wickedness; and so the Syriac and Arabic represent it; for the two principal things which encourage men in sin are, a delay of God's vengeance, and a fond presumption upon his long-suffering and mercy. Supported with such broken reeds, wicked men flatter themselves, and say, What ground or reason is there for the threatening of preachers against such and such actions? God is not so hasty as they would make him, nor yet so ready to strike as they represent him. I have hitherto found him favourable, I have escaped unpunished, though I have delighted in wickedness, and practised all uncleanness with greediness. But take heed, says the wise man, of such false reasonings and conclusions; God's forbearance is no sufficient reason to overlook his justice; he often spareth a wicked person or nation, not because he will not smite, but because he meditates a sorer payment, and a more dreadful vengeance. He suspends his judgments till the wickedness of the Amorites is full, and when iniquity is at the height, he unbares his arm, and destroys them at once in his justice. St. Chrysostom finely exposes this kind of false reasoning, εἰ δὲ λέγεις, οἶδα μὲν ὅτι ἄξιος εἰμὶ κολάσεως, κ. τ. λ. *Si dicas scire quidem te quod pœnæ sis dignus, interim tamen quod non statim in te animadvertatur, nihil pendas; timere potius, et tremere te ob hoc oportet. Quod enim nondum dederis pœnas, id non tibi accidit ut nullas, sed ut graviores luas pœnas.* (Homil. de Peccat. et Confess.)

Ver. 5. *Concerning propitiation, be not without fear to add sin to sin.*] Περὶ ἐξιλασμοῦ μὴ ἄφοβος γίνου. Do not presume too much upon pardon, and thereby be induced to sin the more frequently, in expectation of it; which seems the sense of the Arabic version, *De venia ne præsumas, ne adaugeas peccata tua;* or, Do not go on in a course of wickedness, because thou hast hitherto escaped through the mercy of God; which the Syriac seems to favour, *Super data venia ne confidas, ne peccata peccatis accumules:* or, as a learned prelate explains it, After forgiveness be not bold or confident to sin afresh; like that precept in the gospel, *Behold, thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* (Bishop Taylor's Un. Necess.) The wise man does not here discountenance a well-grounded assurance of pardon, which religion even encourages us to hope for and expect, and has appointed sacraments, and other means of reconciliation, and bids men rely upon God's promises, grace, and mercy, for their acceptance; he only condemns an over security, a criminal excess in our confidence, which may betray us into presumption. Lastly, if περὶ ἐξιλασμοῦ be understood of the act by which God is appeased, *viz.* the offering, the expiation, by whatever means it is made, as ἐξιλασμὸς, ἐξίλασμα, and ἐξίλασις, are generally, I believe, taken; then ἁμαρτία, which follows, may signify, a sin-offering: see Lev. iv. 21. Rom. viii. 3. and so the original word in the Hebrew, and *piaculum* in Latin, signify both the crime and expiation of it. But the sense either way comes to the same thing: a caution to be fearful of provoking God by many sin-offerings, or propitiations for sin, means no more, than to be afraid of provoking him by repeating the acts of sin. Some copies read, περὶ ἐξιλασμοῦ μὴ ἄφοβος γίνου ἐν πλεονασμῷ· προσθεῖναι ἁμαρτίας ἐφ' ἁμαρτίαις. *De propitiatione ne esto securus in abundantia, ad addendum peccata super peccata.* The meaning of which additional phrase either is, that we

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should not be too confident, or so abundantly secure, ἐν πλεονασμῷ ἄφοβος, that our sins shall be forgiven, as to take a handle from thence to commit them with the greater liberty. Or the sense may be, that we ought not to be so secure, or trust ἐν πλεονασμῷ, in abundance, or riches, as to imagine, that by them we shall have our sins redeemed, and taken away; and so, under the notion of being able to purchase forgiveness, be tempted to sin the more freely. If πλεονασμὸς may be taken in this last sense, as some commentators and Latin versions take it; this passage, which the Romanists have abused to their purpose of indulgences, will be found to conclude directly against that doctrine.

Ver. 8. *Set not thine heart upon goods unjustly gotten, for they shall not profit thee in the day of calamity.*] Μὴ ἔπεχε ἐπὶ χρήμασιν ἀδίκοις. Almost all the editions have οὐδὲν ὠφελήσεις, but the reading followed by our translators, οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει σε, seems preferable. Solomon confirms the truth of the observation, when he says, *treasures of wickedness profit nothing.* (Prov. x. 2.) When the author here asserts, that riches unjustly gotten will profit nothing in the day of calamity, he either means, that they will neither prevent nor alleviate any illness, or that they will be of no service to a man at the time of his death, because he must then quit all his large possessions, nor will the sovereign Judge have any regard to or consideration of the power, dignity, or estate, of such offenders, as have enriched themselves by repeated acts of injustice; but naked shall they descend unto the grave, and naked shall they rise from thence, to appear at the great tribunal: according to that of the Psalmist, *Be not thou afraid, though one be made rich, or if the glory of his house be increased, for he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth, neither shall his pomp follow him.* (Psal. xlix. 16, 17.) Or else the meaning may be, that riches gotten by deceit shall add to a man's torment, and be the fuel to increase it, which is finely exemplified in the parable of the rich man, Luke xvi. 19. But may we not understand χρήματα ἄδικα in the sense of the mammon of unrighteousness, Μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας; Luke xvi. 9. so called by our blessed Saviour, not only because riches are often the effect of fraud, and the fruits of unrighteousness, but because they often lead men into sin, by filling their owners with pride, and put them upon doing some violent or unjust action; or they may be so called on account of their deceitfulness, in contradistinction to spiritual good things which are true, and more durable; (see August. in Psal. xlviii.) or because they are more generally the portion of the wicked; or, lastly, because men are apt to set too immoderate a value on them, and sacrifice to them, as their god. The Psalmist has expressed all or most of these senses, Psal. lxii. 10. *O trust not in wrong and robbery, give not yourselves unto vanity; if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.*

Ver. 9. *Winnow not with every wind.*] This is a proverbial expression; Plautus has one very like it, "Ubi ventus est, velum verte." The advice seems nearly the same with that of Ephes. iv. 14. *Not to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.* (See also Heb. xiii. 9.) Plutarch expresses himself in like manner; μὴ παντὶ λόγῳ πλάγιον, ὥσπερ πνεύματι, παραδιδοὺς ἑαυτόν. Calmet understands this of one, who is inconstant in his sentiments, and wavering in his conduct; who judges not for himself, but is apt to receive all impressions: one who is so complaisant, as to say and do every thing to ingratiate himself; and, as Theophrastus describes such sort of men, will, if a dispute arise, espouse both sides, to give no offence. (Ἠθικ. Χαρ. περὶ ἀρέσκου.) Whereas a prudent and wise man will seriously and impartially weigh on which side the truth lies, and continue steadfastly and firmly attached to it; and not imitate those double-dealers, who having no steady principles of their own, are just what other people would have them. According to that of the poet, "Negat quis? nego. Ait quis? aio." (Ter.)

Go not into every way.] Truth is uniform, and but one; to fall in with every opinion is the way to miss of it. Seneca has a thought like this, "Qui quò destinarit, pervenire vult, unam sequi viam, non per multas vagari debet. Non ire istud, sed errare est."

Ver. 10. *Be steadfast in thy understanding.*] *i. e.* Search narrowly into the truth, and resolutely maintain what thou knowest to be true; and to avoid the inconvenience of winnowing with every wind, and changing your opinion upon almost every occasion, have a well-informed judgment, and a steadfastness and constancy of mind, to act according to it. A man of this character will not be too easy or credulous; but when any new opinion or doctrine offers itself, or is proposed by others, will strictly examine the grounds thereof, and if, upon a due and serious weighing of it, he finds reason to approve it, as a solid truth, will gladly acquiesce in it, and not be soon shaken in mind. There is a passage in Seneca, much to the same purpose, "Cogitationes vagas, ac veluti somno similes, non recipies, quibus si animus tuus se oblectaverit, tristis remanebis. Sed cogitatio tua stabilis et certa fit... Sermo quoque tuus not sit inanis." The Vulgate renders, *Esto firmus in via Domini*, following perhaps a copy which read, ἴσθι ἐστηριγμένος ἐν συνέσει Θεοῦ, a corruption I presume of σοῦ. But the sense however of it is good, and the advice useful.

And let thy word be the same.] Εἷς ἔστω σοῦ ὁ λόγος, *Let thy word be one; i. e.* Let thy speech or discourse be of a piece, consistent with itself, according to Grotius; or, Let thy words be according to the inward sentiment of thy mind, and alter not out of fear or affection. According to Calmet, the sense is, Let thy sentiments continue the same, and do not shuffle or equivocate in thy words or actions, that men may know how to depend upon thee, and have or continue an esteem and regard for you, for there is no safety or dependance upon a double tongue, (ver. 9.)

Ver. 11. *Be swift to hear.*] This is agreeable to the apostle's advice, *Be swift to hear, slow to speak*, James i. 19. *i. e.* Be swift to hear, not every sort of communication, but such as *is profitable to the use of edifying.* (Ephes. iv. 9.) Accordingly Junius renders, *Esto celer ad bene audiendum;* and St. Jerome's Bible more strongly and explicitly, *Esto mansuetus ad audiendum verbum Dei, ut intelligas;* to which agrees the Geneva version. The sentence that follows, *viz.* Let thy life be sincere, *i. e.* without artifice or hypocrisy, is scarce in any of the Greek copies; it is omitted also in the Vulgate and oriental versions. The Complut. indeed has it, from whence our translators and Dr. Grabe took it; but it seems improperly placed here, for it disturbs the sense, and spoils the connexion.

With patience give answer.] St. James expresses the

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same by βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι, i. 19. See also Prov. xxix. 20. in the Septuagint version. It is a sign of great weakness for a man to answer hastily and unadvisedly, and without having any regard to time, place, or persons, or perhaps even truth itself. Some Greek copies therefore very properly read, φθέγγου ἀπόκρισιν ὀρθὴν, *i. e.* give a true and right answer. The Vulgate is very full, *Cum sapientia proferas responsum verum.*

Ver. 12. *If thou hast understanding, answer thy neighbour; if not, lay thine hand upon thy mouth. . .*] *Digito compesce labellum,* as the Latin phrase is. Isocrates has a maxim very like this, δύο ποιοῦ καιροὺς τοῦ λέγειν ἢ περὶ ὧν οἶσθα σαφῶς, ἢ περὶ ὧν ἀναγκαῖον εἰπεῖν· ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἄμεινον σιγᾶν, ἢ λέγειν· *i. e.* "observe two rules with respect to speech—to speak only of such things as thou understandest, or of such as you are under a necessity to speak to; in all other cases it is better to be silent;" which is intimated by the phrase of laying the hand upon the mouth. There is the like expression, Job xxi. 5. xxix. 9. Accordingly among the Egyptians, Harpocrates, the god of silence, is pictured with his finger on his mouth, to recommend σιγὴ εὔκαιρος, *a well-timed silence,* or the true government of the tongue. The Vulgate inserts a reason for such a caution in speech, *Ne capiaris in verbo indisciplinato, et confundaris.*

Ver. 13. *Honour and shame are in talk.*] Solomon has more fully expressed this when he says, *Life and death are in the power of the tongue,* Prov. xviii. 21. Nothing is more serviceable, and at the same time more mischievous, than the tongue; it advances men to honour, or exposes them to shame, according to the good or ill use that men make of the blessing of speech. It is the seat of persuasion in some, and a world of iniquity in others; it shines in and recommends the orator, eloquent in a good cause, and disgraces the libertine labouring in a bad one. When employed to bless and praise God, it is the best member we have; when abused to blaspheme its Maker, and curse men, it is set on fire of hell, and will sink men into it. It is therefore of the last importance to know how to govern the tongue, for without a discreet conduct of it, a man can neither be useful in social life, nor esteemed religious before God.

The tongue of man is his fall. . .] This is rather too laxly expressed; the Vulgate very properly adds, *lingua imprudentis subversio est ipsius.* Euripides has a sentiment very like this, ἀχαλίνων στομάτων τὸ τέλος δυστυχία.

Ver. 14. *Be not called a whisperer, and lie not in wait with thy tongue.*] Whispering is the speaking ill of our neighbour privately, and doing an ill turn by a secret and sly insinuation to his prejudice. This sort of slander is a poisoned arrow that flieth in the dark, that wounds covertly, when a man is not aware of it, and is very properly called by this writer, *lying in wait with the tongue.* Καταλαλιὰ and ὕβρις, *backbiting* and *railing,* differ from this vice only in degree. Solomon has admirably described the character of the whisperer, Prov. xxvi. 20. 22. *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out, so where there is no talebearer* [in the Heb. *whisperer*] *strife ceaseth.—The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and go down into the innermost parts of the belly.* Such insidious persons are with reason compared to the serpent, which bites without giving any warning; one feels the sting without knowing from what quarter the mischief came. Solomon uses this comparison, Eccles. x. 11. *Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment, and a babbler is no better,* according to our translation; but the Hebrew words truly rendered are much closer to the purpose—*A serpent will bite without any warning* (Vulgate, *in silentio,* without the least noise or intimation), *and a babbler* (Vulgate, *qui occulte detrahit*) *is no better.*

For a foul shame is upon the thief, and an evil condemnation upon the double tongue. . .] The Vulgate renders, *Denotatio pessima super bilinguem,* and Junius, *Bilingui pessima condemnatio,* as if it were worse to be a whisperer than a thief. And indeed there is some reason to think so; for the thief or cheat aims only at money, and is generally so scandalous and notorious, that one may either avoid him, or by chance take him; but the base and secret whisperer one cannot possibly guard against, nor even know who or where he is. The thief too is often forced upon robbery and stealing through want and necessity, and in such a case can plead a sort of an excuse, (Prov. vi. 30.) but the whisperer does as great, if not a greater injury to his neighbour, without any advantage to himself. And whoever considers the great value which Solomon sets upon a good name, making it preferable even to great riches, (Prov. xxii. 1.) cannot think the taking away a man's property to be the greater crime; see Rom. i. 29, 30. where whisperers and backbiters are ranked amongst the vilest of persons, and such as are worthy of death.

Ver. 15. *Be not ignorant of any thing in a great matter, or small.*] If this be understood strictly, such a perfection as this is not possible in our weak state, and short continuance here; the meaning rather is,—Endeavour to get as much knowledge and insight into affairs as you can, whether they be matters of speculation or practice. The Vulgate seems to understand the words in a judicial sense, *Justifica pusillum et magnum similiter,* as if the meaning was,—that in any suit or controversy, the same fair and impartial judgment should be pronounced in the cause of a poor, as well as a much richer or more powerful person, according to that charge of Moses, Deut. i. 17. There is also another sense of this passage,—Fall not into any sins of ignorance or inadvertency, commit not any sin, either great or small, but have such a guard over yourself, as not to be surprised into them, by any great or little occasion. And thus the Syriac understands it, *Multum, vel parum ne delinquas.* And so ἀγνοεῖν is often used by the Hellenists for *errare, peccare, imprudenter agere,* and as equivalent to ἁμαρτάνειν; and so it is often to be understood in the LXX. see Numb. xii. 11, &c. 1 Esdr. viii. 77. and by this writer himself it seems to be so used, xxiii. 3. xxviii. 7. The learned Hooker's remark upon this passage is, "That we should be diligent observers of circumstances, the little regard whereof is the nurse of vulgar folly; and Solomon's great attention thereto was what made him so eminent above others; for he gave good heed, and pierced every thing to the very bottom; and by that means gained more knowledge, and became the author of many parables." (Eccl. Pol. p. 189.)

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *INSTEAD of a friend, become not an enemy.*] The whole of this verse has been thought by many to belong to

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the fifth chapter, because the conclusion of that chapter seems abrupt, consisting only of one period or sentence, contrary to the general method of this writer. 2. This chapter, it is observable, begins in the Greek copies with a conjunction, καὶ ἀντὶ φίλου μὴ γίνου ἐχθρὸς, which implies some connexion with what went before. 3. Some copies, particularly the Latin ones, do actually so connect them; and according to Rabanus, this sixth chapter does not begin till the fifth verse in the common editions. Lastly, The context, according to others, seems to require it, being probably a continuation of the same subject: for the words, *Instead of a friend, become not an enemy*, may very well refer to the sin of whispering, or backbiting, which is the more aggravated, as they who are guilty of it pretend friendship for another, that they may traduce him more effectually, and under that mask undermine him more successfully, καινὸς διαβολῆς τρόπος, κ. τ. λ. A new way of accusation, says Polybius, to hurt a man by affecting to praise him, and by sweet speech to introduce the poison that is to follow. An artful device this! that while a man would pass for a friend by the praises he lavishes on another, and the regard professed for his good qualities, he may slily insinuate something to his disadvantage, and, by an open declaration in his favour, may the more easily be believed when he secretly spreads his faults, and starts some ill-natured exception. Like the man in Horace, who was glad to hear of his friend Capitolinus, whom he knew so well, and had received such favours from; but, to undo all, and cast some slur upon him, could add by way of an invidious reflection,

> "Sed tamen admiror, quo pacto judicium illud
> Fugerit."

For thereby thou shalt inherit an ill name, shame and reproach.] Our version follows a copy which read, Ὄνομα γὰρ πονηρὸν, αἰσχύνην, καὶ ὄνειδος κληρονομήσεις. Hœschelius has κληρονομήσει, in the third person, and so the Vulgate, *Improperium et contumeliam malus hæreditabit*, understanding by ὄνομα πονηρὸν, not an ill name, but a wicked person. And so indeed ὄνομα is sometimes used. (See Acts i. 15. Rev. iii. 4. xi. 13.) And שֵׁם the Hebrew noun is taken in like manner, Numb. iii. 40. 43. xxvi. 53. 55. and other places.

Ver. 2. *Extol not thyself in the counsel of thine own heart, that thy soul be not torn in pieces as a bull* [straying alone].] Ἵνα μὴ διαρπαγῇ ὡς ταῦρος ἡ ψυχή σου. There are many difficulties in this passage:—1. It may be inquired, whether ψυχή σου be rightly rendered *thy soul*. The Vulgate has, *Ne virtus tua elidatur*, to which agree the oriental versions; but what follows in the Syriac, *Ne quasi taurus robur tuum quærat*, is so flat and inexpressive, that I suspect some mistake in the writing or translating the Syriac word, and possibly the true rendering should be, *Ne quasi taurus robur tuum quatiat, folia tua excutiat*, &c. 2. It is not altogether certain, that διαρπάζω signifies *to tear in pieces*, either in the LXX. or apocryphal books, but rather *to spoil* or *plunder*, though *diripio* signifies both. 3. The words *straying alone* have nothing in the Greek to answer them in any edition. And though the translators sometimes enclose thus [] what they found in some particular copies, yet this, I believe, is in none. It seems to have crept into the text, through some mistake, or from a marginal note, or to be added by the translators themselves (for they venture on greater liberties in making additions in the apocryphal writings) for illustration's sake, and to throw some light upon the obscurity of the passage. 4. The words as now inserted may be applied differently. I would suppose the translators rather meant them of the soul, and its danger through conceit, and wandering by itself; for why a bull should be in more danger to be torn in pieces by straying alone, than amidst the herd, where a contest often does arise; or why a bull should be pitched upon at all, rather than some weaker animal, to be torn in pieces, whose nature is such, especially in its rage, as to rend, tear, and overturn all before him, is not so clear. To avoid this difficulty, therefore, some have fancifully understood this passage of Mount Taurus, because there happened by good luck to be a mountain of that name; and since trees, leaves, and fruit, are mentioned in the next verse, they must undoubtedly belong to and grow upon it. Drusius's conjecture, that the grandfather might write תור, meaning a turtle, ὡς τρυγὼν, and the grandson take it in the Chaldee sense, as equivalent to a bull, is ingenious enough; and Psal. lxxiv. 19. may seem to give some colour to it; but this conjecture is countenanced by no MS. printed edition, nor ancient version. If ταῦρος be indeed the true reading, understanding it of the animal, possibly it may refer to bulls being torn in pieces by lions, which we may presume to have happened often, if not in Jerusalem, at least in other places: a bull being pitched upon for the simile, rather than a weaker creature, as being more likely to trust in his own strength, which answers to a man's extolling himself in the counsel of his own heart. Upon the whole, I can conceive no good sense arising from our version, and yet I apprehend a natural one from the Greek, *viz.* Lift not up thyself in the desires or lusts of thine own heart, lest thy soul be distracted, hampered, or pulled contrary ways, like a bull in toils. It is a proverbial saying, and not an uncommon one, that a man who is governed by his own unruly passions and lusts, is like a wild bull in a net: and to this the Arabic seems to accord, *Libidines animæ tuæ ne sequaris, ne te in miseriam impellant, viresque tuas debilitent, quasi taurus cui pabulum objicitur.* Here I suspect a mistake in that version, for in what sense can *pabulum* stand here; or what light does it afford to the comparison? but if the original word be rendered by *tragula, plaga, indago*, or some such term, then the above interpretation will be complete, and the simile much improved. Nor is Badwell's interpretation, of the mind being hurried away by its own passions and desires, like a wild and lustful bull, to be despised; but there may be some doubt whether διαρπάζω be so used; at least Epictetus, who gives the like advice, μὴ συναρπαζέτω σε ἡ φαντασία, uses a different preposition. Grotius renders the words of our author, *Ne forte animus tuus (præfractus et contumax) diripiat te, ut taurus;* and so the Geneva version, *Lest thy soul rend thee as a bull.* If διαρπάσῃ be the true reading here, and has the authority of some Greek copy, probably σε followed it originally, and was absorbed afterward in the preceding σῃ; or σε being understood here, σῃ might be changed into γῃ to make sense. Some have thought the passage before us an imitation of Psal. vii. 2. But if our author alludes to this, why should it not have been a closer imitation, and preserved ὡς λέων, instead of

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substituting ὡς ταῦρος? It was scarce worth while, as Bochart observes, to allude to that place, only to pervert the sense of it. But there may possibly be some help found out to restore the true reading and sense. For are not the words *as a bull*, at least disjointed, and out of their true place? The Vulgate certainly countenances this conjecture, and so does St. Jerome's Bible, placing these words at the end of the first sentence, "Non te extollas in cogitatione animæ tuæ, velut taurus," i. e. *Extol not thyself in the counsel of thine own heart, as a bull that is incontrollable and headstrong.* The simile is very just in this light, and properly enough applied to a heady, obstinate, and overbearing temper; and if other editions concurred to support it, would at once remove most if not all the difficulties. (See v. 2, 3.) If none of these solutions be satisfactory, I shall only observe farther, that the whole sentence which occasions all the perplexity, is entirely omitted in Ald. and the Basil editions.

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt eat up thy leaves, and lose thy fruit, and leave thyself as a dry tree.*] Grotius contends that the reading here should be in the third person, καταφάγεται, ἀπολέσει, &c. and he is countenanced herein by the Syriac version. *Leaves* are a figure for the promising prospect of success: it is a beautiful metaphor, taken from the management of trees, whose leaves, if pulled off, either kill or starve the fruit. (See Hales's Veget. Stat. p. 323—325.) So the Psalmist, *His leaf shall not wither; and whatsoever he doth* [Heb. *putteth forth*], *it shall prosper.* By losing thy fruit, is meant, Thou shalt defeat thine own ends, blast thine own hopes, and fail of the success thou aimest at. The becoming a dry tree, which is the next particular, is the natural consequence of the loss both of fruit and leaves, *i. e.* thou shalt be good for nothing: a proper description of the man, who is ruled and carried away by his own lusts: or thus, Be not proud of any excellency, natural or moral; for by such a behaviour thou wilt take away from the merit of what would otherwise recommend thee: thy good qualities will lose all their grace, and be no longer an advantage, or ornament to thee; for modesty should both conceal and perfect thy goodness, as leaves both shade and meliorate the fruit. Self-opiniatry is to merit what the worm was to Jonas's gourd: it decays and ruins the root, and thereby destroys what was most beautiful and promising.

Ver. 5. *A fair-speaking tongue will increase kind greetings.*] Isocrates has well expressed this, τῷ μὲν τρόπῳ γίνου φιλοπροσήγορος, κ. τ. λ. "Be polite in your manner and address, and courteous and affable in your words: it is an instance of politeness civilly to salute those one meets with, and of affability to speak to them in an agreeable and engaging manner." (Ad Dæmon.) Cicero has the like observation, "Difficile dictu est, quantopere conciliet animos hominum comitas, affabilitasque sermonis." (De Offic.) This may also be applied to friendship, which the context warrants; for a person of a sweet and obliging temper will always promise most to be a real friend. There are a thousand endearments and compliances in the exercise of friendship, that makes good-nature as necessary as rigid virtue and honesty. "Strict virtue in friendship (says a learned writer) is like the exact rules of mathematics in musical compositions, which indeed are necessary to make harmony true and regular; but then there must be something of air and delicacy in it too, to sweeten and recommend it, or else it will be but flat and heavy." (Norris's Theory of Love, p. 129.)

Ver. 6. *Be in peace with many; nevertheless have but one counsellor of a thousand.*] *i. e.* Be kind and courteous to all, but intimate only with a few: there are several degrees in friendship. One ought to live upon good terms with all the world, and to endeavour to have all persons in it, as far as may be, our friends, at least to be careful not to have them our enemies, according to that of St. Paul, *If it be possible, live peaceably with all men.* (Rom. xii. 18.) There are other friends and acquaintance who are still nearer to us, with whom we live and converse in a more familiar and free manner; and yet even among those, there is scarce any to whom one can safely open and unbosom himself without reserve, as we cannot be sure of their prudence, honour, integrity, and sincere attachment to us. It would be imprudence therefore to disclose and lay open the secrets and recesses of our hearts, before all sorts of friends, as all are not fit to be entrusted with affairs of consequence and importance. The moralists are upon no subject more copious, than this of friendship: their sentiments agree with those of our author. "Marriage (says the learned writer above), which is the strictest of friendships, admits but of one, and inferior friendship admits not of many more: for besides that the tide of love, by reason of the contractedness of our faculties, cannot bear very high, when divided among several channels, it is great odds but among many we be deceived in some; and then we must be put upon the inconvenience of retracting our choice, which in nothing is so uncomely and inconvenient as in friendship." (Ibid. p. 130.) Lucian mentions, that among the Scythians a number of friends was as scandalous as a number of wives. (In Toxar.) And though this may seem overstraining the point, yet has it a good moral, and intimates the sense of our author. Isocrates too has a pertinent observation on the occasion, ἡδέως μὲν ἔχε πρὸς ἅπαντας, κ. τ. λ. "Live friendly with and behave civilly to all; but be intimate with a few of worth and merit: by this means you will not have many enemies, and only valuable friends." (Ad Dæmon.)

Ver. 7. *If thou wouldst get a friend, prove him first, and be not hasty to credit him.*] *i. e.* Have him for some time, according to the oriental versions, upon trial. The margin furnishes another sense, Get him in the time of trouble, ἐν πειρασμῷ, and so Junius renders, *Si comparaturus es amicum, in afflictione compara eum.* We do not now use the word *credit*, in the sense it is here taken; the meaning is, Be not hasty to trust him: Arabic, *Ne cito fidas ei;* or to trust thyself to, or with him. And so the Complut. reads, μὴ ταχὺ ἐμπιστεύσῃς σεαυτὸν αὐτῷ. And so the Syriac, *Ne temere te concredas illi;* to which agrees Jerome's Bible, and that of Junius: and so πιστεύω is used, John ii. 24. ὁ Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἐπίστευεν ἑαυτὸν αὐτοῖς. That precept of Solon, φίλους μὴ ταχὺ κτῶ, οὓς δ' ἂν κτήσῃ, μὴ ἀποδοκίμαζε, (apud Laert.) is not very unlike this.

Ver. 9. *There is a friend, who, being turned to enmity and strife, will discover thy reproach.*] Ἔστι φίλος μεταθέμενος εἰς ἔχθραν, καὶ μάχην ὀνειδισμοῦ σου ἀποκαλύψει. Μάχη ὀνειδισμοῦ is an unusual expression, and wants an authority to confirm it, except it may receive some countenance from 1 Sam. xxv. 39. according to the LXX. But I think

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μάχην joined with ἔχθραν, as our translators seem to understand it, a more proper construction; only it may still be asked by what ὀνειδισμοῦ is governed. Probably this is a mistake. Hœschelius, from some authentic copy, as I presume, and not by mere conjecture, reads ὀνειδισμόν σου; and why might not some other ancient copy formerly have ὀνειδισμοὺς, for it is used in the plural to signify shame or shameful things? as Isa. xlvii. 3. φανήσονται οἱ ὀνειδισμοί σου, and the ς might easily be absorbed in that which follows. The Vulgate seems to have read ὀνειδισμοὺς, rendering, *Convicia denudabit.* The sense of the passage is, A quondam friend changed into an enemy, will reveal all the faults which he knows, has heard, or observed, during his acquaintance; and the more intimate and longer the friendship has been, the more is the breach and rupture to be dreaded; the more noise will it also make, and the more fierce and implacable will be the hatred; according to that wise observation of Pliny, "Arctissima necessitudo, si quando contingat dirimi, in summam vertitur simultatem; et ex artissimis fœderibus, si semel rumpantur, maxima nascuntur dissidia." (Lib. xxxvii. cap. 4.) This and the two following verses are wanting in the oriental versions.

Ver. 13. *Separate thyself from thine enemies, and take heed of thy friends.*] *i. e.* Avoid suspected or declared enemies; and be aware of pretended and false friends, in whom you can place no certain confidence, such as are described, ver. 8—10. Companions only of the table, flatterers, and occasional attendants upon great fortune or power, who will discover a coldness and indifference, and perhaps openly or secretly do you some ill turn, when you are reduced to misfortunes. Count therefore none real friends, but such as you have proved, and found faithful in adversity. Phocylides describes the τραπεζοκόρους κόλακας, almost in the same terms, whose maxims very often agree with those of our author. King Antigonus's wish or prayer, as recorded by Plutarch, is agreeable to the advice of this wise writer, and proceeded from a like sentiment, "The gods keep me from pretended friends; against open and avowed enemies I can guard and provide myself." Clemens Alexand. has the like observation, ἐχθρὸν ἄνδρα ῥᾷον φυλάξασθαι, ἢ φίλον. (Strom. lib. vi.)

Ver. 16. *A faithful friend is the medicine of life; and they that fear the Lord shall find him.*] Friendship is the very life and soul of a man, as necessary to his subsistence and well-being, as medicines are to preserve health. Nay, other medicines are profitable only to the sick, and superfluous to those that are in health; but friendship is necessary to both. The Latins have well intimated this by terming friendship *necessitudo*, and friends, *necessarii*. For all is feeble and tottering without this firm support; all flat and insipid, till friendship seasons, and gives a relish to all enjoyments. For what pleasure is there in life, except one has a friend to whom he can unbosom himself, on whom he can rely, who will divide his griefs, and double his joys? What felicity is not ungrateful, if we have none to share with us in it? and what calamity is not lessened by the sympathy and condoling of a friend? (See Ambr. de Offic. lib. iii.) But a right and true friendship must be founded upon virtue; and so all the moralists have determined it.

Ver. 17. *Whoso feareth the Lord shall direct his friendship aright, for as he is, so shall his neighbour be.*] To be blessed with a sincere and valuable friend, is a particular gift of God, a reward of a man's piety and virtue. Such was Jonathan to David, which is the most perfect instance and pattern of friendship recorded in story; the Scripture describes it in the fullest and most sensible manner, when it says, that *the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David.* (1 Sam. xviii. 1.) A good man will direct his friendship in so wise and useful a manner, as either to choose those that are like himself, or by proper means to make them such; *Amicitia similes invenit, aut facit.* Between good men, friendship is, as it were, natural; there is a correspondence of manners, a like disposition to do good, which directs them to fix upon each other; and a friendship so founded, without self-interested views, cannot but be lasting. Tully accordingly observes, that the most excellent and perfect friendship is that which is formed and subsists in a society of virtuous and well-disposed persons; there is the most complete union and harmony arising from such a resemblance and similitude of manners, and the greatest things are to be expected from a fraternity of such, whose joint aim and endeavour is, to promote the common good. When hearts and affections are so uniformly and commendably joined, each rejoices, and takes as much pleasure in his friend, as in himself, and so becomes as it were one with him, *Unus fit ex pluribus*, and thereby completes Pythagoras's description of friendship. (Cic. lib. i. de Offic.)

Ver. 18. *Gather instruction from thy youth up, so shalt thou find wisdom till thine old age.*] The first impressions, those which are made in the time of youth, are of great force and long continuance; they not only help to prevent, or curb the impetuosity of dangerous passions, but have an influence upon the whole life. This is exactly agreeable to the adage of Bias, ἐφόδιον ἀπὸ νεότητος εἰς γῆρας ἀναλάμβανε σοφίαν· *i. e.* furnish yourself with wisdom, as with a viaticum, which may continue with you from youth till old age. (Ap. Laert. lib. i.) Here a new subject begins, in which the author exhorts the young candidate for wisdom, not to be discouraged at the hardships, which at first attend the undertaking, not to complain of the roughness and unpleasantness, or length of the way, nor despair of at length attaining the desired end, notwithstanding the many labours and difficulties that necessarily will occur, but to imitate rather the faithful and diligent husbandman, who sows in hope, and spares no pains, in expectation of a future plentiful harvest. St. James uses the same comparison, and well expresses the sense of the next verse; *Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain; be ye also patient and establish your hearts,* (v. 7.) And so St. Paul, *The husbandman that laboureth first,* πρῶτον κοπιῶντα, *must (afterward) partake of the fruits.* (2 Tim. ii. 6.) For so I would render the words, and not, as our version has it, *The husbandman that laboureth, must be first partaker of the fruits,* which is preposterous and absurd. This is agreeable to the marginal reading, and Beza and Junius both confirm it, who have, *Agricolam oportet, prius laborando fructus percipere.*

Ver. 21. *She will lie upon him as a mighty stone of trial.*] This by the prophet Zechariah (xii. 3.) is called a burdensome stone; and St. Jerome upon the place observes, that the expression is taken from an exercise kept up in Pales-

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tine in his time, where young men used to make trial of their strength by lifting great stones as high as they could, and adds, that he saw one of these mighty stones of trial himself at Athens. In this exercise, if men attempted to lift a stone too ponderous for their strength, they were in danger of its falling upon them, and crushing them to death. In this sense some understand Matt. xxi. 44. *On whomsoever this stone shall fall, it will grind him to powder.* To this stone of trial, our author here compares wisdom, which many endeavour at, and have a fancy to be engaged with, but few have resolution and constancy enough for it; but after a slight attempt, and faint wishes, they give it over presently, οὐ χρονιεῖ ἀποῤῥίψαι, as despairing of managing so superior a weight, and desist from the trial, to their own shame or hurt. To some the very sight of it is sufficient to deter them, and they go away without making any attempt at all to exert themselves. Some understand by the stone of trial, a touchstone, by which the goodness of metals is proved and tried. And this the Vulgate, the Geneva, and Coverdale's version, seem to follow. But the first sense seems preferable.

Ver. 22. *For wisdom is according to her name, and she is not manifest unto many.*] The original text of this work, whether it were Hebrew or Syriac, not being extant any where, one is at a loss now to know to what particular word he refers in this place. Had he given the original word first, and then the meaning of it, the allusion would have been plainer and better understood. It is probable, the translator derives the Greek word σοφία from an eastern root, and that the elder Jesus writing in Hebrew, his translator, who was skilled in that and the Greek tongue, endeavours to preserve in this version an allusion to some Hebrew word, which signified covered or hid. If there was then in the Hebrew tongue a word like σοφία, signifying wisdom, used also for secrecy and concealment, which was its primary sense, the name might then metaphorically be translated to wisdom, for some relation it had to things hidden and covered. Possibly there was a Syriac or Chaldee noun formed שִׁפְיָה (whence σοφία) from אשף Dan. i. 20. *magus, sapiens,* which by aphæresis would be in Greek, σοφὸς. It is well known that the wise men in the earlier ages used to communicate their knowledge by dark parables and figurative expressions. Hence the learned have contended, that they were then called *Assaphim,* or Σοφοὶ, a name which the emperors of Persia retain to this very day. (See Bishop Chandler's Def. of Vind. of Christ. p. 61. vol. i.) I cannot agree with those who would derive the later meaning of σοφία from the Greek, and would have it so called from Ζόφος, *caligo,* since our author confessedly wrote in the Jerusalem tongue, and has elsewhere made the like allusions to words. (See xliii. 8. xlvi. 1.) The Scripture too has instances of the same nature; thus the name of *Elymas,* (Acts xiii. 8.) which in the Hebrew is derived from a root, which signifies *hidden,* by interpretation is the ὁ μάγος among the Persians, answering to σοφὸς, or the wise man, among the Greeks. The contrary character we have likewise in the word *Nabal. Nabal* (says Abigail) *is his name, and folly is in him; as his name is, so is he;* (1 Sam. xxv. 25.) *Nabal* in the original signifying *a fool;* and though these etymologies were not altogether exact, yet it was sufficient that they were probable and known, and warranted among those to whom they were spoken; so that we are not to be surprised, that this writer should derive σοφία here from a Hebrew root, which signifies hidden. As to the truth of the observation itself, that wisdom is concealed, he intimates it, i. 3. and xxiv. 4. where he elegantly describes the throne of wisdom to be in a cloudy pillar. And the sacred penmen, particularly Solomon, use a term for wisdom no less expressive, *viz. chachma,* which means and implies obscurity, both in the Hebrew and other eastern languages. Job confirms it in the following words, which are parallel to those of our author, *Whence then cometh wisdom, and where is the place of understanding, seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living?* (xxviii. 20.) The philosopher therefore spake not amiss, when he asserted, that truth, which is another word for wisdom, lay hid and concealed in the bottom of a great deep.

Ver. 24. *Put thy feet into her fetters, and thy neck into her chain.*] The wise man represents wisdom here as a sovereign queen of such great worth, that her service and even her chains are honourable. (See Prov. i. 7—9.) Calmet says, he alludes to an ancient superstitious custom of the Babylonians, (see Herod. lib. i. Bar. vi. 42.) and of the Egyptians, (see Tab. Isiac.) or Germans, who put chains about them, or round them, and in that manner presented themselves before their deities, to testify their close and inviolable attachment to them; "Dum lucum Diis sacrum ingrederentur, vinculis se obligant, ut sese Diis obstrictos profiterentur." (Tacit. de Moribus German.) And perhaps the next verse may have some such allusion too. (See Bar. vi. 26. Isa. xlvi. 7.) Or the meaning may be, that by her thou shalt be advanced to great honour and dignity. (See note on ver. 29.)

Ver. 28. *For at the last thou shalt find her rest, and that shall be turned to thy joy.*] The rendering of our translation is harsh and inaccurate; the Geneva version is clearer and preferable, *For at the last thou shalt find rest in her,* &c. And Coverdale's is to the same effect, following probably the Vulgate, *In novissimis invenies requiem in ea; i. e.* In the end of your pursuit, or, as others understand it, at your last hour, thou shalt find *comfort* and *refreshment* in and by her; for so ἀνάπαυσις signifies in various places of this book. The Syriac takes it in this latter sense, *Tandem requiem atque delicias invenies, et in extremis tuis gaudebis.* St. Jerome has not expressed this amiss, *Vincula Domini sunt voluntaria, et vertuntur in amplexus; quique his fuerit colligatus, dicit, Læva ejus sub capite meo, et dextera illius amplexabitur me.* We have an instance of the truth of this observation in Joseph, whose advancement on account of his singular wisdom was so glorious, notwithstanding his former hardships and imprisonment, that Pharaoh arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck, and they cried before him, *Bow the knee.* (Gen. xli. 42.)

Ver. 29. *Then shall her fetters be a strong defence for thee, and her chains a robe of glory,* &c.] *i. e.* By her thou shalt be advanced to great dignity and glory; for so chains are sometimes understood, in a good and more honourable sense, as equivalent to a collar, or chain of gold, see Dan. v. 7. and 1 Esdr. iii. 5, 6. which comes nearer to this place, where the reward to him that excelled before the king in wise sentences or speeches, is to be honoured with a garment of purple to drink in, and to sleep upon gold, to have a head-tire of fine linen, and a chain about his neck. Our

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author seems to allude to Prov. iv. 8, 9. where Solomon says of wisdom, by way of encouragement to the study of it, *Exalt her, and she shall promote thee, she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her; she shall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee; when thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.* The accomplishments and advantages of wisdom are finely and magnificently described in this and the two following verses, under the insignia and ornaments of the Jewish people in general, and the high-priest's vestments in particular: that wisdom will not only be a resplendent ornament, but also be δήλωσις καὶ ἀλήθεια, light and perfection, a faithful oracle to direct a man right, will remind him of his duty, and distinguish him from others more effectually than the κλῶσμα ὑακίνθινον, mentioned ver. 30. *i. e.* the fringes and lace upon the borders of the garments could. (See Numb. xv. 38.)

Ver. 34. *Stand in the multitude of the elders, and cleave unto him that is wise.*] The Roman and some other Greek copies read with an interrogation, καὶ τίς σοφός; αὐτῷ προσκολλήθητι· *Is there a wise man? Cleave unto him.* The sense is, that to attain wisdom, men should seek the company of the wise, and attend upon their lectures and instructions; or by *standing* may be meant the reverence to be observed towards them—that as a mark of great deference and respect, we should stand in their presence. By elders, we are not barely to understand such as are aged, though reverence to them is required, but such whom time and experience have taught wisdom and knowledge, and are so called from their prudence and abilities. And so the Vulgate, *In multitudine presbyterorum prudentium sta;* and thus *senatus* and γερουσία are usually taken. According to Philo, it was the custom of the Jews every time they went to the synagogue, that the youngest should place themselves at the feet of the aged, and in profound silence give attention to what was delivered; that one of the most learned stood up, and either read the sacred books, or some excellent instructions of morality, how to behave themselves wisely through the several stages and callings of life. (De Septen.)

Ver. 36. *If thou seest a man of understanding, get thee betimes unto him, and let thy foot wear the steps of his door.*] Ὄρθριζε πρὸς αὐτόν. This is agreeable to the advice before given, to seek wisdom early, (iv. 12.) It also signifies to seek diligently. See particularly Jer. xxv. 3. where God says, ἐλάλησα ὀρθρίζων, which Theodoret expounds by ἐπιμελῶς· ὀρθρίζειν is applied to such as carefully attend upon any person, or solicit with more than ordinary diligence any business. (See Prov. xi. 27. xiii. 24. Psal. lxiii. 1. Isa. xxvi. 9. Hosea vi. 1. Ecclus. xxxii. 11. xxxix. 5.)

Ver. 37. *He shall establish thine heart, and give thee wisdom at thine own desire.*] Ἐπιθυμία τῆς σοφίας σου δοθήσεταί σοι. So the Roman, and some other editions; but the more correct ones omit σοῦ, which only perplexes the sense. The literal rendering is, *The desire of wisdom shall be given thee;* and thus the Vulgate, *Concupiscentia sapientiæ dabitur tibi*, which is a Hebraism, and equivalent to *concupita sapientiæ.* The sense is, The wisdom which thou desirest shall be bestowed upon thee; and so the Tigurine version, *Et quam desideres, sapientia tibi dabitur;* and the Syriac is to the same purpose, *Ipse vias tuas diriget, et quicquid optaveris, te docebit;* or, in the words of the Psalmist, *He will inform thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go, and guide thee with his eye.* (Psal. xxxii. 9.) I shall only observe farther, that our author in the latter part of this chapter sets down five means or helps for the attainment of wisdom: 1. A willing mind. 2. Care and diligence. 3. Hearing useful and profitable things read, and attending upon the expositions of such teachers, as can best explain the great truths and mysteries of wisdom or religion. 4. Meditating upon them seriously, and drawing useful reflections from them. 5. To crown all, begging God's blessing and assistance to go along with and prosper our own endeavours.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 3. *Sow not upon the furrows of unrighteousness, and thou shalt not reap them sevenfold.*] The Scripture often uses this comparison in speaking of sin. See Hosea x. 13. and the prophet uses the like expression in the foregoing verse of righteousness, *Sow to yourselves righteousness, and reap in mercy.* Job has the same observation in the like terms, *They that plough iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same,* (iv. 8.) But the rendering of the LXX. is more express, εἶδον τοὺς ἀροτριῶντας τὰ ἄτοπα, οἱ δὲ σπείροντες αὐτὰ ὀδύνας θεριοῦσιν ἑαυτοῖς. And thus Solomon, *He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity,* (Prov. xxii. 8.) which the LXX. give more properly and fully, ὁ σπείρων φαῦλα θερίσει κακὰ, πληγὴν δὲ ἔργων αὐτοῦ συντελέσει. And St. Paul, *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption.* (Gal. vi. 7, 8.)

Ver. 4. *Seek not of the Lord pre-eminence, neither of the king the seat of honour.*] The design of the wise man in this and the two following verses seems to be, to check the ambitious spirit of such aspiring persons as are full of themselves, are fond of titles, and forward to thrust themselves into places of power and authority, and perhaps are not able to fill them with sufficiency. Like the sons of Zebedee, they have the vanity to ask to sit the one on the right hand, the other on the left, in the kingdom, whose forwardness our Saviour reproved. (Matt. xx. 22.) It is observable, that those who are most pushing for pre-eminence, and the seat of honour, are generally such as are least qualified for it. It is the most promising circumstance in a man's favour, and the surest sign of merit, when he is chosen into an office of importance, or raised to some dignity, against his own will and inclination, or however without his seeking or applying for it. Such a one we may be sure is devoid of ambition, and contents himself rather with deserving than seeking preferment. This is well shadowed in Jotham's parable, (Judg. ix. 15.) wherein the bramble is represented as more ambitious than either the olive, fig-tree, or vine, and presently accepts of that power and sovereignty, which the rest had the modesty to decline. This is applicable to preferments in the church, as well as state. And accordingly Messieurs du Port-Royal and Rabanus extend it even to the episcopate, to which high dignity humility is no little recommendation: such a self-denying and modest temper, as St. Cyprian commends in Cornelius: " Episcopatum nec voluit, nec postulavit; sed quietus et modestus, et quales esse consueverunt, qui ad

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hunc locum divinitus eliguntur; non vim fecit, ut episcopus fieret; sed ipse vim passus est, ut episcopatum coactus acciperet." (Lib. iv. epist. 2. ad Anton.)

Ver. 5. *Justify not thyself before the Lord, and boast not of thy wisdom before the king.*] The former part seems to be an imitation of Prov. xxi. 2. at least the Vulgate so understands it, adding the latter part of that verse *(Quoniam agnitor cordis ipse est)* to this passage; and indeed the addition contains a substantial reason against spiritual pride, because a man, however plausible or sanctified he may appear in the sight of others, cannot hope or think to impose upon God, who knows the imperfection of our best services, and that no flesh should glory in his presence. As merit cannot be pleaded before God, so neither must it be pretended to before the king, whether it consists in the excellency of either body or mind. Our author only instances in wisdom, by which he condemns an affectation of shewing it before great personages, and an ambition to be distinguished by it in their presence, and, above all, an attempt either to equal or outshine them. As princes, and those that are about them, would be thought as considerable for their parts and capacity, as they are elevated above others in point of rank and dignity, they have a sort of jealousy, a kind of secret dislike against such as make a figure, and appear any way to rival them. If persons beneath them have a train of followers, and much court and deference are paid to them, and great things are said in their commendation; even merit, when so distinguished, becomes frequently disagreeable to the great, and an object of their hatred. David did not draw upon himself the indignation of Saul, till his great valour appeared, was confessed, and extolled; nor could envy bear that depreciating song, *Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.* Alexander betrayed a sort of impatience, when the victories of Antipater, or any of his generals, were mentioned to him with applause and commendation; not but that he was always glad that his enemies were vanquished, but then he was jealous and grieved, that it was done by another hand than his own; "Vinci quidem hostes volebat, sed Antipatrum vicisse indignabatur, suæ demptum gloriæ existimans, quicquid cessisset alienæ." (Q. Curt. lib. vi.) Demosthenes mentions the like temper in his father Philip; and how envy and discontent work in the great, we may see in a much lower instance mentioned by Xenophon—that the young Assyrian prince killed Gobrias's son, merely because he had outdone him in dexterity, and being a better marksman had slain a lion, and a bear, which the prince's javelin had missed. (Κυροπαιδ. lib. iv.)

Ver. 6. *Seek not to be a judge, being not able to take away iniquity.*] *i. e.* To break through or withstand all the secret artifices of iniquity to pervert you; for great are the dangers and temptations to which a judge's office exposes him, either from the attempts of designing men, or the importunity and solicitations of friends. But an upright and uncorrupt judge will guard against all these, as likewise against all bribery, injustice, fear, favour, and even compassion and tenderness itself, and will make every consideration give way to justice and truth. And he who enters upon that important office, without a mind resolutely determined to resist all allurements, that may any ways blind his eyes, and prove stumbling-blocks in the way of his uprightness, ought not to accept, much less seek and apply for, so weighty a trust; for they who thrust themselves into the tribunal, and, through ambition, covetousness, or any prevailing interest, betray its sacred oracles, and make truth itself venal, are accountable to God and the public for every instance of negligence, corruption, and want of judgment. The judicious Hooker applies this direction to the high stations and functions in the church; "For with respect to these it always behoveth men to take good heed, lest an affection for the dignity, without a due regard for the difficulty, should sophisticate that true and sincere judgment, which they ought to have of their own abilities, an inattention to which has, to many forward minds, been the occasion of repentance instead of contentment." (Eccl. Pol. b. v. p. 346.)

Lest at any time thou fear the person of the mighty, and lay a stumbling-block in the way of thy uprightness.] *i. e.* Should commit an offence against thy uprightness, by being awed through the power, or swayed by the authority, of the great. For this reason, among the Jews, the judges of less authority and character were to give their opinion first, lest they should be biassed by the judgment of those of greater. And this seems to be the meaning of that precept, Exod. xxiii. 2. *Thou shalt not decline after many, to wrest judgment;* and the charge to Joshua is, who had the care of God's people after the death of Moses, *Be strong, and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed,* (i. 9.) Good-nature and tenderness, which are commendable qualities in a private person, often become criminal in a magistrate; his silence, easiness, or indifference, is, as it were, a consent to the crimes of others, and he commits an evil as often as he does not hinder or punish one. A judge, says Plato, ought to be both wise and resolute; wise, so as to judge for himself, and not be influenced by others in giving his determination; and resolute, to pronounce his sentence without fears, and execute it without concern or partiality, (lib. ii. de Leg.) Messieurs of Port-Royal apply this passage to the governors of the church, in whom courage is an essential qualification, *They ought to be instant in season and out of season, to reprove and rebuke with all authority such as oppose the truth,* or occasion its being spoken against, through an evil conduct. Athanasius, Chrysostom, and other primitive lights of the church, were as remarkable for their resolution and courage on such occasions, as for their charity and meekness on others. And the prayer of St. Peter and John is, *Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word.* (Acts iv. 29.) If the heart be wanting, all other qualifications lose their influence; even the finest understanding without this will make but slow progress in the work of the Lord.

Ver. 7. *Offend not against the multitude of a city, and then thou shalt not cast thyself down among the people.*] The words *and then,* inserted without authority, by our translators, perplex the sense. The meaning, according to Calmet, is, Provoke not the multitude or people by rough language, or a haughty and imperious behaviour, or by an odious and disagreeable law, or a hard and oppressive sentence, which may stir them up to mutiny or rebellion; nor run into the other extreme by an abject flattery, or mean compliance, which will make them insolent and assuming; but preserve a medium between pride, which irritates, and abjectedness, which occasions scorn and con-

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tempt. Nothing is more difficult than so to temper severity and complaisance, as to preserve the love and affection of the people, and, at the same time, not to relax discipline, or lose authority; which Tacitus remarks as a particular happiness in Agricola, "Nec illi, quod est rarissimum, aut facilitas autoritatem, aut severitas amorem diminuit." (In Vit. Agric.) Rehoboam is a signal instance of the danger of offending the multitude: by following the advice of the young men, he answers the Israelites roughly; and by threatening to chastise them with scorpions, he endeavours to frighten them into obedience. Nor was he less imprudent in sending Adoniram as his ambassador to them, who had the principal care of those tributes of which they complained, the consequence of which was, that they stoned him; and the king himself was obliged to provide for his own safety by flight. (1 Kings xii. 11. 18.) Vatablus understands the passage of mixing in popular tumults and quarrels. And so the Syriac seems to take it, *Ne reum te reddas inter turbam civitatis, et in judicia ejus ne te præcipites.* And Coverdale's and the Geneva versions favour this sense, *Cast not thyself among the people.* Grotius expounds it of offending with the multitude, and stooping so low as to imitate their vices. Messieurs of Port-Royal, according to their custom, apply this to the pastors of the church, who should be careful of their charge, and not by an indiscreet behaviour offend, or an evil one mislead, their flock, and so forfeit their character, and cast themselves down among them.

Ver. 8. *Bind not one sin upon another, for in one thou shalt not be unpunished.*] The literal rendering of the Greek is, *Bind not sin twice, either by repeating the same sin, or committing different sins, one after another.* According to the Geneva version, *Bind not two sins together,* we may understand complicated sins, such as are usually attended with and draw on the commission of others; or, if this be applied to judges and persons in a public character, the advice to them is, that they should be particularly circumspect as to their conduct, because, besides their own, they are answerable for the sins of others, whom their examples or influence may have induced to offend. The wise man here imitates the phrase of the sacred penmen, who often compare a continued course of sin to a chain composed of many links. (See Prov. v. 22. Isa. v. 18. Aug. Conf. lib. viii. cap. 5.)

Ver. 9. *Say not, God will look upon the multitude of my oblations,* &c.] As God is all-sufficient, the earth and the fulness thereof belonging unto him, he has no need of a multitude of oblations, it is the heart which he chiefly regards, and looks upon the number or richness of the presents which a man brings, only in proportion as the person himself is agreeable to him. As God requires us to serve him in spirit and in truth, we must not content ourselves with such outward marks of piety only, nor place any such merit in them, as to imagine that they can purchase pardon, or procure acceptance. Superstition indeed hath fondly dreamt, that even the Deity may be won by gifts; and therefore Porphyry hath well defined one species of it to be, ὑπόληψις τοῦ δεκάζειν δύνασθαι τὸ θεῖον: (lib. ii. Περὶ ἀποχ.) *An apprehension that the Deity may be bribed;* which he observes was the cause of all those bloody sacrifices among the heathens, who imagined by virtue of them to be released from their sins. Plato makes one species of atheism to be a persuasion, that even wicked and unjust men will be accepted for their gifts; but he wisely observes, that God is not to be dealt with, ὡς τοκιστὴς, as a greedy usurer, in this manner. (De Leg. lib. x. Simplic. in Epict. cap. 38. Ecclus. xxxiv. 19.) This irreligious temper, in supposing by gifts or money to purchase heaven, Lucian well exposes in his treatise De Sacrificiis; nor is Juvenal less facetious, with a superstitious Egyptian, in the following lines:—

"Illius lacrumæ, meditataque murmura præstant,
Ut veniam culpæ non abnuat, ansere magno
Scilicet, et tenui popano corruptus Osiris." (Sat. vi. 540.)

Ver. 10. *Be not faint-hearted when thou makest thy prayer, and neglect not to give alms.*] Be not discouraged in thy prayers, nor fall into despair about the success of them, if they are not immediately answered, or in the manner thou wouldest have them; if God defers giving what you ask of him, he sees perhaps that it is not proper or expedient for you to have it; or imagine that you have some way asked or done amiss, and comfort yourself, that he will at length reward your patience and trust in him. To your prayers add alms, as the most effectual means to redeem past transgressions. The words are also capable of this farther sense, according to Calmet,—Be not afraid of asking too much of God, who is infinitely rich, and has gifts of immense value to bestow; but covet earnestly the best gifts, and do not ask trifles of him, which are beneath his majesty to be acquainted with, or grant. Imitate Solomon herein, who asked not long life, honour, or riches, which, in the opinion of men, are of great worth; but only true wisdom, a gift worthy of God to bestow, and of such a prince to ask.

Ver. 11. *Laugh no man to scorn in the bitterness of his soul.*] *i. e.* Insult not any poor or unfortunate person, for he that insults such a one, affronts God that made him so; according to that of Solomon, *Whoso mocketh the poor, reproacheth his Maker; and he that is glad at calamities, shall not be unpunished.* (Prov. xvii. 5.) If a man falls into disgrace, or comes to misfortunes through his own fault or mismanagement, even then one should spare reproaches, and consider that he has probably suffered enough for his folly and imprudence, without our increasing his confusion, or adding to the load of his misery: but as to such as lie under natural infirmities, either of body or mind, who perhaps are born blind, or deficient in understanding, or such as are reduced to poverty, through some sad accident, and not through any real fault or negligence of their own; to sport with such unhappy objects, to pronounce their calamities judgments, and to suppose or represent them or their parents as sinners above all others, whom we ought rather to pity and to comfort, is not only an instance of rash censure, but of great cruelty. True humanity and a generous compassion rather sympathize with the afflicted, and weep with those that weep, especially such as Providence has visited in so severe a manner, for its own wise ends. We have an instance of this unkind behaviour and rude insult in Shimei cursing David, when he fled in great anguish and grief from the face of his son Absalom: (2 Sam. xvi.) and in that scornful taunt of the Babylonians to the Israelites in their heaviness, *Sing us one of the songs of Zion.* (Psal. cxxxvii.)

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Isocrates has just the same sentiment with our author, and assigns the like strong reason against upbraiding others in their distress, μηδένι συμφορὰν ὀνειδίσῃς, κοινὴ γὰρ ἡ τύχη, καὶ τὸ μέλλον ἀόρατον. (Ad Dæmon.)

Ver. 12. *Devise not a lie against thy brother.*] Μὴ ἀροτρία ψεῦδος. (See the like expression, ver. 3.) Calmet thinks the original word was, *charasch*, which signifies to invent, as well as to plough. There is the like advice, Prov. iii. 29. where the Hebrew word is the same, which makes it probable that the author here alludes to that passage. The LXX. have well rendered the place, μὴ τεκτήνῃ ἐπὶ σὸν φίλον κακὰ, παροικοῦντα καὶ πεποιθότα ἐπί σοι, which our version gives but imperfectly. The sense is, Do not invent any false accusation, or raise any calumny, evil suspicion, or slander, against thy friend or brother; an injury of this sort done to so near a relation, and one that puts his confidence in thee, will aggravate the guilt; or, if we understand this of lying, strictly so called, the phrase then denotes the secret and clandestine manner of it. It is a Hebraism, which signifies to work under ground, that, as the husbandman toils in ploughing up the ground, to raise an increase from it, so a wicked man labours in his mind, and turneth over his heart to invent a lie, which he may do mischief with.

Neither do the like to thy friend.] Μηδὲ φίλῳ τὸ ὅμοιον ποίει. This differs very little from the former clause, and all the ancient versions explain it as meaning the same thing. Our learned Fuller only gives a different sense to this passage, "Do not secretly forge a lie, nor, while you are devising or propagating it, act the false friend, by behaving outwardly as a friend would do, that you may spread the falsehood more securely, and do mischief more successfully." (Miscell. Sac. p. 37.)

Ver. 13. *Use not to make any manner of lie.*] In the foregoing verse the wise man cautions against calumniating a friend or a brother by false accusations; and, lest any should infer from thence a liberty to traduce and abuse others not so related, and that lying is sometimes allowable, he very properly adds, *Use not any manner of lie; i. e.* speak truth upon all occasions, in affairs of little as well as of greater moment. Some ancient philosophers, indeed, and even some fathers, have thought, that an occasional lie was innocent in some certain cases; as when told, for instance, to avoid a greater evil, as poisons are given to expel poison. St. Austin absolutely maintains the contrary in a set treatise on the subject; it is likewise forbidden in the law without exception, and by our Saviour in the gospel.

For the custom thereof is not good.] It will by degrees lead you to other bad acts, as perjury and false swearing. Thus Cicero, "Qui mentiri solet, pejerare solet: quem ego, ut mentiatur, inducere possum; ut pejeret, exorare facile potero." (Pro Rosc.)

Ver. 14. *Use not many words in a multitude of elders.*] If, by elders, we understand ancient men, there is exactly the same advice, xxxii. 9. *When ancient men are in place, use not many words,* for before such, reserve and silence are always commendable, especially in the younger sort: but if by elders we mean senators, and persons of a public character, *Senatus potentum,* as the oriental versions have it, the advice then is to speak gravely, weightily, ἐν ὀλίγοις πολλὰ, *much in a little;* not to affect a show of learning, or sport with turns of fancy; not to wander from the matter in debate, or tire the audience by a tedious harangue, which is wasting the time of such a solemn assembly, where only matters of the greatest consequence are attended to, and come under their cognizance.

Make not much babbling, when thou prayest.] Use not vain repetitions by asking the same things in thy prayers. The Scripture represents the worshippers of Baal as much addicted to this, who cried from morning until evening, *O Baal, hear us;* and it is the character of the heathen in general, that they thought to be heard for their much speaking. Such repetitions our Saviour condemns, but he does not thereby forbid us to pray often; but that we should not be always making the same requests, through distrust or infidelity, as if God would not otherwise attend to our prayers, or they would be ineffectual without them. (See Eccles. v. 2.) St. Chrysostom understands this passage of frequent relapses into sin, and asking forgiveness often for the same faults; as if the advice was, Repent sincerely of your sins, that thou mayst not be obliged to mention them often in your confession to God; and walk so circumspectly, as not to be every day asking pardon for repeated transgressions. (In Psal. lxxxiv.)

Ver. 15. *Hate not laborious work, neither husbandry, which the Most High hath ordained.*] The words, Gen. iii. 19. *In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread, until thou return unto the ground,* are not only a curse, but they seem to carry in them the force of a precept, enjoining Adam, and all his posterity, to take pains for their livelihood, and to employ themselves diligently in their several generations for their own support, and the profit of others, who may stand in need of their help. It plainly appears to be a precept of Divine institution, and not merely a curse, because Adam, before he had deserved a curse, was yet enjoined this task, to dress and keep the garden, and not merely to enjoy the pleasures of it. And though its fertility was such as perhaps not to need any husbandry; yet God, by thus employing Adam, intended that he should be a law and an example to his posterity. And as Adam lived himself, so we may presume he bred up his children in like manner; his two first-born, though heirs-apparent to all the world, had yet their peculiar employments, the one in tillage, the other in pasturage. (Gen. iv. 2.) According to the learned Bochart, the improvement of soil was at first by the direction and instruction of the Most High himself; and Cain, a tiller of the ground, had the rudiments of husbandry communicated to him by inspiration. (Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii.) Anciently the greatest men esteemed nothing more honourable and worthy their study than the art of husbandry; this was the occupation of the patriarchs of the Old Testament, and of the first founders of kingdoms and states. Among the Jews, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, kings, consuls, dictators, generals, were not ashamed of this employment. Not to mention Cato, Varro, Virgil, Pliny, and other great names, who tempered the severity of their studies with the pleasing toils of agriculture; some of the first note among the Romans in the military art, and of the greatest service to the commonwealth, such as Camillus, Regulus, Fabius, and Cincinnatus, were fetched from the plough, as Gideon was among the Israelites from the thrashing-floor; and Elisha was called to the high

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office of a prophet, as he was driving one of the twelve ploughs his father had going in the field.

Ver. 16. *Number not thyself among the multitude of sinners, but remember that wrath will not tarry long.*] *i. e.* Join not thyself to, nor be ranked with, the congregation of wicked and ungodly men; but be assured, that God will take speedy vengeance of all such as know not him; or possibly it may mean, Do not comfort thyself with the great number of sinners that are concerned jointly with thee, or that are to be found at large in the world, as if a society in wickedness was any alleviation of thy fault, or was any safeguard or security to thee. The Alexandrian MS. agrees with the copy which our translators follow, and so does the Vulgate. Most other Greek copies transpose part of this and the following verse thus: *μὴ προσλογίζου σεαυτὸν ἐν πλήθει ἁμαρτωλῶν· ταπείνωσον σφόδρα τὴν ψυχήν σου. Μνήσθητι ὅτι ὀργὴ οὐ χρονιεῖ· ὅτι ἐκδίκησις ἀσεβοῦς πῦρ καὶ σκώληξ·* which Coverdale's version follows. The Syriac and Arabic in rendering ver. 17. take no notice of the vengeance of the ungodly, nor the punishment here assigned them; the reason there given for humility is general, and affects every man, *Quoniam postremus omnium hominum finis ad vermes et corruptionem tendit.*

Ver. 17. *The vengeance of the ungodly is fire and worms.*] Some understand this passage of the dead bodies of criminals, that were denied burial, and consumed by worms, but more commonly by fire, lest they should infect the city by their stench; but it seems as if a greater and more intense punishment than that in the valley of Hinnom, was here to be understood. It has been variously controverted among learned men, what this fire and worm are; whether they be real and material, or are only to be understood in a metaphorical sense; whether under the name of fire any thing more is meant than sharp burning pain, and by worms than remorse of conscience, and the despair of sinners in another life. The fathers are greatly divided in their sentiments on this point, and the same father often differs from himself, particularly St. Jerome and St. Austin. Those who maintain the former opinion support it, 1. By some texts of Scripture taken according to the latter, particularly Isa. lxvi. 24. Mark ix. 43—46. 48. 2. They quote Judith xvi. 17. where we read, that *the Almighty will take vengeance of the wicked in the day of judgment, by putting fire and worms into their flesh, and they shall feel them, and weep for ever,* κλαύσονται ἐν αἰσθήσει ἕως αἰῶνος; or if we read καύσονται, with a late learned editor of Justin Martyr (which conjecture is confirmed by the Syriac rendering of the place), the sense will conclude much stronger for a material fire. 3. They urge the Vulgate translation of the passage before us, *Quoniam vindicta carnis impii, ignis et vermis,* which explicitness denotes, say they, according to St. Austin, not only that the wicked shall be punished, but that the seat of the punishment shall be their flesh, and in it they shall suffer both by fire and worms. Lastly, they say, that the concurrent sense of the Latin church is for a real fire. On the other side it is answered, that the texts of Scripture above are to be understood metaphorically, and refer to the punishment in the valley of Hinnom, the figure and picture of hell. 2. That the quotation from Judith is apocryphal, and may likewise have the same reference. 3. As to the Vulgate rendering of this place, it is arguing only from a single translation; we meet with no mention of the flesh in any Greek copy, nor in the Syriac or Arabic versions. 4. The testimony of the Greek church is as strong for the contrary opinion. But I see no reason why both these may not be admitted, and reconciled in the following manner, *viz.* That corporal sensible pain, such as that of fire and worms, shall torment the bodies of the wicked, and stings of self-condemnation and the horror of despair shall wound and gnaw their conscience. Take the expression either way, sufficient unto the sinner is the evil thereof, and dreadful is his portion.

Ver. 18. *Change not a friend for any good by no means.*] Μὴ ἀλλάξῃς φίλον ἕνεκεν ἀδιαφόρου. This is accurately rendered, ἀδιάφορος, signifying rather indifferent and ordinary, than precious or valuable; and so the Tigurine version has it, *Ne permutes amicum re vulgari.* But the place is probably corrupt, and the true reading is, διαφόρου, and so one MS. actually does read. Grabe has so restored it from conjecture; and Casaubon makes the same emendation. See notes on Theoph. Char. p. 89. where the definition of sordidness is, φειδωλία τοῦ διαφόρου ὑπὲρ τὸν καιρόν. We have διάφορον in the sense of riches, 2 Macc. i. 35. iii. 6. iv. 8. and the oriental versions expound it by *pecunia* in this very place. It should also be so corrected, xxvii. 1. xlii. 7. Euripides expresses himself upon the subject like this writer,

> Ὅστις δὲ πλοῦτον ἢ σθένος μᾶλλον φίλων
> Ἀγαθῶν κεκτῆσθαι βούλεται, κακῶς φρονεῖ.

And Plato speaks to the same purpose; βουλοίμην φίλον ἀγαθὸν μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ Δαρείου χρυσίον κτήσασθαι. This writer's sentiments upon friendship are much to be admired; he sets the like value upon it, vi. 14, 15.

Ver. 19. *Forego not a wise and good woman, for her grace is above gold.*] Μὴ ἀστόχει γυναικὸς σοφῆς καὶ ἀγαθῆς, i. e. *Miss not of a good and valuable woman,* but let such a one be thy principal aim and mark to choose for a wife, and take care not to err or mistake in a matter of such importance. The metaphor is taken from shooting at a mark. (See the like expression, viii. 9.) A woman of such qualities as are here described, *viz.* discretion and goodness, is a gift that cometh of the Lord, and ought to be esteemed beyond all riches, and preferred before what the world calls a great fortune. She is such a peculiar blessing, that this author says, *She shall be given in the portion of them that fear the Lord,* (xxxvi. 3.) The Vulgate understands this of not divorcing a person of such accomplishments; but this advice seems useless, with regard to one so well qualified to make a man happy, and is given more fully, ver. 26.

Ver. 20. *Whereas thy servant worketh truly, entreat him not evil, nor the hireling that bestoweth himself wholly for thee.*] Διδόντα ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ· *i. e.* Who wastes and impairs his life, his health, and strength, in thy service, exposed to a variety of dangers, and particularly to heat and cold, and the inclemency of the seasons: (Gen. xxxi. 40.) some of them following such laborious occupations as insensibly ruin their health, and others such as render them continually liable to hurts and accidents. The author seems to make a difference between a servant and a mercenary, the work imposed upon the latter being generally more intense and severe; but he requires diligence in both, not merely

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an eye-service, and orders a proportionable recompence and return to be made to them. Not to entreat them evil by menaces or blows, nor to exercise any act of inhumanity or injustice towards them; not merely to consider what strictly and rigidly, but what may fairly and equitably be done to them. Seneca seems well to have settled this: "Servis imperare moderatè laus est; et in mancipio cogitandum, non quantum illud impune pati possit, sed quantum permittat æqui bonique natura, quæ parcere etiam captivis, et pretio partis jubet." (Lib. i. de Clem. cap. 18.)

Ver. 21. *Let thy soul love a good servant, and defraud him not of liberty...*] The author is not here speaking of a slave taken in war, or bought with money at a market, but of a native Jew, who serves a Jewish master; the law appointed that such a one should have his liberty in the sabbatical year. (Exod. xxi. 2. Deut. xv. 12.) The sense of the passage is, Refuse him not his liberty at the stated and appointed time; and as he has risked his health and life in thy service, treat him not as a slave, but with the tenderness of a friend or brother. Some of the heathen moralists have expressed the same favourable regard for good servants. Thus Seneca: "Servi sunt? imo homines. Servi sunt? imo contubernales. Servi sunt? imo humiles amici. Servi sunt? imo conservi, si cogitaveris tantundem in utrosque licere fortunæ." (Epist. 47.) Euripides says, the name of a servant carries something of a disgrace in it, but a good servant, in all respects, is not inferior to a free man:

Ἔν γάρ τι τοῖς δούλοισιν αἰσχύνην φέρει,
Τοὔνομα· τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα τῶν ἐλευθέρων
Οὐδεὶς κακίων δοῦλος, ὅστις ἐσθλὸς ᾖ. (Ion. 854.)

We have a remarkable instance of regard shewed to a good servant by the centurion, Luke vii. 1. but St. Paul's tenderness for Onesimus cannot be paralleled, whom he vouchsafes to call *his own bowels, not a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, both in the flesh, and in the Lord.* (Philem. ver. 12. 16. see also Apost. Constit. lib. iv. cap. 12. Ecclus. xxxiii. 30, 31.)

Ver. 24. *Hast thou daughters? have a care of their body, and shew not thyself cheerful towards them.*] *i. e.* Be not too indulgent, or over fond of them, nor ready to grant them every liberty they may wish to have, for liberty often terminates in some bad consequence. Too much indulgence was the ruin of Dinah; her curiosity to visit the daughters of the land at a festival time, and to partake of their amusements and sports, was the occasion of her defilement. (Gen. xxxiv.) Juvenal advises to keep young men out of the way of all company that may corrupt their morals; but this caution is much more necessary with respect to women, whose sex being so delicate, their modesty should be principally attended to and secured, and the carriage of all about them be more circumspect and reserved before them. Cato the censor carried his resentment very high for a salute only given in the presence of his daughter. (In Vit. Cat.) The wise Solon's saying, Θυγατρὶ μὴ προσμειδιάσῃς, ἵνα μὴ ὕστερον δακρύσῃς, is very like that of our author. And Phocylides, to prevent any accident abroad by company to young virgins, well advises;

Παρθενικὴν δὲ φύλασσε πολυκλείστοις θαλάμοισι,
Μηδέ μιν ἄχρι γάμων πρὸ δόμων ὀφθῆναι ἐάσῃς. (Ver. 203.)

As to the care necessary to be observed towards children in general, expressed in ver. 23. the like particulars are insisted on in the Apostolical Constitutions; Ἐκδιδάσκετε ὑμῶν τὰ τέκνα τὸν λόγον Κυρίου· στύφετε δὲ αὐτὰ πληγαῖς καὶ δαρμοῖς, καὶ ποιεῖτε ὑποτακτικά· ἀπὸ βρέφους διδάσκοντες αὐτὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα, κ. τ. λ. (lib. iv. cap. 11.) and at the conclusion, the same direction is given about fixing them in marriage soon and wisely. The education of daughters among the Jews was formerly very strict and severe; they seldom let them be seen abroad, and, for this reason, a daughter is called in Hebrew, *alma; i. e.* one concealed, or shut up.

Ver. 25. *Marry thy daughter, and so shalt thou have performed a weighty matter, but give her to a man of understanding.*] The Jews had a high opinion of the married state, and matched their children early, which they did to fix their inclinations, but were very cautious about the moral qualifications of their intended son-in-law. And indeed in marrying daughters, regard ought chiefly to be had to those which are likeliest to promote their best and truest interest. For happiness is not possible to be attained in the conjugal state without true worth and virtue in the associate, which are not always the attendants of high birth, wealth, or honour. Parents, therefore, in settling their children, should not make avarice or ambition the motive of their choice and conduct; but rather virtue, sobriety, and discretion, which afford a much more reasonable prospect of happiness in that state. These accomplishments the emperor M. Antonius preferred in the disposal of his daughter, Lucilla; for he gave her, as the writer of his life observes, "Non satis quidem nobili, sed egregiæ tamen virtutis viro; quippe qui generum non pro opibus aut prosapiæ dignitate, sed ex merito, et virtute æstimandum censuit." And the like is recorded of Themistocles, "Malle se virum pecunia, quam pecuniam viro indigentem." If we take *understanding* here in a larger sense, as meaning religion, as in these didactical books it is sometimes used, the direction then may also be extended to forbid unequal marriages of believers with infidels, and of the religious with the loose and the profane; as when Jehoshaphat matched his son with Ahab's daughter. (2 Chron. xxi. 6.) For it is a law of marriage that should never be broken, that it be *in the Lord; i. e.* with his liking, and in his fear. That exception which Abraham took against the daughters of the country, and his express commandment for a wife to be taken to his son out of the faithful, teaches us plainly, to prefer religion and the true fear of God to honour, wealth, nobility, and all other considerations, in all marriages that we shall make, either for ourselves, our friends, our children, or such as are under our guardianship and charge. (See Gen. xxviii. Deut. vii. 3. 2 Kings viii. 18.)

Ver. 26. *Hast thou a wife after thy mind? forsake her not, but give not thyself over to a light woman.*] Our translators seem to have understood this passage of unfaithfulness to the marriage-bed, and leaving a valuable and agreeable woman for stolen embraces: but ἐκβάλλειν (which probably is a forensic term) seems to relate rather to casting out by divorce; which is confirmed by μισουμένη, which follows, and is properly rendered by the Vulgate, *odibili*, and in the margin, *a hateful woman*, one that is disagreeable in her person, or odious for her bad qualities. According to the law of Moses, one might put away a wife not beloved, provided there was a legal cause for so doing; but divorce,

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though tolerated among the Jews, was never approved or commended by the wisest of that nation, unless some urgent cause made it necessary. This wise author accordingly advises, to prevent coming to such an extremity, not to marry a person whom one cannot love, or has such forbidding qualities, as to create disgust: to take a woman so unpromising, is paving the way for a divorce, or, which is as bad, condemning a man's self to live with an odious and disagreeable partner for the term of life; but to choose rather one that is agreeable and amiable, who will sweeten life, from whom, as there can be no occasion, so there ought to be no inclination to part.

Ver. 27, 28. *Honour thy father with thy whole heart, and forget not the sorrows of thy mother: remember that thou wast begot of them, and how canst thou recompense them the things that they have done for thee?*] The advice of Tobit to his son is very like that here given: *My son, despise not thy mother, but honour her all the days of thy life, and do not grieve her; remember she saw many dangers for thee, when thou wast in her womb.* St. Ambrose has some sentiments upon the occasion, which one cannot sufficiently admire: after having enumerated what the mother undergoes for the child, as sickness and loathing during the time of gestation; the strict regimen she is obliged to submit to; the great confinement and self-denial in many other instances, and the danger and difficulty of childbirth; the certain great pain, and often death itself, attending the birth, and the constant fears for the child's life and safety,—immediately adds, "Si paveris matrem, non reddidisti ei cruciatus quos pro te passa est, non obsequia quibus te gestavit, non alimenta quæ tibi tribuit, vero pietatis affectu immulgens labris ubera: non famem, quam pro te ipsa toleravit, ne quid quod tibi noxium esset comederet, ne quid quod lacti noceret hauriret: tibi illa jejunavit, tibi manducavit, tibi illa cibum quem voluit non accepit, tibi quem noluit, cibum sumpsit, tibi vigilavit, tibi flevit. Illi debes quod habes, cui debes quod es." (Com. in Luc. xviii. See note on iii. 8.) By Plato, parents are styled, Θεοὶ ἐπίγειοι; and Philo gives the reason why they are so called, as being a sort of visible gods, imitating the Invisible in bestowing life; he has the same observation with our author upon the occasion, Οὐδὲ τοῖς γονεῦσιν ἴσας ἀποδοῦναι χάριτας ἐνδέχεται, ἀντιγεννῆσαι γὰρ οὐχ οἷόντε τούτους. (Allegor. lib. ii.) Aristotle mentions three sorts of persons to whom we can never make a suitable return, *viz.* the gods, our parents, and our instructors. (Ethic. lib. ix.)

Ver. 31. *Fear the Lord, and honour the priest, and give him his portion as it is commanded thee; the first-fruits, and the trespass-offering, and the gift of the shoulders, and the sacrifice of sanctification, and the first-fruits of the holy things.*] There is the like advice, ver. 29. Τοὺς ἱερεῖς αὐτοῦ θαύμαζε, where θαυμάζειν is to be taken in the sense of τιμᾶν. It is so used Lev. xix. 15. Deut. xxviii. 50. 2 Kings v. 1. 2 Chron. xix. 7. Job xiii. 10. xxxii. 22. Jude 16. Δοξάζειν, the term here used, is sometimes taken in a larger sense, than to *respect* or *honour*, and probably here means *maintenance*. The duty of maintenance is expressed in various terms by this writer; as, not forsaking his ministers, (see the like command, Deut. xii. 19.) honouring his priests, and giving them their portion; and to ascertain what belongs to them, he enumerates five particulars, mentioned also in the law: 1. Ἀπαρχὴ, or the first-fruits of the land and trees; as, corn, wine, oil, figs, &c. (Deut. xxvi. 2.) to which some add, the first-fruits of animals. These were also called πρωτογεννήματα. 2. The offering περὶ πλημμελείας, or such portion of the victim, or trespass-offering, as usually belonged to the priest, which indeed was the whole of it, except the kidneys, and the rump, and the fat upon the inwards, which were burnt upon the altar. (Levit. vii. 2—5.) It may not be improper here to distinguish between a trespass-offering and a sin-offering. Trespass-offerings were for sins of less note and importance, sins of ignorance or omission, through forgetfulness; as, the not observing the legal washings and purifications, &c. Sin-offerings were for greater offences, for voluntary crimes, and wilful violations of the law. 3. The gift of the shoulders in the peace-offerings, (Exod. xxix. 27, 28. Lev. vii. 34.) *i. e.* the wave-breast and the heave-shoulder. 4. The sacrifice of sanctification, called *mincha*, which was of things without life, as flour, cakes, wafers, &c. The Greek sometimes preserves the Hebrew name, *manaan*, (see Ezek. xlvi. 5. 7. 11.) and often uses θυσία simply for it. (Lev. ii. 13. vi. 14, 15. Ezek. xlv. 15. Amos v. 25.) Sometimes it is called προσφορὰ, (Psal. xl. 7. Heb. x. 5. 8. 10.) and by this writer, θυσία ἁγιασμοῦ, as being the most holy of the offerings of the Lord made by fire; and, according to the Hebrew, is *holiness of holinesses.* (See Lev. ii. 3. 10. vi. 17.) The remnant of this was Aaron's and his sons', and was in part for their maintenance. 5. The first-fruits of holy things; this differs from ἀπαρχὴ beforementioned; it seems to be the tithe of the tithes, *sanctitatum decima*, which the Levites themselves paid the priests. (Neh. x. 48. Numb. xviii. 28. 2 Chron. xxxi. 6.) They are called *holy things*, because all the tithe, whether of the land, or of the fruit of the trees, being the Lord's, it was holy unto him. (Levit. xxvii. 30. Ecclus. xxxv. 8, 9.)

Ver. 32. *And stretch thine hand unto the poor.*] That nothing may be wanting to recommend thy service, join works of charity and mercy; invite the Levite and the poor to partake with you, as the law appoints, Deut. xiv. 26. 29. xvi. 11. xxvi. 11. In this general sense many understand this place; but I presume from the context, that it relates to the poor man's tithe on the third year, which year is termed a year of tithes, Deut. xxvi. 12. which the husbandman carried not to Jerusalem, but spent it at home, within his own gates, upon the Levite, the fatherless, the widows, and the poor: (Deut. xiv. 18.) as it was paid to the poor every third year, reckoning from the sabbatical year, on which the land rested, it was called πτωχοδεκάτη, or the *poor man's tithe;* and in Tobit i. 8. the *third tithe*, where the several sorts are enumerated, and well distinguished. I have the pleasure to find Grotius agreeing with me in this sense of the place, which the other expositors seem not to have attended to.

That thy blessing may be perfected.] Some render, *That thy liberality may be complete*, which is the sense of the margin; others, *That thou mayst be completely blessed.* (2 Cor. ix. 10.) The Vulgate has, "Ut perficiatur propitiatio, et benedictio tua," *that thy atonement may be perfected.* (Ecclus. xxxi. 11. xxxv. 11.) The Arabic, "Ut mendici pro te precatio exaudiatur," i. e. *that the poor man's blessing may rest upon thee, and his prayer be heard in thy behalf.* Grotius by εὐλογία understands *riches*, in which sense it is used, Judith i. 15. 1 Sam. xxx. 26. Ecclus. xxxiv.

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17. According to him the meaning is,—Thy riches will be sanctified hereby, and blessed by God that gave them, (1 Tim. iv. 5.) or made holy and acceptable to him, by thus applying them; to which Coverdale's version agrees, *Reach thine hand unto the poor, that God may bless thee with plenteousness.*

Ver. 33. *A gift hath grace in the sight of every man living, and for the dead detain it not.*] Having spoken of provision and maintenance for the Levite, charity to the poor, and kind actions to be done to the living, the wise man proceeds to shew his regard and concern for the dead. The sense of the place is,—Be liberal and charitable towards all, and let even the dead have a share of thy goodness. The Geneva version of it is clearer, *Liberality pleaseth all men living, and from the dead restrain it not.* Pay thy last offices, by decently interring them, respecting their memories, and comforting their disconsolate relations, by giving the usual funeral entertainment to them, and the poor. That this was the custom among the Jews, see Jer. x. 7. and particularly Tobit iv. 17. where Tobit gives exactly the same advice; for having enjoined his son to give his bread to the hungry, and garments to them that were naked, and alms according to his abundance; it immediately follows, *Pour out thy bread on the burial of the just.* The primitive Christians, many of whose customs, it is well known, were derived from the Jews, expressed in the same manner their pious regard to the saints and martyrs, by pouring wine upon their tombs, and celebrating the sepulchral feast over them. St. Austin mentions this to have been the practice of his mother Monica in particular, and that it was at length dropped, "Ne ulla occasio se ingurgitandi daretur ebriosis, et quia illa quasi parentalia superstitioni Gentilium essent simillima," lest they should administer to intemperance, and because they savoured of pagan superstition. (Confess. lib. vi. cap. 2.) It is surprising, that both these texts should be abused by Bellarmine, and the popish writers, in favour of masses and prayers for the dead; whereas they undoubtedly relate to the sepulchral feasts usually given for the comfort of the disconsolate relations and friends of some good man deceased; and respected such as mourned and wept, rather than those who had no sense, and could not be benefited by such posthumous expressions of kindness.

Ver. 35. *Be not slow to visit the sick, for that shall make thee to be beloved.*] This is not rightly translated; the Greek is, ἐκ τῶν τοιούτων· *i. e.* By these, and such-like offices of humanity and charity as are just mentioned, thou wilt gain the hearts and affections of others, especially such as you have laid under an obligation by your kindness. To visit the sick, does not mean the bare seeing of them, which may be matter of curiosity only, but inquiring into the nature of their disease, discoursing them about patience and submission, binding up their wounds; and, if our own circumstances will permit, giving them medicines. (Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 27. de Cura Paup.) St. Chrysostom finely observes, That if we have nothing, by reason of our own indigence and poverty, that we can assist the sick with, we must give him our company at least, and the comforts of our conversation, imparting to him our best wishes, and the benefit of our prayers, so shall we hear at the last great day, *I was sick, and ye visited me.* This advice more nearly concerns God's ministers, whose attendance upon a sick-bed is the more necessary, as, besides ordinary help, they can administer spiritual relief to the disturbed conscience, and be the happy means perhaps of saving a soul from death and everlasting ruin. And nothing makes a pastor more beloved than his attendance at such a season, when the powers of darkness tempt men to despair, especially by those who have a sense of their spiritual danger, and would hallow their last moments by the best preparation their time or condition will admit.

Ver. 36. *Whatsoever thou takest in hand remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss.*] Our translators seem to have understood this, as a piece of advice never to undertake any thing but for some good end, to have that mark principally in view, and to direct all our actions and affairs accordingly: but I do not think this to be the only meaning of the place, or that it is a maxim of mere prudence only. The Greek is, ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς λόγοις σου μιμνήσκου τὰ ἔσχατά σου, i. e. *in all thy words and actions* (for *debar*, the original word, as I presume, signifies both) *remember thy latter end, and frequently meditate on death;* and so the Arabic, *Memor esto mortis in omnibus operibus tuis;* or, more fully, Reflect on the *quatuor novissima*, the four last and most important things, as they are called, *viz.* death and judgment, heaven and hell: if we had always these in our eye, and attended to them with that seriousness which matters of such moment require, we should be the more careful not to offend, at least not to sin wilfully. If we considered every action as perhaps the last of our lives, and ourselves as upon the brink of appearing before the great tribunal of God, how powerful and how happy a restraint should we live under? but so long as we stifle the disagreeable thoughts of death, and consider eternity as at a vast distance, we are not much affected with so wide a prospect, nor induced to prepare ourselves for our great change. St. Jerome points out the vanity of men's hopes, and the greatness of human folly, when he says, "Quotidie morimur, quotidie commutamur, et tamen æternos nos esse credimus." (Ad Heliodor.)

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *STRIVE not with a mighty man, lest thou fall into his hands.* Ver. 2. *Be not at variance with a rich man, lest he overweigh thee.*] As in the former chapter the author laid down several positive precepts, how we ought to act with respect to different persons and cases therein mentioned; so here he gives several negative ones, how we ought not to act. And the first is, not to fight or contend bodily with an adversary superior in strength, for fear of coming to some mischief, by falling into his hands, and suffering through them. This may likewise be understood in a forensic sense, not to go to law with, or commence any judicial process against, a very rich man, lest he preponderate, or get the balance on his side, by his interest, power, and great fortune, and prove too much for thee, and incline the judges to give the cause against you. Literally the Greek is, *Lest he overbalance thy weight:* the metaphor is well known and beautiful. The Vulgate accordingly renders, *Ne litiges cum homine potente, ne incidas in manus illius; ne contendas cum viro locuplete, ne forte contra constituat litem tibi.* Calmet, too, understands the place in

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this latter sense: the following lines exactly agree with our author,

Ἄφρων ὃς κ' ἐθέλει πρὸς κρείσσονος ἀντιφερίζειν,
Νίκης τε στέρεται, πρὸς αἰσχεσι ἄλγεα πάσχει. (Vet. Poeta.)

i. e. It is a folly to contend with one mightier than one's self, for you are sure to be vanquished; and, besides the disgrace, to be exposed to injuries and evil treatment.

Ver. 3. *Strive not with a man that is full of tongue, and heap not wood upon his fire.*] It is a great instance of prudence to know how to be properly silent before one that loves to talk, and not to give occasion to him by question, or opposition, to be more troublesome. Such a loquacious person is aptly compared here to a fire, which always burns the fiercer in proportion as you put on fuel. To continue discourse with him, is to furnish fresh matter for more impertinence; and to differ from him, or attack him in any matter of dispute, is to make him more fierce and outrageous. The best way to impose silence upon him, and to be easy one's self, is to let him alone, and take no notice of him; and then, like the fire which is not stirred, the flame will of course go out. And if such a one be also of an *evil tongue*, as the margin understands it, civil words and obliging things will produce the quite contrary behaviour from him, and besides being verbose and noisy, he will be abusive and scurrilous, or privately asperse and blacken thy character. The author may with great reason be supposed to allude to Prov. xxvi. 20, 21. where Solomon has the like comparison upon the same subject, *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out, so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth; as coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife.*

Ver. 4. *Jest not with a rude man, lest thy ancestors be disgraced.*] Vulg. *Non communices homini indocto;* and so Coverdale's version, *Keep no company with the unlearned, lest he give thy kindred an evil report;* i. e. Have no acquaintance, friendship, or intimacy, ἀπαιδεύτῳ, with a raw, undisciplined, uninstructed person, lest it bring a reflection upon yourself and family, as if your own education had been bad, or neglected by your choice of such a companion. All acquaintance with the unlearned and uninstructed is not here forbidden, for there is an ignorance that is not faulty, such as has humility and ingenuity enough to acknowledge its low state, and inclination and readiness to attend to means, to alter and improve it; but such are here condemned, and their company to be avoided, whose ignorance is wilful, and who obstinately persist in it; who consider knowledge as a burden, and truth as their enemy, and hate to be set right and informed, lest their ignorance and weakness should be discovered. As we are sure by telling such the truth, and kindly admonishing them of their mistake, to have them for our enemy, it is better to have no converse or society with them, lest by our honest freedom, either to instruct or reform them, they should think themselves affronted, and turn their spleen and malice against our family and relations, and report something to their disgrace and prejudice, which may affect and wound us through their sides. But the sense followed in our version seems preferable, and more agreeable to the Greek, μὴ πρόσπαιζε ἀπαιδεύτῳ· *i. e.* Joke not with a man that is rude, and wants good breeding; for if he knows any family misfortune, which persons of politeness would be tender of mentioning, he will be sure to expose it, and make their failings and infirmities to be the subject of his coarse raillery.

Ver. 5. *Reproach not a man that turneth from sin, but remember that we are all worthy of punishment.*] As it is a sign of humility and grace to turn from sin, so it is an instance of great degeneracy, to reproach or ridicule any one for becoming better. A good man will not revile a sinner, even while he continues such, nor insult over his fall, but rather shew a generous pity and concern for him, and endeavour to restore such a one in the spirit of meekness. Instead of superciliously upbraiding an offending brother, he considers his fall as an instance of human frailty, and it serves to remind him how liable he himself is to miscarry every moment; to convince him, that he stands in as much need of God's help to continue him in a state of grace, as the sinner does of his mercy to restore him to it; and that if God should proceed against him with rigour and strict justice, he deserves nothing but punishment. He is therefore tender of the returning prodigal; he goes out to meet him, he embraces him with joy, and, as he finds him thoroughly sensible and ashamed of his past folly, he encourages him to perseverance, quickens and invigorates his resolutions, infuses pleasing hope, by opening unto him the riches of the goodness and mercy of God.

Ver. 6. *Dishonour not a man in his old age, for even some of us wax old.*] Coverdale's version seems preferable, *for we wax old also;* i. e. shall come, if we live, to the same state, and may as reasonably expect the like scorn ourselves, when the infirmities which are inseparable from that stage of life shall overtake us. And so the Arabic, *Ne derideas senem decrepitum; scito, nos, si vixerimus, grandævos ac senes futuros. Consider also,* as the Geneva version has it, *that they were as we which are not old;* were once in their prime and vigour, though now the objects of ridicule, and that we are hastening to the same period, to partake of what they suffer. Are not all men desirous of long life, and is it not looked upon as a particular favour of heaven when extended to any great term? How then can old age be dishonourable, which is not an evil in itself, and all covet to arrive at? If to be cut off in the midst of our days is a misfortune or punishment, to live to be full of days, especially if time has been well improved, must surely be a good and a blessing. According to Gellius, age was so honourable among the Romans, that neither birth nor fortune was more respected; that a kind of veneration was paid to persons advanced in years, as to so many gods and fathers: "Apud antiquissimos Romanorum, neque generi neque pecuniæ præstantior honos tribui, quam ætati solitus; majoresque natu a minoribus colebantur ad Deûm prope et parentum vicem, atque in omni loco, inque omni specie honoris, priores potioresque habiti." (Noct. Attic. lib. ii. cap. 15.)

Ver. 7. *Rejoice not over thy greatest enemy being dead.*] One should not rejoice at any accident or ill fortune that happens to an enemy, even in his life-time. Charity enjoins this, but humanity commands rather a concern for him when he is dead, and it is out of his power to injure us any more; it is both decent and just to spare his ashes, and not to insult his memory. Hatred is always odious, but should never be immortal, and pursue a man into the

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other world. Our author probably alludes to Prov. xxiv. 17. *Rejoice not when thy enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.* Job comforts himself, that *he had never rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated him, nor lifted up himself when evil found him,* οὐκ εἶπεν ἡ καρδία μου, Εὖγε, (xxxi. 29.) Many of the Greek copies omit τῷ ἐχθροτάτῳ σου, and read in general, *Rejoice not over a dead person;* and so the oriental versions, *Ne lætaris de morte ullius.* According to that of Homer,

Οὐχ ὅσιον φθιμένοισι ἔπ' ἀνδράσι εὐχετάασθαι. (Od. x.)

Remember that we die all.] *i. e.* Must all die; and so the oriental versions, *Memento nos omnes morituros.* As death is the common lot of all men, any of us may die as well as our enemy whom we triumph over; and we should be very unwilling, could we possibly foresee or know it, that others should rejoice at our death. And this I take to be the meaning of the additional clause in the Vulgate, *Et in gaudium nolumus venire.* The expression here is very particular and observable; it is not said that *we shall all die,* in the future, but that *we die all,* in the present tense, πάντες τελευτῶμεν, intimating probably the shortness of life, that death is always present with us, that in the midst of life we are in death, and may be said, without a metaphor, to die daily. St. Austin has not expressed this amiss, when he says, "Vita hæc non est vita dicenda, sed mors, in qua momentis singulis morimur, per varios mutabilitatis defectus diversis generibus mortium." (Meditat. cap. 21.)

Ver. 8. *Despise not the discourse of the wise, but acquaint thyself with their proverbs, for of them thou shalt learn instruction, and how to serve great men with ease.*] In all doubts and difficulties consult wise and experienced persons, and submit patiently to hear, and be informed by them. Nor let a vain conceit of your own abilities produce a contempt of their well-grounded maxims and aphorisms; for you may be assured they were not taken up and uttered at random, but were the result of a long and judicious observation, and will be found of the greatest use in life. Plato well remarks, that he that would be a learned or wise man must be, φιλομαθὴς, φιλήκοος, ζητητικὸς, *willing to learn, attentive to others, and of an inquisitive disposition.* (De Rep.) And for these qualities he highly commends Socrates, in Theætet. This advice is repeated in many parts of this book. As to the skill here recommended, of knowing how to please great men, and acting in their service with credit and approbation, which Horace says is no mean accomplishment, (Epist. lib. i.) nobody is so proper to advise how to behave in this respect, and to deliver maxims of just conduct, as a person long used to courts; a nice discernment of what passes there, joined to the great experience which he has had in the world, must give him in this respect a knowledge which is not to be fetched from books, nor acquired in the schools. The court is, as it were, a new world, to those especially who know little of it, and have seen it only at a distance; and therefore the direction and countenance of those who have conversed long in it, and who have the art of pleasing, and recommending themselves to the great, must be of more service than the most refined speculations, or any rules of general conduct laid down by others.

Ver. 10. *Kindle not the coals of a sinner, lest thou be burnt with the flame of his fire.*] There is the like metaphor upon the same occasion, xxviii. 11. The Vulgate renders, *Non incendas carbones peccatorum,* and then adds, by way of explanation, *arguens eos,* confining the sense to the seasonable reproof of a sinner. For though brotherly reproof is a most necessary duty, yet much prudence and caution must be used in giving it. The most favourable opportunities must be watched, when our reproof is likely to have the most weight; we must do it with temper, and take care not to inflame the party reproved by any indiscretion, which will serve only to draw on ourselves his abuse or resentment, without answering the end proposed. Sometimes reproof is altogether useless, as when a person is incorrigible, and upon good grounds we foresee that it will be to no purpose, or that it may provoke him to fresh offences. In such a case we may spare ourselves both the pains and hazard; it is only casting pearls before swine, who in requital will turn again and rend us. God approves of zeal in his service, but it must be regulated by prudence, and the best things cease to be so when they are done out of season. St. Jerome very wisely remarks, that neither king Hezekiah, nor his people, gave any answer or reproof to the repeated blasphemies of Rabsaces, for fear of provoking him, and giving him a fresh occasion to utter more and greater: "Ideo jusserat blasphemanti Assyrio non responderi, ne eum ad majores blasphemias provocarent." (Com. in loc.) For the same reason it is neither adviseable, nor always safe, to reprove a person almost in the very instant of sinning, in the hurry of his passion and folly, when he cannot attend to cool reflection or friendly admonition, nor to do it in too plain and direct terms. When Nathan was sent to reprove David for his crime with Bath-sheba, he took a most prudent method to prevent that prince's resentment, which a sudden and direct charge might have occasioned. He first artfully proposes a parable to him, and brings him, by that stratagem, to condemn his own guilt in the person of another, before he says to him explicitly, *Thou art the man.* And when by this artifice he had properly prepared him, he then enlarges upon the heinousness of his offence, and imparts to him his message from the Lord. The oriental versions understand the words of keeping company with sinners, and suffering by their evil communication, as if the sense was nearly the same with Prov. vi. 27. 29. *Can a man take fire in his bosom, and not be burnt? so he that goeth in unto wicked persons shall not be innocent.*

Ver. 11. *Rise not up in anger at the presence of an injurious person, lest he lie in wait to entrap thee in thy words.*] This is not accurately translated; the words *in anger* are added by the translators, and seem to perplex the sense. The meaning is, Oppose not to his face, nor rise up to speak to or before a perverse, captious, quarrelsome man, lest, through some artifice or evil design, he entrap thee in thy words. Instead of regarding and profiting by your advice or discourse, he will watch with an insidious intent all you say, will strive to entangle you by your talk, and draw some consequences from it, to your hurt and disadvantage. Of this stamp were the scribes and pharisees, whose end in urging the blessed Jesus to speak of many things, was *to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.* (Luke xi. 53, 54.) Grotius and Calmet from the term ἐξαναστῇς, understand it of rising up to speak in form in a popular assembly or senate; that one should

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be cautious not to engage with or reply to a warm speaker, one of great interest and power, but impatient of contradiction, for fear of drawing on us his resentment, either by personal reflections, or exhibiting some charge against us: or the sense may be, Contend not with a scurrilous abusive man, ὑβριστὴς; andso the Tigurine version, *Ne inveharis in contumeliosum;* for he will take occasion from your words to be mischievous and troublesome. Some few copies have ἵνα μὴ ἐγκαθίσῃ ὡς ἔνεδρον τῷ σώματί σου, instead of τῷ στόματί σου, which is the common reading, and followed in our version. And then the sense will be, *Beware of such a scurrilous person, lest he sit upon thy skirts.*

Ver. 12. *Lend not unto him that is mightier than thyself, for if thou lendest him, count it but lost.*] Ὡς ἀπολωλεκὼς γίνου, which is well rendered by Junius, *Perinde esto quasi perdideris;* nor will you only be in danger of losing your debt, but drawing on you a new and powerful enemy. *Les Grands* (says Calmet) *se tiennent choquez, lorsque l'on repete ce qu'ils doivent.* Great men often take it in their head to be affronted, when they are asked for what they owe; and if you are necessitated to attempt to recover your own by a course of law, it is often in their power to disappoint their creditors in their attempt, through their interest, or by insisting on their privilege. Lend not therefore more than what thou canst afford or art willing to lose, for thou hast but little prospect of receiving thine own again with usury.

Ver. 13. *Be not surety above thy power, for if thou be surety, take care to pay it.*] Arabic, *Persuasum tibi sit quod sis soluturus,* Expect and be persuaded that it will fall to your share to pay it. Look upon yourself as the debtor, and consider how most effectually to disengage yourself. Use all diligence and application to make the party principally concerned discharge his own debt; quicken his indolence, lest, at the time appointed, he should not be ready or able to make the payment, for you may be assured, the creditors will come upon his security, if he himself neglects to satisfy them. Solomon gives the like advice in many parts of the book of Proverbs, vi. 1. xi. 15. 17, 18. xx. 16. xxii. 26, 27. The last comes nearest this place, and expresses in the strongest manner the danger of such an engagement, *Be not thou one of them that strike hands, nor of them that are sureties for debts; if thou hast nothing to pay, they will take thy very bed from under thee.* The ancient sages have always looked upon this as a necessary piece of advice to be pursued in life, and are unanimous in their cautions on this head. Ἐγγύη, πάρα δ' Ἄτη, was a maxim of such consequence, as to be thought worthy to be wrote on the temple of Delphi. To be bound at all, is an instance of weakness; but to be bound above one's power, or for one that is mightier than thyself, *potentiori,* as the oriental versions here have it, is the very height of folly.

Ver. 14. *Go not to law with a judge, for they will judge for him according to his honour.*] The Vulgate renders, *Non judices contra judicem, quoniam secundum quod rectum est judicat;* i. e. Do not rejudge a cause which the judge has determined, or presume to condemn his sentence and decree; his great experience in judicial matters should make private persons, who are not so proper judges of the merits of a cause, and are too apt to be partial in their own or friend's favour, acquiesce in the verdict given, and modestly to presume that the judge had weighty reasons for the decision which he made. But the sense of our version comes nearer the Greek, μὴ δικάζου κατὰ κριτοῦ, κατὰ γὰρ τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ κρινοῦσιν αὐτῷ, i. e. *Do not contend at law, or have any suit with a judge;* for, according to Calmet, *Les autres juges soutiendront leurs collegues, ou leurs confreres, et lui donneront gain de cause, ou confirmeront son jugement;* the other judges will support and countenance their colleague and brother, and give the cause for him, or confirm his decree; they will judge and determine, κατὰ τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, either according to his dignity, or, as the margin has it, according to the opinion which he has given.

Ver. 19. *Open not thy heart to every man, lest he requite thee with a shrewd turn.*] *i. e.* We should be cautious and sparing in our intimacies, and of disclosing our affairs to every accidental acquaintance, out of prudence, and tenderness to our own interest. Our charity indeed should be universal, and extend to all mankind; but it is by no means convenient our friendship and familiarity should do so likewise. We often find that a person very little known to us, recommended to us perhaps by some accident, and whom, upon too slender an acquaintance, we have unwarily unbosomed ourselves to, when better known, has lost the good opinion we had of him before, and betrayed the confidence we reposed in him, to our great prejudice. The Vulgate renders, *Ne forte inferat tibi gratiam falsam, et convicietur tibi.* Not unlike that of Solomon, Prov. xxv. 9, 10. according to the Vulgate, *Secretum extraneo non reveles, ne forte insultet tibi cum audierit, et exprobrare non cesset;* i. e. Do not suffer yourself to be repaid with ingratitude and ill usage, by the treacherous person you have opened your heart to, and entrusted with your secrets. Sacred story informs us how dear it cost Samson for discovering to the faithless Delilah the secret of his strength: and profane gives us this remarkable instance of Pompey's great fidelity and secrecy, "That being sent ambassador by the senate, he unfortunately fell into the hands of king Gentius. That prince tried to get from him the secret of his embassy; but Pompey, instead of answering, put his finger into the flame of a candle, and let it burn there without crying out. The action struck the king, and made him instantly conclude, that nothing could force from such a man a secret which regarded his country." (Valer. Max. lib. iii. cap. 3.)

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *BE not jealous over the wife of thy bosom, and teach her not an evil lesson against thyself.*] *Wife of one's bosom,* is a familiar expression among the Hebrews. (Deut. xiii. 6. xxviii. 54. Mic. vii. 5.) There are some certain affairs wherein too much circumspection is dangerous; one often suggests and teaches an evil, by an ill-judged endeavour to prevent it: "Quidam fallere docuerunt, dum timent falli, et illius peccati suspicando occasionem præbuerunt." Distrust often puts persons upon wicked actions, which they would never otherwise have thought of. Of this sort is the unjust suspicion of a husband, which has often raised an unclean spirit in the wife, out of mere spite and revenge, to resolve to give him reason for his suspicions, and to enjoy the pleasure of the crime, since

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she must undergo the ignominy. A woman of honour is affronted when she is but suspected of being capable of falsehood, and if she is one of spirit, will not fail to resent it, and often in the very manner which the jealous person so much dreaded. A good woman, says a polite writer, wants no bars, and a bad one will not be confined by them; watching only serves to make her the more abandoned. Theophrastus, as I find him quoted by St. Jerome, (lib i. cont. Jovin.) has the like remark; "Quid prodest etiam diligens custodia, cum uxor servari impudica non potest, pudica non debeat, infidæ enim custos castitatis est necessitas." Such outward restraints rather provoke than do good. A generous confidence in the honour and conduct of the wife, and faithfulness and constancy on the part of the husband, are the best and most lasting security.

Ver. 2. *Give not thy soul unto a woman to set her foot upon thy substance.*] Ἐπιβῆναι αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὴν ἰσχύν σου· i. e. *Give not thyself up into the power of a woman, lest she get the ascendant over thee, and become imperious.* The Vulgate has, "Non des mulieri potestatem animæ tuæ, ne ingrediatur in virtutem tuam, et confundaris;" i. e. *Do not so doat on a woman, as to part with thy just authority, lest she enter upon thy privilege, and assume that power that belongs to thee, and thou be ashamed.* Cato observes of the sex, "Extemplo simul ut pares esse cœperint, superiores erunt:" (Liv. lib. xxxiv.) and laments, that when, in all other places, husbands had the rule and authority over their wives; at Rome, the mistress of the world, wives ruled their husbands, "Omnes homines uxoribus dominantur, nos omnibus hominibus, nobis uxores." But more seems meant here, than merely submitting to a woman, or parting with that original prerogative which God gave mankind over the sex, Gen. iii. 16. There is this farther and better meaning,—Give not thyself up to strange women to follow thy lust, which will destroy thy strength, impair thy understanding, blast thy reputation, and exhaust thy substance, or treasure; for so ἰσχὺς is frequently taken in this book. The sense is the same in this last acceptation with Prov. xxxi. 3. Luke xv. 30. The artifices of women of this stamp and character, and the mischievous consequences of keeping such loose company, are well described, Prov. vii. 10. xxiii. 27.

Ver. 4. *Use not much the company of a woman that is a singer, lest thou be taken with her attempts.*] Μετὰ ψαλλούσης μὴ ἐνδελέχιζε. Thus Ovid:—

"Pro facie multis vox sua læna fuit."

The margin has, *With one that playeth upon instruments;* the Vulgate, with St. Cyprian, renders, *Cum saltatrice ne assiduus sis,* following a copy which read, μετὰ ἀλλούσης, which probably may be the better reading; for Calmet observes, that the eastern dances were less modest than the modern, less decency observed, and more freedoms taken. Herodias's dancing shews the power of that entertainment over an enamoured mind, and her bloody request the abuse of that power. The advice here given is, to avoid all occasions, opportunities, and temptations to impurity, not to indulge a wanton eye, or an itching ear, or run into danger by conversing with pleasing, but yet ensnaring objects.

Ver. 5. *Gaze not on a maid.*] Παρθένον μὴ καταμάνθανε. The verb means, to look with attention and earnestness, with a sort of wonder and amaze. (See Gen. xxiv. 21. Eccl. xxv. 21. xxxviii. 28. xli. 21. Susan. xxxii. Matt. vi. 28.) It expresses in one word what the apocryphal Esdras describes by a long periphrasis, 1 Esdr. iv. 19. Messieurs of Port-Royal observe, that this writer lays great stress upon a prudent reservedness towards women, as he enjoins it in so many particulars, and so remarkably diversifies his discourse about it:—"Not to sit, eat, or look upon them, but according to the strictest rules of decency, even though they may be as fair in character, as in person; as such interviews are always attended with danger, open or secret. The world, indeed, esteems gazing, as both innocent and inoffensive, and that it is a faulty preciseness to confine modesty so strictly; but experience confirms the necessity of the advice, and that the remedy is no other, or greater, than what the evil requires. We are not more holy than David was, and have not received more grace from heaven, that we should have that command over us which he wanted. And what was it that ruined him, but the view of a beautiful woman, who yet was at a great distance from him? Let us be afraid of a stumbling-block, which the saints would not have fallen by, if they had been as watchful as they ought, and let their fall be a warning to others that are more weak. There is not a greater delusion, than for men to imagine that they can live in the midst of flames, and not be burnt; such a persuasion is a sign, that they think the danger trifling, but it is impossible to avoid the greater irregularities, but by guarding against the less, which are the avenues and inlets to them. Discretion is as it were the barrier of chastity; these two virtues support each other, and he that neglects one cannot long keep the other." (Com. in loc.)

Lest thou fall by those things which are precious in her.] Ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτιμίοις αὐτῆς· *i. e.* Lest you are involved in her punishment, according to some expositors; or, as St. Austin strongly expresses it, *Ne, cum pereunte deceptrice, et ipse perire cogaris.* (Meditat. cap. 21.) The oriental versions understand it of falling into fornication, and paying the legal penalty. (Deut. xxii. 29.) Grotius thinks ψιμυθίοις to be the true reading; *i. e.* Gaze not curiously upon her, lest thou be ensnared by the fineness of her complexion. But I would rather read, μή ποτε σκανδαλισθῇς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτῆς, according to Drusius's copy; *i. e.* Lest thou fall by lusting after her; and then the sense will exactly correspond with the advice of Solomon, Prov. vi. 25. What necessity there is of guarding the eye, the unhappy examples of persons who have fallen through the lust of it sufficiently evince. Had the Jews forbore to look on the daughters of Midian, they had prevented the plague which consumed the chosen men in Israel; and, not to mention David, had the elders, instead of admiring the beauty of Susanna, looked another way, they had prevented their ignominious execution.

Ver. 6. *Give not thy soul unto harlots, that thou lose not thine inheritance.*] The mischief arising from these is prettily couched under the fable of the sirens, who are therefore by the poets feigned to occasion shipwreck to the mariners; because, being infamous and loose prostitutes, by their artifices they drew in people, and brought them to poverty. (Serv. on Æn. v.) The Vulgate renders, *Ne perdas te, et hæreditatem tuam,* which includes that of Solomon, Prov. vii. 22, 23, where he describes, in the

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most moving manner, the sad state of one led astray by them. The advice is very seasonable in the following verse, not to frequent suspected places, or wander about in quest of women of such infamous character; and is agreeable also to that of the wise man, *Let thine eyes look right on, and thine eyelids straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, so shall all thy ways be ordered aright.* (Prov. iv. 25, 26.) It was a wise appointment of some of the ancients, to order the temple of Venus to be built out of the city, where temptations of this sort are more frequent and inviting, that no breach of decency, or offence to modesty, might be observed by the younger sort. (Strad. Prolus. p. 153.)

Ver. 8. *Turn away thine eye from a beautiful woman; for many have been deceived by the beauty of a woman; for herewith love is kindled as a fire.*] One cannot conceive any thing stronger to express the power of beauty, than what is mentioned concerning Holofernes's passion for Judith, *That her beauty took his mind prisoner,* (xvi. 9.) and his fate shews the danger of being a slave to it. In the contest at Darius's feast, the advocate for beauty finely urges, πολλοὶ ἀπενοήθησαν ταῖς ἰδίαις διανοίαις διὰ τὰς γυναῖκας, καὶ δοῦλοι ἐγένοντο δι' αὐτάς· πολλοὶ ἀπώλοντο καὶ ἐσφάλησαν, καὶ ἡμάρτοσαν δι' αὐτάς. (1 Esdr. iv. 26, 27.) Alexander the Great was sensible of its power, when he denied himself the pleasure of gazing upon Darius's daughters, his pretty prisoners; alleging, with a resolution agreeable to his character, That he who had conquered so many men should not suffer himself to be overcome and captivated by women, *Non committam ut cum viros vicerim, a mulieribus vincar.* Musæus gives much the same account of the original of love, with our author:

Κάλλος γὰρ περίπυστον ἀμωμήτοιο γυναικὸς
Ὀξύτερον μερόπεσσι πέλει πτερόεντος ὀϊστοῦ.
Ὀφθαλμὸς δ' ὁδός ἐστιν· ἀπ' ὀφθαλμοῖο βολάων
Ἕλκος ὀλισθαίνει, καὶ ἐπὶ φρένας ἀνδρὸς ὀδεύει.
(Her. et Lean. ver. 93.)

The Vulgate understands this passage of our author of a woman finely dressed, and set off with all the ornaments that art and fancy can bestow, *Averte faciem tuam a muliere compta.* The primitive fathers and ancient sages are on no subject more copious than in condemning a gaudy excess of apparel, or superfluous ornaments lavished upon the person. They looked upon all affectation of this sort, not only as an instance of vanity and a low taste, but as a sign of a loose turn of mind. St. Cyprian accordingly remarks, "Ornamentorum ac vestium insignia, et lenocinia fucorum, non nisi prostitutis et impudicis fœminis congruunt, et nullarum fere pretiosior cultus est, quam quarum pudor vilis est." (De Hab. Virg.)

Ver. 9. *Nor sit down with her in thine arms.*] This sentence is wholly omitted in many Greek copies, particularly the Vatican, and is not countenanced by any of the ancient versions. Such editions as retain it, read very differently. Our translators follow the Complut. which has, μὴ κατακλιθῇς ἐπ' ἀγκαλῶν μετ' αὐτῆς, and is but imperfectly rendered by them; it means rather to lie in her embraces, *in amplexibus alienæ uxoris dormire,* according to Grotius. And thus the Tigurine version, *Nec inter ulnas ejus recumbas;* and Junius is to the same effect. Theocritus has, ἐπ' ἀγκοίνῃσιν ἐκλίνθη, in an impure sense. But the true reading seems to be, μὴ κατακλιθῇς ἐπ' ἀγκῶνα μετ' αὐτῆς· *Lie not upon the same couch or bed with her at meals;* alluding probably to the ancient posture at entertainments. Clem. Alex. whose authority Dr. Grabe follows, reads in this manner, and explains it manifestly to this sense; (Pædag. lib. ii. cap. 7.) and thus the Vulgate also renders, *Nec accumbas cum ea super cubitum.* It may be proper here to inquire, in what the indecency consisted, in sitting thus at table with a married woman. Calmet observes, that at the ancient entertainments the husband sat at the head of the table, and the wife beneath him in such a manner, that her head touched or rested upon his bosom; so that with respect to any other man placed there, her situation would be too close and familiar. Secondly, it was reckoned a sort of indecency for a man of great gravity to sit at table near a woman that was not his spouse. Thirdly, it was esteemed an instance of forwardness in a married woman, to be present at an entertainment with strangers of the other sex, her husband not being present.

Spend not thy money with her at the wine.] The Vulgate seems to understand this of something more than mere treating: *Non alterceris cum illa in vino,* is a prohibition not to challenge or urge a woman to drink; a contest which it is beneath a man to offer to engage in, and unseemly in a woman to accept. It is improper also, as drinking is an incentive to lust; revelling and wantonness going so often together, that the names are almost synonymous. See Prov. xxiii. 21. where μέθυσος, καὶ πορνόκοπος are joined together by the LXX.

Lest thine heart incline unto her; and so, through thy desire, thou fall into destruction.] Τῷ πνεύματί σου· *i. e.* Through thy inordinate desire or lust, thou be brought into misery and ruin. This is a Hebraism; that language expressing any affection of the mind by *ruach.* Clem. Alex. reads, τῷ αἵματί σου, (Pæd. lib. ii. cap. 7.) to which agrees the Vulgate, *Ne sanguine tuo labaris in perditionem;* and the Syriac is more express, *Ne sanguine noxio ruas in infernum;* which may either mean the loss of life in some amorous or drunken quarrel, or the punishment of death by the law for the sin of adultery; (Lev. xx. 10.) or, that they shall utterly perish in their own corruption, and receive hereafter the reward of their unrighteousness; (2 Pet. ii. 12, 13.) or, lastly, may not the words be understood in some such impure sense as that of Juvenal?—"Accipiat sane meretricem sanguinis." (Sat. i.)

Ver. 10. *Forsake not an old friend, for the new is not comparable to him: a new friend is as new wine; when it is old, thou shalt drink it with pleasure.*] Friendship, the more ancient it is, the more valuable it is, as wine is meliorated and improved by a proper age. Aristotle makes use of the same comparison upon the subject of friendship; comparing new and old friends to wine of different ages: "A new friend (says he) is at first like new wine, sweet, but withal unpleasant; but when it has age, it mellows, and is in its perfection." Which is the common opinion of mankind, and represented as such, Luke v. 39. *No man having drunk old wine straightway desires new; for he says, The old is better.* Cicero determines the point in his book Of Friendship, pursuing the same metaphor; "Existit hoc loco quædam quæstio subdifficilis, num aliquando amici novi, digni amicitia, veteribus sint anteponendi, ut equis vetulis teneros anteponere solemus: indigna

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homine dubitatio; non enim amicitiarum debent esse, sicut aliarum rerum satietates. Veterrimæ quæque, ut ea vina, quæ vetustatem ferunt, debent esse suavissimæ." (See Plut. Sympos. lib. iii.)

Ver. 11. *Envy not the glory of a sinner; for thou knowest not what shall be his end.*] The Vulgate renders, *Non zeles gloriam, et opes peccatoris; i.e.* Envy not his outward pomp and seeming good fortune; for the state of a wicked man is rather to be pitied than envied; though the particular way and manner in which he shall be destroyed, may be a secret to thee, and thou knowest not what, or how soon his overthrow shall be; yet be assured, that misfortunes and ruin attend him. It is a certain truth, confirmed by the repeated voice of Scripture, that sinners shall come to a fearful end. The sentiments of the Psalmist upon the like subject agree exactly with this writer, *Fret not thyself because of the ungodly, neither be thou envious against the evil-doers; for they shall soon be cut down as the grass, and withered as the green herb.* (Psal. xxxvii. 1, 2.) The Port-Royal comment has a fine reflection on this place: "Man is too weak to guard against that which flatters his vanity: he is always fond of glory and greatness himself, and admires and envies it in others; but it is faith alone which discovers the nothingness of all that appears great below, and grace which enables him to despise and resist the temptation. It is for this reason that the wise man so often reminds us not to suffer ourselves to be dazzled with the power or glory of sinners, nor to envy their outward flourishing condition; but to assure ourselves, that their elevation portends their ruin, as it occasions a forgetfulness of God and his judgments, and serves only to draw down his wrath more heavily."

Ver. 12. *Delight not in the thing that the ungodly have pleasure in.*] Μὴ εὐδοκήσῃς εὐδοκίαις ἀσεβῶν. The Vulgate renders, *Non placeat tibi injuria injustorum,* following a copy, probably, which read, μὴ εὐδοκήσῃς ἀδικίαις ἀσεβῶν. After the advice in the former verse not to envy the glory of sinners, it follows very properly, not to delight in their customs or pleasures, as we are too easily induced to approve of the ways, and imitate the conduct of such, whose condition we admire, and whose greatness we envy. Besides the common exposition of the words, which at first offers itself, of not approving or joining in the amusements, follies, and vices, of the abandoned and profligate, the sense may be,—Do not value or pride yourself in having the approbation or good word of sinners, whose praise is an injury, and their approbation a disgrace. And thus the Port-Royal comment, *Ne vous rejoüissez point d'avoir l'approbation des mechans.*

But remember that they will not go unpunished to their graves.] Μνήσθητι ὅτι ἕως ᾅδου οὐ μὴ δικαιωθῶσι. Drusius understands the words as our translators do, but the sense of them literally translated may either be, That they shall not be just, or esteemed such to their death; and however they may have flattered themselves, or received the false praises of others, men shall at length change their opinion of them, and be convinced of their mistake in so esteeming them, and even themselves shall find that of the wise man to be true, *That there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* (Prov. xiv. 12.) And this seems to be the meaning of the Geneva version, *Remember they shall not be found just unto their grave;* or, they shall never be justified, shall always continue wicked, and shall never repent so truly and effectually, as to be converted and accepted, which is Coverdale's sense: or, lastly, that they shall be so far from being justified or acquitted, that misfortunes shall overtake them in this life, and after death God will punish them with larger vials of his wrath. See note on xviii. 22. where the senses of δικαιοῦσθαι are enumerated more particularly.

Ver. 13. *Keep thee far from the man that hath power to kill, so shalt thou not doubt the fear of death.*] The advice here is to avoid the court of princes, especially of tyrants, who often abuse their power, and sport with the lives of their subjects. Their tempers are variable and uncertain, and to be in disgrace with them, is both frequent and dangerous: to keep at a distance therefore is most prudent, so shalt thou be safe, and out of any apprehension of death from them. Our version is a literal translation of the Greek, οὐ μὴ ὑποπτεύσῃς φόβον θανάτου, and thereby obscure; nor is the Vulgate much clearer, *Et non suspicaberis timorem mortis.* The meaning is, that by keeping altogether away from the presence of such imperious and tyrannical persons, as have it in their power, and may have it in their inclination, to ruin us, or by being so wise and circumspect in our conduct, if we do approach them, as to give no offence, that may expose us to their censure and displeasure; we shall not only be out of the reach, but out of the fear of danger, and need have no doubt or suspicion of any. Coverdale's version is preferable here, *So needest thou not to be afraid of death;* which is agreeable to the oriental ones, *Procul absiste ab eo, qui potestatem habet necis, et terrores mortis ne reformides.* The philosopher seems happy in his comparison, who resembled the court to a fire, which at a distance gives a comfortable and refreshing heat, but scorches when you come too near. The images of walking in the midst of snares, and upon the battlements of a tower, are not less lively and expressive. The Vulgate changes the last simile, and renders, from what authority I know not, *Super dolentium arma ambulabis,* following a copy which probably had, ἐπὶ ἀλγούντων πολεμικὰ περιπατεῖς. The sense of which I presume is, Thou shalt walk amidst the arms of enraged enemies, disposed to give no quarter to those that fall into their hands.

Ver. 14. *As near as thou canst, guess at thy neighbours.*] Our translation seems here not full enough; for mere guessing is not a sufficient foundation of security in the choice of friends. The original word στόχασαι expresses a great deal more. It is a metaphor taken from shooting, and the whole sentence, κατὰ τὴν ἰσχύν σου στόχασαι, means, to take good aim, to look steadfastly upon the mark, and to apply all one's strength and dexterity to hit it; and the direction couched under it is, that, to form a right judgment of our neighbour, we must make all necessary inquiry concerning him, and try him in all possible instances; we must consider his general character, and particular qualifications, whether in all respects, such as temper, faithfulness, honour, discretion, virtue, &c. he is a proper person to make a friend or confidant of, and one whom we are satisfied we can safely trust and communicate our most secret affairs to, and be assisted in them by his wisdom and experience.

Ver. 16. *And let just men eat and drink with thee.*] This advice somewhat resembles that of our Saviour, Luke xiv. 12. not to call our rich neighbours to our feast, such

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as are recommended to us merely by their state and fortune, but in the choice of our acquaintance, and the disposal of our good things, to have regard chiefly to merit, and especially men's moral qualifications. To prefer a man of strict sobriety, to an intemperate and noisy companion; and one of piety and virtue, to an abandoned and profligate rake. And we have the reason in the former verse for the preference here given, because when thy table is furnished with deserving and edifying guests, *thy talk will be with the wise, and all thy communication in the law of the Most High;* and indeed the Vulgate so transposes the verses. We may also apply this direction to charity in particular, which is very much recommended, and rises in its value by the prudent choice of the most worthy objects. Among such as we intend to do acts of kindness and benevolence to, we should prefer those whom we know to be of the number of the faithful; and among these, such as have more eminently distinguished themselves, and merely because they have so. Thus Tobit, when he saw abundance of meat prepared, said to his son, *Go and bring what poor man soever thou shalt find out of our brethren, who is mindful of the Lord.* (ii. 1, 2.) And our Saviour promises a reward to them that receive a prophet, or a just man, or shall give only a cup of cold water to a disciple of his, as such. When Elijah was sustained by the hospitable widow, the merit of her piety chiefly consisted in this, that she knew she was feeding a man of God, and it was the very motive of her doing it; "Fructu pascitur Elias a vidua, sciente, quod hominem Dei pasceret, et propter hoc pasceret." (Aug. Confess. lib. xiii. cap. 26.)

Ver. 17. *For the hand of the artificer the work shall be commended, and the wise ruler of the people for his speech.*] Every business and occupation has its marks and characters by which it is distinguished, and in which each artist seeks to excel: as sculpture, by representing nature in relievo; painting, by imitating it in colours; statuary, by a bold expression of life, and a familiar and agreeable attitude; that which should distinguish a prince, is wisdom in his discourse, prudence in his resolves, and justice in his laws and administrations. Nothing should come from his mouth, but should have some resemblance of an oracle; according to that of Solomon, *A divine sentence is in the lips of the king,* μαντεῖον ἐπὶ χείλεσι βασιλέως, *and his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.* (Prov. xvi. 10.) Jansenius is of opinion, that a new chapter begins here; and indeed it appears, that this is not mere conjecture, for some copies do begin the tenth chapter at this verse.

Ver. 18. *A man of an ill tongue is dangerous in his city, and he that is rash in his talk shall be hated.*] *i. e.* The slanderer or spreader of false and evil reports, is a terror to the neighbourhood where he lives, and very justly too, for by sowing discord and jealousy, and fomenting differences, he sets all around him at variance. Calmet applies ἀνὴρ γλωσσώδης to the satirist, who spares nobody, provided he can shew his witty talent, or make himself merry, at the expense of others. Nobody cares to lie under the lash of his satires, and even those who commend him most, are afraid of him. Clemens Alex. instead of ἐν πόλει αὐτοῦ, which is the common reading, has ἀνὴρ γλωσσώδης φοβερὸς ἐν ἀπωλείᾳ αὐτοῦ· (Pædag. lib. ii. cap. 7.) which is a good comment upon the latter part of the verse; *i. e.* the talkative, abusive person often brings upon himself not only hatred and disgrace, but punishment likewise, and sometimes such a punishment as is terrible to himself and the beholders; which he illustrates by the correction which Thersites underwent for his insolent way of talking.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *A WISE judge will instruct his people, and the government of a prudent man is well ordered.*] Will be well ordered, ἡγεμονία συνετοῦ τεταγμένη ἔσται. This isthe reading in all the editions. The Vulgate renders, *Principatus sensati stabilis erit,* from a copy probably which had στερεγμένη, to which agrees the Syriac, *Princeps sapiens stabiliet civitatem suam.* Calmet follows one which read, τεταμένη ἔσται, *Le goverment de l'homme sensé sera etendue, son regne sera long et heureux; i. e.* God shall bless the reign of a prudent prince, and make it of long continuance, and vast extent. According to that of Solomon, Prov. xxix. 14. *The king that faithfully judgeth, his throne shall be established for ever.*

Ver. 2. *As the judge of the people is himself, so are his officers, and what manner of man the ruler of the city is, such are all they that dwell therein.* Ver. 3. *An unwise king destroyeth his people, but through the prudence of them which are in authority, the city shall be inhabited.*] Good kings, such as Josiah, Hezekiah, David, &c. who have themselves a true sense of religion, and a regard for the honour of God, will be zealous in promoting the right worship of him, and encouraging it in others; but such an evil one as Jeroboam, who introduces wrong modes of worship, will occasion the Lord's people to transgress in the like instances of idolatry. We may make the like observation with respect to the Roman emperors, whether we instance in Augustus, Trajan, or Vespasian, the delight and guardians of their people; or in those monsters, Caligula, Nero, and Heliogabalus, the pests and scourges of them. Cicero has the like reflection with our author: "Ut cupiditatibus principum et vitiis infici solet tota civitas, sic emendari et corrigi continentia," &c. Through the vices of princes the whole city commonly is infected; as, on the contrary, by their goodness and regularity, it is amended and improved: so that the vices of princes are not so much to be lamented, though this is no small evil, as that their subjects are drawn thereby to an imitation of them. One may observe in the history of all times, that such as the rulers were, such by degrees was the city itself; and every change of manners in the prince, produces the same in the conduct of the people. And then he beautifully observes, "Quo perniciosiùs de republica merentur vitiosi principes, quòd non solum vitia concipiunt ipsi, sed ea infundunt in civitatem, plusque exemplo, quam peccato, nocent." (De Leg. lib. iii.) St. Chrysostom applies what is here said of rulers in general, to such as are vested with spiritual authority. To shew how their failings influence others, he illustrates the case by comparing their miscarriages with injuries happening to the natural body. "If a hand, or foot, or any common member, is hurt by some accident, the whole welfare of the body is not thereby affected, nor its general uso obstructed; but if through somo casualty the eyes are blinded, or the head dangerously wounded, the whole body suffers in the calamity of so principal a part, and wants its necessary guide and direction." (Eclog. de Peccat. et Confess.)

Ver. 4. *The power of the earth is in the hand of the Lord,*

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and in due time he will set over it one that is profitable.] God, as he is the sovereign Lord of the world, disposes of the kingdoms of the earth according to his pleasure; he pulleth down one, and setteth up another, (Psal. lxxv. 7. Dan. ii. 21.) as shall best suit with the designs of his providence. He rejected Saul from being king over Israel, for not executing his commandments, and promoted David to the kingdom, though chosen out of the people, as the fittest, and most profitable. And thus God in due time raised up Cyrus, who was prophesied of above a hundred years before his birth, to be a special instrument of his providence in restoring the Jews from their captivity, and to fulfil all his will; or, according to some learned men, the Messiah in particular may be here meant, the expectation of whom was matter of consolation to the Israelites in all their dispersions and calamities: for that there was an expectation of some great blessing or deliverance still to come, in the days of this writer, appears from many passages in this book; and the faith and hope of such righteous ones among the Israelites, as waited for the salvation of God, seems well expressed in these words. (See Bishop Sherlock on Prophecy, disc. 6.)

Ver. 5. *And upon the person of the scribe shall he lay his honour.*] The title of scribe belongs not merely to a copier of the law, but to those likewise who were learned in explaining it, and answering the difficulties arising concerning the sense of it. Γραμματεὺς, here used, signifies, in general, a wise and learned man, and so it is rendered, xxxviii. 24. The Jews had their Σοφοὶ, Γραμματεῖς, and Συζητηταί. Σοφοὶ were wise moralists in general; Γραμματεῖς were those that were skilled in the knowledge of the law, and interpreted it to the people, according to the literal sense; Συζητηταὶ were mystical and allegorical interpreters of Scripture. We meet with them all together, 1 Cor. i. 20. The sense, according to Calmet, is, That God puts upon the person or face of the wise man part of the glory with which he is encompassed, a portion of that light which shone upon the face of Moses; (Exod. xxxiv. 33.) or, that God gives to the wise all the light which they have occasion for, to fulfil their duty; that it is he which crowns their skill, and gives success and honour to them; that the dignity which a learned man through his merit arrives at, is from the Lord, who bestowed the wisdom, and blessed the endeavours, by which he became so eminent and useful; or if, by scribes, we understand magistrates or public officers of state, whom we read of often under the kings of Judah, both in times of war and peace; the meaning then is, that God has made persons of such a public character, in some sort the representatives of his power upon earth; that they are in this respect the images of God, and, in proportion to their dignity, claim reverence and honour. The oriental versions understand the place in a moral sense, "Dabit colentibus se gloriam suam," i. e. *Those who honour God, he will honour.* The Port-Royal comment applies it to the clergy, to whom, when God calls them to the important charge of the pastoral office, he gives the spirit of wisdom and understanding at their desire, and the other requisites to discharge so weighty a trust. Or, lastly, if we understand it of the high-priest in particular, it may refer to the majesty of God upon the diadem of his head. (Wisd. xviii. 24.)

Ver. 6. *Bear not hatred to thy neighbour for every wrong, and do nothing at all by injurious practices.*] The advice is like that of Pythagoras, in his Golden Verses,

Μήδ' ἔχθαιρε φίλον σὸν ἁμαρτάδος εἵνεκα μικρῆς.

The Vulgate renders, *Omnis injuriæ proximi ne memineris;* following a copy probably which had μιμνήσῃς instead of μηνιάσῃς. It seems to be a repetition and enforcement of Lev. xix. 18. and forbids the treasuring up in our minds revenge, for every private injury received, and meditating an opportunity of returning the like. Calmet observes, that the duty of forgiveness is expressed here almost in as clear and full a manner, as in the gospel itself. The best remedy against injuries received is to forget them: "Injuriarum remedium est oblivio." (Aug. epist. 54.) And Cicero records it to the honour of Cæsar, "Quod nihil oblivisci soleret, nisi injurias." (Orat. pro Ligar.) Or perhaps the true rendering and meaning may be, Express not ill-will to thy neighbour by any act of injustice, or by doing him any wrong, and act nothing in a proud and haughty way; which sense of the whole verse is greatly confirmed by the context, and the oriental versions.

Ver. 7. *Pride is hateful before God and man, and by both doth one commit iniquity.*] Καὶ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων πλημμελήσει ἄδικα. So Vat. Drusius, Hœschelius, and Grabe, contrary to the reading of the Alex. MS. Why he preferred this, or how he understood it, we should probably have known, had he lived to publish his notes. If, with Badwell and Drusius, we refer both to what goes before, the sense will be, that by pride and injustice (for no other vices are mentioned) one commits iniquity. Grotius by conjecture reads, καὶ εἰς ἀμφοτέρους πλημμελεῖ ἀδικία, *Injustice offends against both, viz.* God and man; or, which comes to the same, By injustice a man offends against both. This exposition is more agreeable to the context, and is confirmed by the oriental versions. Syriac, *Odio est apud Deum et homines superbia, et apud utrumque* (Noldius renders the particle לע which the Syriac here uses often by *coram*) *rapina et oppressio;* and the Arabic, *Execrandus est fastus apud Deum et homines, et apud utrumque violentia et tyrannis.* The Tigurine is to the same effect, *Utrique facinus injustum aversantur.* Calmet says, the sense may be, that injustice is beyond them both, *i. e.* more odious to God and man than either hatred or pride, and supposes the Hebrew originally so to have read.

Ver. 8. *Because of unrighteous dealings, injuries, and riches got by deceit, the kingdom is translated from one people to another.*] *i. e.* Because of injustice, and contumelious (or proud) behaviour, διὰ ἀδικίας καὶ ὕβρεις, and wealth, the foundation of both, a kingdom undergoes different changes, and is translated into the hands of different rulers. Our translators follow a copy, which read, χρήματα δόλια, but most editions, as the oriental versions likewise, have only χρήματα singly. The pride and luxury of a nation which enervate, public injuries which irritate, and riches which create envy, are temptations to their neighbours to invade such a dissolute people, and are no improbable causes of their weakness, and final overthrow. Besides the infinite power of God, who is the sovereign arbiter and disposer of kingdoms, and overturns them often for the punishment of either prince or people, one may plainly discover a natural cause of the fall of states and empires, which is no other, than national iniquity, or the

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ambition, violence, and injustice of the great. When a public spirit is lost and destroyed, and liberty itself is no longer valued as a blessing; when ambitious and aspiring tempers seek only their own benefit, and are regardless of the public welfare, one may pronounce that that kingdom cannot long stand, but must at length sink under the weight of its burdens and oppressions. This observation is justified in the translations and fate of the four famous monarchies; luxury within themselves, and violence offered to others, self-interestedness, and a disregard to the principal things, both civil and sacred, were the occasion of their overthrow. As to the Roman empire in particular, Cato's account of that people's gradual degeneracy and fall is worth transcribing, and is a close comment upon the passage before us: "Nolite existimare majores nostros armis Remp. ex parva magnam fecisse. Alia fuere quæ illos magnos fecerunt, quæ nobis nulla sunt. Domi industria, foris justum imperium, animus in consulendo liber, neque libidini neque delicto obnoxius. Pro his nos habemus luxuriam atque avaritiam, publice egestatem, privatim opulentiam, inter bonos et malos nullum discrimen, omnia virtutis præmia ambitio possidet; neque mirum, ubi vos separatim sibi quisque consilia capitis, ubi domi voluptatibus, hic pecuniæ aut gratiæ servitis. Hinc impetus fit in vacuam Remp." (Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. v. cap. 13.) Solomon assigns the like reason of the decay of states, and quick succession of princes, *For the transgression of a land, many are the princes thereof.* (Prov. xxviii. 2.) Βασιλεία ἀπὸ ἔθνους εἰς ἔθνος μετάγεται διὰ ἀδικίας καὶ ὕβρεις καὶ χρήματα, is the reading in all the editions of this place: but I cannot conceal my suspicion, that it is both corrupt and faultily pointed; I propose it therefore as a conjecture, whether the true reading might not have been, ver. 8. Βασιλεία ἀπὸ ἔθνους εἰς ἔθνος μετάγεται διὰ ἀδικίας καὶ ὕβρεις. Ver. 9. Διὰ χρήματα τί ὑπερηφανεύεται γῆ καὶ σποδός; φιλαργύρου μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἀνομώτερον. My reasons to support this conjecture are these: 1. In ver. 7. two vices are only mentioned, pride and injustice, as the cause of the fall of empires, and therefore it seems wrong to insert a new particular in the verse following, which is a continuation of the same subject. 2. That, according to the common reading, there seems to be no sense or connexion in ver. 9. whether τί ὑπερηφανεύεται γῆ καὶ σποδὸς precedes φιλαργύρου, κ. τ. λ. as it does in some editions, or follows after it, as it does in others. 3. If διὰ χρήματα be carried forward, and joined to τί ὑπερηφανεύεται, the context is quite consistent and uniform, and a good reason is subjoined against pride upon account of riches; *viz.* that the φιλάργυρος, or person fond of wealth, who is resolved to get it at any rate, often sets his own soul to sale. I have the pleasure to find that Messieurs of Port-Royal confirm this conjecture in their comment on that place.

Ver. 9. *Why are earth and ashes proud? There is not a more wicked thing than a covetous man, for such a one setteth his own soul to sale, because while he liveth he casteth away his bowels.*] That this verse is mangled and imperfect, appears from the different reading of it in most of the printed editions, and from all the ancient versions, none of which agree in placing the sentences, or representing the sense of the whole alike. The Syriac and Arabic say nothing of the covetous man, or his behaviour, nor are the intermediate sentences in the Vat. or Alexand. MS. Dr. Grabe indeed by a transposition, Ecclus. x. makes them his ninth verse, but from what authority he either transposes or inserts them, does not appear; the Vulgate has the whole, but in different order. Our translation follows the Complut. an edition of great authority as to this book: (see Grabe's Prolegom. cap. 3. sec. 1.) yet here differs somewhat from the Vulgate. This great uncertainty, and the incoherence of the text itself, have induced many to think of a transposition, particularly Jansenius and Messieurs of Port-Royal; and, among the sacred critics, Badwell and Castalio, which is also followed in the Geneva version. They have generally agreed it designed to fix this fine reflection, *Why are earth and ashes proud,* at the beginning of the eleventh verse, where it is followed by one no less beautiful, and well adapted to it, and which gives a convincing reason, why man, subject to so many infirmities and diseases, of short continuance here, and whose final condition is in the dust, ought not to be proud. The consideration, that he is a composition only of animated clay, and by death resolvable into it again, when he shall be a filthy loathsome object, and inherit creeping things, θηρία, *i. e.* poisonous insects, and worms, is alone sufficient to mortify all pride, even in the best or greatest of the species. But I do not warrant this transposition, though the sense is improved and well connected by it, without some authority from MSS. or printed copies to justify it. I shall only observe with St. Chrysostom, that the prophets, to abate human pride, represent the present state of man, his highest enjoyments of life, and the final period of it, under the most diminutive terms, and the meanest resemblances and comparisons. (Hom. 27. de incompreh. Dei Nat.)

Because, while he liveth, he casteth away his bowels.] The reading of this passage is very different. Our translators follow a copy which had, ὅτι ἐν ζωῇ αὐτοῦ ἔῤῥιψε τὰ ἐνδόσθια αὐτοῦ, which the Vulgate seems likewise to have followed. The sense of it is perplexed; the best that offers seems to be this, That the covetous man for the sake of money pawns his soul, or forfeits his salvation, because, from an immoderate love of it, he scruples not to commit any acts of injustice, fraud, or violence. And from the same principle, when he seeth his brother have need ἔῤῥιψε τὰ ἐνδόσθια αὐτοῦ, he casts away or shuts up his bowels of compassion from him, *Omnem humanitatis affectum,* as Castalio renders ἐνδόσθια, answerable to σπλάγχνα οἰκτιρμῶν (Col. iii. 12.) or it may mean, that he is not good even to himself, but starves and pinches his own bowels. Calmet favours this sense, That for the sake of getting wealth, he exposes his life, his liberty, and his repose; he, as it were, tears out his own bowels by the cruelty which he exercises towards himself, refusing himself even common necessaries; and after this revenge upon himself, it is no wonder that he casts off all tenderness and natural affection towards his nearest relations, and all care of those that belong to him. The wickedness of covetousness, and the perdition it leads men into, is strongly represented in the instance of Judas, who when, for the gain of thirty pieces of silver, he sold his master, at length ἔῤῥιψε τὰ ἐνδόσθια αὐτοῦ, *burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.* (Acts i. 18.) Some Greek copies, with which agree Drusius and Vatablus, have ὅτι ἐν ζωῇ αὐτοῦ ἔῤῥιψαν τὰ ἐνδόσθια αὐτοῦ. I presume the true reading in those

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copies was, ὅτι ἐν ζωῇ αὐτοῦ ἐρρίψαντο ἐνδόσθια αὐτοῦ· i. e. *because in his life, or while he is living, his bowels are, or may be shed.* To shed a man's bowels, is a Hebrew phrase for an assassination, or sudden slaughter of a man. Thus in the passage of Joab and Amasa, it is said, *He smote him under the fifth rib,* a Hebraism for stabbing at the heart, and *shed his bowels to the earth,* another expression likewise for stabbing him: and none so liable to be thus slain by treachery, as unjust and proud kings, potent and great oppressors, of whom the context warrants us to understand this passage principally. The sense, according to this small alteration is, *Dum vivit, intestina projiciuntur;* i. e. that such a tyrant is never safe, in the midst of life he is in death. And the reflection we should draw from it is, that the most secure state (seemingly from wealth and power) is not exempt from sudden accidents, nor more safe from violence than natural death; which seems to be a more natural sense than that of Grotius, who understands the place of chirurgical operations upon the persons of the mighty.

Ver 10. *The physician cutteth off a long disease, and he that is to-day a king, to-morrow shall die.*] There are various readings of this passage likewise; the two principal are, μακρὸν ἀῤῥώστημα κόπτει ἰατρὸς, which is followed by our translators, and approved of by Drusius and Grotius; and μακρὸν ἀῤῥώστημα σκώπτει ἰατρόν. The sense of the former is, That as a physician cureth a long and inveterate disease by the application of suitable remedies, so God often takes away suddenly, by the stroke of death, a tyrant who has been a long and sore evil and plague to the state; which seems to be the sense of the Vulgate rendering, *Omnis potentatus brevis vita,* though this probably was a marginal note, and crept into the text. The sense of the latter is, A long disease baffles or laughs at the physician; and considered jointly with the following sentence, *he that is a king to-day, to-morrow shall die,* contains two substantial reasons why mortal men should avoid pride, *viz.* the difficulty and uncertainty of cure in long and chronical distempers, and the sudden and unexpected dispatches made by short and acute ones. Misfortunes in life, and remarkable visitations, have taught even tyrants not only a sense of their mortality, but of submission and humility. When the hand of God lay heavy upon Antiochus Epiphanes, he who, a little before, was so exalted beyond the condition of a man, that he thought he might have *commanded the waves of the sea, and could weigh the mountains in a balance, and reach even to the stars of heaven,* as it is finely expressed, 2 Macc. ix. 11, 12. began to come to a due sense and knowledge of himself, when worms rose out of his body: he then confessed his weakness, and the folly of opposing the Most High in these remarkable words:—"It is meet to be subject unto God, and that a man who is mortal should not proudly think of himself as if he was God." Mattathias enforces his speech to his children, concerning that tyrant, from the like consideration, *Fear not the words of a sinful man, for his glory shall be dung and worms; to-day he shall be lifted up, and to-morrow he shall not be found, because he is returned to his dust, and his thought is come to nought.* (1 Macc. ii. 62, 63.)

Ver. 12. *The beginning of pride is when one departeth from God, and his heart is turned away from his Maker.*] Ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας, ἀνθρώπου ἀφισταμένου ἀπὸ Κυρίου· or, as other copies have it, ἀποστῆναι ἀπὸ Κυρίου, which the Vulgate manifestly follows; *i. e.* to depart from God, is the beginning of pride, or rather pride is the cause of man's revolting from the Lord. Thus the Syriac, *Initium delictorum hominum est ipsorum superbia,* as if the reading was, ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανία, κ. τ. λ. And so Calmet, *Le premier pas que l'homme fait pour s'eloigner de Dieu, est l'orgueil;* i. e. the first step which a man makes to depart from God, is through pride. According to Grotius, the sense is, that it is ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας, the height of pride, *fastigium superbiæ,* to depart from and rebel against one's Maker; and so *rosh* is often taken in Hebrew, and ἀρχὴ in many places of this book, (xi. 3. xxix. 21. xxxix. 26.) The following sentence, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ποιήσαντος αὐτὸν ἀπέστη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ, should be rendered, *and whose heart is turned away from his Maker.* It is a Hebraism, as in Psal. xxxii. *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth no sin, and there is no guile in the spirit of him:* so the Heb. οὐδὲν ἐστι ἐν τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ δόλος; so the LXX. and yet our rendering is preferable, *and in whose spirit there is no guile;* and so our translators have done in other places. The truth of the observation itself will appear from considering the first angel and man. Lucifer was dazzled with his great beauty and perfections, he forgot that he was nothing before God made him what he was, and imagining that he could subsist by himself, independently of his Creator, he fell into a shameful apostacy and rebellion. (Fulgent. de Prædest. lib. ii.) The first man in like manner became an apostate through pride, and all his children, who imitate his presumption, and make an idol of their own will, and aspire to a perfection which is incommunicable to any creature, do so far withdraw their hearts like him from their Maker, and renounce allegiance to him. Pride in both was the beginning of sin, as it follows in the next verse. In the devil it produced envy, which is inseparable from it, and by it he ruined the first man; in Cain, the eldest of Adam's children, it produced jealousy, which made Abel's virtue and good qualities insupportable to him, and that jealousy filled him with rage to kill his brother, the protomartyr of the Old Testament.

Ver. 13. *For pride is the beginning of sin.*] *i. e.* It is the source of all or the greatest sins, or it is itself the chief of all sins; and so Grotius expounds it, *Summum omnium peccatorum est superbia.* Fulgentius says, Pride is properly styled here ἀρχὴ ἁμαρτίας, because sin springs from it, as from its root. (De Virgin. et Humil.) And this we may either understand, with that writer, of the sin and fall of Lucifer, for so high does he trace the original of pride; (de Prædest. lib. i. as does St. Austin likewise, de Civit. Dei, lib. xii. cap. 6.) or, we may apply it to Adam's transgression in particular, as others do; or we may take pride in a larger sense here, to signify, in general, a contempt of God, which accompanies all manner of sin, according to that of Prosper, "Nullum peccatum fieri potest, potuit, aut poterit, sine superbia; si quidem nihil aliud est omne peccatum, nisi contemptus Dei." (De Vita Contemplat. lib. iii. cap. 3, 4.) That pride is the root or source of sin, experience and observation confirm, for men grow more or less wicked in proportion as this vice of pride gets ground. Some degree of it is to be found in every act of disobedience; for sin being a transgression of the law, implies a contempt of the authority which enacts

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it; but when pride is grown up to the height, it exalts men into so vain an opinion of themselves, that they lose the sense of duty, and of those obligations which they owe to their Maker, and the overflowings of their ungodliness are like a mighty torrent. The Psalmist therefore, with great propriety, gives this, as the character of an ungodly man, *That he is so proud he careth not for God, neither is God in all his thoughts.* (Psal. x. 4.) And as pride was the original of sin, so is it still the promoter and continuer of it, pride being the fountain of most of the heresies and schisms which have disturbed the church. Dr. Grabe contends, that the true reading of this place is, ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας ἁμαρτία, (Proleg. cap. 2. tom. ult.) to make it correspond with the preceding verse. But it matters not greatly which reading is preferred, the sense being nearly the same in both.

And therefore the Lord brought upon them strange calamities.] As pride is the root of sin, so God's judgments and threatenings are particularly levelled against it. On this account the prophets frequently denounce destruction to Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Jerusalem itself. And one end of the ruin brought upon a wicked people is, to stain the pride of their glory, and to revenge their contemptuous defiance of him. There are two readings of the Greek; παρεδόξασε Κύριος τὰς ἐπαλωτὰς, which is followed in our version; and though this expression is somewhat particular, yet is it warranted by a parallel, 1 Deut. xxviii. 59. παραδοξάσει Κύριος τὰς πληγάς σου, and in this sense ἐπαγωγὴ is often used in this book. (See note on ii. 2.) The other reading is, παρεδόξασε Κύριος τὰς συναγωγὰς, i. e. *God hath disgraced the assemblies or congregations of the proud;* and thus συναγωγὴ is used, xvi. 7—8. upon a similar occasion. The Vulgate favours this sense, *Exhonoravit conventus malorum;* and the Tigurine, *Agmina malorum effecit ignominia;* and Coverdale's and the Geneva versions are to the same effect. In either reading there are memorable instances of the truth of the observation. Thus God brought strange calamities upon the proud builders of Babel, the old giants, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, (xvi. 7, 8.) Pharaoh and the Canaanites, who are particularly referred to in the context, Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and other insolent and haughty princes, whose actions are recorded in sacred and profane history—all of whom *fell away in the strength of their foolishness, and were abhorred by God for their pride.*

Ver. 18. *Pride was not made for man, nor furious anger for them that are born of a woman.*] Οὐκ ἔκτισται ἀνθρώποις ὑπερηφανία, οὐδὲ ὀργὴ ζυμοῦ γεννήμασι γυναίκων· i. e. *Pride was not created in men,* as the Geneva version rightly has it, with which agree Grotius and Junius. There is not, therefore, any just reason to accuse nature, or complain of our Creator, if we are subject to pride, anger, or revenge, for these are not radical vices, or natural to our frame, but such as we brought upon ourselves through negligence, or the malice of the devil introduced them. As God is not the author of sin, so neither hath he infused such bad habits. Pride indeed is natural to some kind of animals, and anger to others; but man came perfect out of his Maker's hands, and if pride, wrath, or cruelty, prevail over him, they are passions originally foreign to his nature. In himself he is so excellent, and his nature so far superior to that of animals, that what are perfections in them, are in man vices, and their nature and qualities are his shame and reproach. Thus St. Austin: "Tantæ excellentiæ est in comparatione pecoris homo, ut vitium hominis natura sit pecoris." (Lib. ii. de Peccat. Origin. cap. 4.) The latter sentence, οὐδὲ ὀργὴ ζυμοῦ γεννήμασι γυναικῶν, which is well rendered in our version, and with it agree Drusius, Junius, Badwell, and Bossuet, as also the oriental and Coverdale's versions, is strangely misunderstood by Grotius, and very badly rendered by him, *nor furious anger for the female sex.* Had he attended to the use of the phrase, Job xv. 14. xxv. 4. 1 Macc. iii. 45. Matt. xi. 11. he might have spared his unhandsome sneer and unjust reflection, "Sunt quidem multæ mulieres iracundæ, sed non necessario." In this mistake he manifestly copies the Vulgate, *Neque iracundia nationi mulierum;* as do Messieurs of Port-Royal, and the Geneva version, and some other interpreters, all of whom derive their mistake from the same cause, and seem not to have consulted the Greek, which gives no handle, as there is no foundation in nature, for such an abuse. I shall only set down this caution about pride, that it is the more dangerous as it is a bosom evil. Other vices are more open, and strike a sort of horror in the commission; but pride springs from our very virtues, it grows up with them, and lies concealed under them, like a worm in some fair fruit, which spoils and corrupts all within, however beautiful the outward appearance may be.

Ver. 19. *They that fear the Lord are a sure seed, and they that love him, an honourable plant; they that regard not the law, are a dishonourable seed; they that transgress the commandments, are a deceivable seed.*] Σπέρμα πλανήσεως, *a mistaken,* or, as the margin has it, *an unstable seed.* Our translators follow the Complut, with which agrees Camerarius's copy. But neither the Vatican, nor Alexandrian MS. nor the Vulgate, nor Syriac, nor Drusius, follows it. The other Greek copies have, Σπέρμα ἔντιμον ποῖον; σπέρμα ἀνθρώπου· σπέρμα ἔντιμον ποῖον; οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν Κύριον· σπέρμα ἄτιμον ποῖον; σπέρμα ἀνθρώπου· σπέρμα ἄτιμον ποῖον; οἱ παραβαίνοντες ἐντολάς· which if closely attended to, though seemingly intricate, affords a sense easy and natural enough, *viz.* What is the precious seed (or what race of creatures is peculiarly worthy of honour)? the seed of man, *viz.* the human race alone of all the generations of creatures upon earth claim this honour. What is this precious or honourable seed (*viz.* of man)? they that fear the Lord. What is said of σπέρμα ἄτιμον, which immediately follows, if pursued in the same light, will be equally clear. The first answer to the question is true so far as it goes, but being not complete or explicit enough, the question is put a second time to draw out a full answer. The repetition of questions in this manner is not unusual in Scripture, and in these sapiential books especially, instances of which we have, Ecclus. ii. and iii. Psal. xxiv. 7—10. and many might be fetched from the Proverbs. Of the two Greek readings, if one only is to be admitted, there seems much the greater authority for the latter, which our translation hath omitted. Whether both be genuine, cannot be determined. Hœschelius indeed has joined them, but from what copy, or whether from a very ancient one, does not appear. The Geneva version makes one verse of both, and sets the sense in no indifferent light; *There is a seed of man which is an honourable seed; the honourable seed are*

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they that fear the Lord. There is a seed of man which is without honour; the seed without honour, are they that transgress the commandments of the Lord: it is a seed that remaineth which feareth the Lord, and a fair plant that love him; but they are a seed without honour that despise the law, and a deceivable seed that break the commandments.

Ver. 20. *Among brethren he that is chief is honourable, so are they that fear the Lord in his eyes.*] *i. e.* Honourable in his eyes. The Syriac rendering is preferable, *Inter fratres natu grandior est honorabilis, at qui timet Dominum honorabilis est præ illo;* and the Tigurine version agrees with it.

Ver. 21. *The fear of the Lord goeth before the obtaining of authority, but roughness and pride are the losing thereof.*] This verse is omitted in many Greek copies, the Vulgate and oriental versions: our translators follow the Complut. There are two readings of the first sentence, *viz.* πρὸ λήξεως ἀρχῆς, φόβος κυρίου, and προλήψεως ἀρχὴ, κ. τ. λ. Σκληρυσμὸς is rather hardness of heart, than roughness, such as was that of Pharaoh's. The history of the different fortunes of Saul and David is a full comment on this verse.

Ver. 22. *Whether he be rich, noble, or poor, their glory is the fear of the Lord.*] *i. e.* In every state of life, the fear of the Lord is most to be valued and regarded. Whether a man be rich and honourable, or poor and disregarded, under each of these conditions let him act agreeably to what God requires from him. In the former state, let him not pride himself in, nor presume too much upon, a great fortune, nor be tempted to forget God, the giver of it. In the latter, let him not offend against his neighbour by wrong or robbery, nor against his God by murmurs and discontent. The author seems to allude to Jer. ix. 23, 24.

Ver. 23. *It is not meet to despise the poor man that hath understanding, neither is it convenient to magnify a sinful man.*] In the proverbial books, wisdom and religion mean the same thing, and accordingly by a man of understanding here, is meant a just and good man. And thus the Vulgate, *Noli despicere hominem justum pauperem, et noli magni facere virum peccatorem divitem;* which last word is very properly added there to preserve the antithesis, which is likewise inserted in the oriental, the Tigurine, and the old English versions.

Ver. 25. *Unto the servant that is wise shall they that are free do service.*] See xi. 1. It is not properly speaking either birth or fortune that makes the free man or the slave. A man of a good and great soul, of an elevated genius, and of surprising parts and accomplishments, in whatever condition he be with respect to his outward circumstances, is always free, and fit to preside over his superiors in birth or fortune. His great abilities will always command respect; he will shine either in private or public life, and is born not to instruct children only, but to teach senators wisdom; not to command a single family, or neighbourhood, but provinces and kingdoms. Joseph's great accomplishments, though sold for a bond-servant, could not be confined to Potiphar's little concerns, which his skill and faithfulness greatly improved, but gave him authority over the whole land of Egypt; nor was Daniel, one of the children of the captivity, less in favour and power at the court of Nabuchodonosor. Diogenes, when exposed at a public sale, and asked what he knew, conscious of his own worth, and of the importance of his abilities, with a peculiar greatness of soul replied,—I know how to command free men. (Apud Laert. lib. vi.) Solomon has an observation resembling this, *A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame,* κρατήσει δεσποτῶν ἀφρόνων, according to the LXX. (Prov. xvii. 2.)

And he that hath knowledge will not grudge when he is reformed.] Many copies omit παιδευόμενος, and the sense is good without it. But if it be admitted, it should not be rendered *reformed,* but either *instructed* or *reproved,* as the Vulgate has it; *i. e.* No man of knowledge or sense will murmur to be either instructed or reproved by one, who is his superior both in skill and power.

Ver. 26. *Be not overwise in doing thy business, and boast not thyself in the time of thy distress.*] *i. e.* Be not conceited of thy work, nor boast of thy superior skill in the way of thy profession or trade, and be not slothful in time of poverty, or ashamed to get your livelihood by labour, nor say with the unjust steward, *I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed;* which is a ridiculous pride. Or the sense may be, Invent not pretences to excuse yourself from labour, nor scruple through a false shame to get your own living by it in a low estate; and thus the Geneva version, *Seek not excuses when thou shouldest do thy work, neither be ashamed thereof through pride in the time of adversity.* The Arabic version too seems to favour this latter sense, *Ne sis ignavus in opere tuo, nec impediat te pudor, cum fueris egenus ab his quæ tibi prosunt,* following probably a copy which read νοσφίζου. The Port-Royal comment is, Be not exalted or proud upon having done your work or duty, for when we have taken the greatest pains to do our best, we are but unprofitable servants; but such is our nature, that even our virtue and goodness itself is apt to betray us into pride.

Ver. 27. *Better is he that laboureth and aboundeth in all things, than he that boasteth himself, and wanteth bread.*] Calmet thinks our author here aims at exposing the ridiculous pride of the stoics, who made their wise man, though starving and naked, a demigod.

> "Ad summam sapiens uno minor est Jove; dives,
> Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum."
> (Hor. Epist. lib. i.)

Some copies read ἢ περιπατῶν, ἢ δοξαζόμενος; others omit περιπατῶν, and have only ἢ ὁ δοξαζόμενος. I think the true reading is, ἢ περιπατῶν δοξαζόμενος, which the Alexandrian MS. has; *i. e.* one that strutteth and walketh proudly, that goeth about boasting, as vain and idle persons are wont to do, one of a quite different character from ἐργαζόμενος immediately before. As St. Paul's words περιπατοῦντας ἀτάκτως μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους, express the full opposition to his command ἵνα μετὰ ἡσυχίας ἐργαζόμενοι, κ. τ. λ. (2 Thess. iii. 11, 12.)

Ver. 28. *My son, glorify thy soul in meekness, and give it honour according to the dignity thereof.*] The sense seems the same with Luke xxi. 19. *In your patience possess your souls;* but the expression here is much stronger. It is rendered more clearly in the Geneva version, *My son, get thyself praise by meekness, and esteem thyself as thou deservest; i. e.* If thou art in want and poverty, be not dispirited or dejected, but preserve a constant evenness of temper, and endeavour to act up to the dignity of your nature; or there may be, according to Calmet, this farther meaning, as τιμὴ often signifies *maintenance* in this writer, Provide for all the

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necessary wants of life, by allowing yourself food, and all things convenient, according to your condition and circumstances. In the foregoing verse the wise man condemns those who out of a foolish vanity were ashamed to work, though ready to perish with hunger; see Prov. xii. 9. to which probably he alludes. Here he attacks those who, out of a shameful principle of avarice, refuse themselves the common necessaries of life, and are afraid to use those good things which they have in their power and possession. This sense seems countenanced by the following verse. This advice may also be extended to persons succeeding to great fortunes, or advanced to high posts of honour, to behave with moderation in their new state, not to be puffed up with pride, nor yet to demean themselves, or act below the dignity of their rank, and thereby forfeit the regard and deference due to it; but this is not so agreeable to the context.

Ver. 29. *Who will justify him that sinneth against his own soul?*] *i. e.* He that is so niggardly and covetous as to defraud and deny himself even common necessaries, and fails in the duty which he owes to himself, cannot expect that others should justify him, or speak in his behalf, or that they should administer any relief to him. The latter part of the verse, *Who will honour him that dishonoureth his own life*, is parallel to that of Horace,

"Miraris, cum tu argento post omnia ponas,
Si nemo præstet quem non merearis honorem?"
(Lib. i. sat. i.)

Ver. 31. *He that is honoured in poverty, how much more in riches? and he that is dishonourable in riches, how much more in poverty?*] He that behaves well upon a little, would shine in the management of a superior fortune; but he that cannot live upon an overgrown fortune with credit, will be laughed at and despised, when reduced almost to poverty; or the sense may be, If a poor man, by his skill and merit, acquires honour and esteem, how much more would he have been respected, and his accomplishments extolled, if he had been master of a great fortune. A poor man of real and intrinsic worth, is more to be esteemed and valued than one who is simply rich, and has nothing else to recommend him; for the reputation of the former must arise from himself, and his own personal merit, which has broke through many difficulties and oppositions in its way. Whereas the honour which attends the rich, and the regard paid to him, is founded upon something foreign to him, upon the lucky chance of birth or fortune, which may be, and sometimes is, the lot of the worthless and undeserving. Diogenes and Epictetus adorned a very mean condition, as Joseph was an instance of a just conduct in both states.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 2. *COMMEND not a man for his beauty, neither abhor a man for his outward appearance.*] By which is not meant, that it is no advantage or recommendation to a man to have a good person, or an agreeable air; but the meaning is, that a man's merit or excellency is not chiefly to be placed in the size or lineaments of the body, since the mind is the true and lasting beauty, in the accomplishments of which consists the perfection of man, and the likeness and image of God. As outward beauty therefore does not confer merit, so neither should the want of it in any instances occasion ridicule or contempt. Lowness of stature, which with some passes for a sort of deformity, is no reason for sneer or reproach; for sometimes great souls inhabit little bodies, and much merit may lie concealed under a disagreeable outside. St. Paul's person and appearance was, according to tradition, but ordinary and contemptible; and yet, if we consider his great qualities and attainments, he was rather an angel than a man. Honey is here called ἀρχὴ γλυκασμάτων, and rightly rendered, *the chief of sweet things;* and so ἀρχὴ is used in many places by this writer; (see xxix. 21. xxxix. 26. Psal. cx. 3. Amos vi. 16.) which the author pertinently illustrates by the example of the bee, which, though little in size and appearance, by its industry produces fruit of most admirable use and sweetness.

Ver. 4. *Boast not of thy clothing and raiment.*] These are good indeed for the uses which God designed them, to defend us from the weather, or to cover our nakedness, but it is folly to boast of that as a perfection, which owes its original to our shame, our weakness, or natural necessities; (see Chrys. in cap. 3. Gen. Hom. 18.) and to this sense what follows may also be explained, *Exalt not thyself in the day of honour;* for that δόξα signifies *glorious apparel*, see Addit. Esther xv. 1. Luke xii. 27. where ἐν πάσῃ τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ οὐ περιεβάλετο, must be taken in this sense, the same with ἱματισμὸς ἔνδοξος, Luke vii. 25. and δόξα τοῦ ἱματισμοῦ, Isa. iii. 11. Or δόξα may be taken here in its usual acceptation, to signify *advancement, state,* or *dignity;* and then the advice is, not to be proud of these, because of God's terrible judgments, often sent to mortify and subdue pride. Thus Herod, priding himself in his royal robes, and in the flattering acclamations of the people, was immediately struck with an incurable disease from the hand of God. Thus also Nebuchadnezzar, flushed with the success of his victories, and with the superb magnificence of Babylon, which he had built for the honour of his majesty, is admonished by a voice from heaven, *Thy kingdom is departed from thee,* and was so literally brought to the ground, as to graze upon it, like one of the beasts. (Dan. iv. 30.) Histories are full of such revolutions, and changes of princes and mighty men, deposed, vanquished, made prisoners, and led in triumph by the conquerors. Scripture shews us Samson in the hands of the Philistines, and Zedekiah in those of the Babylonians; which instances are sufficient to shew the truth of the observation in the two following verses.

Ver. 7. *Blame not before thou hast examined the truth; understand first, and then rebuke.*] To proceed with caution and deliberation, and to examine into the merits of a cause, before sentence is pronounced, is agreeable to what God himself hath done upon many occasions; for with respect to the sin of our first parents, he vouchsafes first to inquire about the offence, and to examine the fact, before he gives sentence against them. The like behaviour is observable in God with regard to the murder of Abel; he first asks Cain, *Where is thy brother?* giving him an opportunity to excuse himself, if he could, before he pronounces, *Thou art cursed from the earth.* The like example we have, Gen. xi. 5. where it is said, *The Lord came down to see the tower,* before he would confound their language. And again, Gen. xviii. 20, 21. speaking of Sodom and Gomorrah, he says, *He will go down and see, whether they have done altogether according unto the cry which is come unto him.* He, from

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whom no secrets are hid, even he first examines the fact, and will hear first what miserable man can say for himself, before his sentence shall pass upon him; not out of any ignorance of what was done, for how should the omniscient God, θεὸς γνώσεων, be ignorant? but out of his wonderful clemency and unspeakable moderation towards man, and to instruct his creatures to proceed with the same caution, and not to be precipitate or rash in their censures or rebukes. This is the very inference which St. Chrysostom draws from it, τί βούλεται, καταβὰς ὄψομαι, κ. τ. λ. *Docere nos vult, quod non auditu solo peccatores condemnandi sint, neque sententiæ ferendæ, nisi probatio præcedat. Audiamus hæc omnes; non enim solum ii, qui pro tribunali sedent, observare hanc legem debent, sed et nullus unquam ob nudam accusationem proximum condemnet.* (Com. in loc. Mede, Disc. 40.) This rashness David was guilty of, when, listening to the false suggestions of Ziba, he condemned Mephibosheth, and gave away his inheritance. (2 Sam. xvi. 4.) It was matter of continual grief to Constantine, that he had put his son Crispus to death by a hasty credulity; and for the same reason Eusebius condemns the proceedings of Theodosius the Great, against the people of Thessalonica. *Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doth?* was Nicodemus's wise answer to the pharisees, John vii. 51. and from hence we may explain our Saviour's answer to the woman taken in adultery, *Neither do I condemn thee;* (viii. 11.) which we are not to understand, as if he thought her innocent, or any way approved or authorized hereby the sin of adultery, as some have falsely inferred; but that he discharged her at this time, as her accusers through self-consciousness had fled, and she had not been formally convicted of the crime.

Ver. 8. *Answer not before thou hast heard the cause.*] By a hasty proceeding thou wilt probably mistake the matter; and if thou judgest right, it is but chance; and therefore thou wilt not escape censure, according to that of Seneca,

"Qui statuit aliquid, parte inauditâ alterâ,
Æquum licet statuerit, haud æquus erit." (In Medæa.)

A man may perhaps think to shew the readiness and quickness of his parts by a hasty determination, but he will rather make himself ridiculous, and be in danger to pervert judgment. According to that of Solomon, which this writer had certainly in view, *He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is shame and folly to him.* Hence judges were, for their prudent deliberation in matters that came before them, called *cognitores*, as it is incumbent upon them to know, and be acquainted with, the truth and circumstances of a case before they give their sentence. For if it be a fault in ordinary discourse for a private person to determine with positiveness, before he rightly understands the case, much greater certainly is the imprudence and rashness of a magistrate, to be inconsiderate or hasty in matters of justice and judgment. It was by searching out the cause that he knew not, that Job put on righteousness, *and it clothed him, and his judgment was as a robe, and a diadem,* (xxix. 14. 16.) From hence also we may be instructed in private life not to judge rashly, nor to suffer ourselves to be led away by vague and uncertain reports, nor hastily credit accusations to the prejudice of our neighbour, without knowing the truth and foundation of them.

Ver. 9. *Strive not in a matter that concerneth thee not, and sit not in judgment with sinners.*] According to the marginal rendering, *Sit not in the judgment of sinners.* The sense may be, Sit not on the bench with corrupt judges; or applied to private life, Associate not nor consult with sinners; according to the advice of the Psalmist, (Psal. i. 1.) *Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful.* Or, Sin not by private judgment, or in matters that do not belong to thy cognizance; for nothing is more common, says Nazianzen, quoting this passage, than for men to interfere in things that have no relation to them, and to set up themselves as censors of those who are not under them, and judges of things which they are ignorant of. God commands us to judge ourselves and not others, and we always do the contrary. We are at no trouble to know or understand ourselves, and are always determining about others, whom we know nothing of with certainty. This the wise man calls sitting in judgment with sinners, who make themselves such, by an unwarrantable way of acting, full both of presumption and injustice.

Ver. 10. *My son, meddle not with many matters.*] In any business or profession, a man should not undertake more than his time, condition, or the nature of such affairs to be well managed, will admit of: for either they must be performed imperfectly and in haste, or some of them be neglected. Life is too short, our minds too limited, our bodily powers too small and feeble, to execute successfully many things at once; for the surest way of doing nothing well, is to attempt a multiplicity of things together. It is a very just observation, "Impar quisque invenitur ad singula, dum confusa mente dividitur ad multa." This advice also is proper in spiritual matters; when we are about any part of our duty, we must avoid, as much as possible, the distraction of cares and outward avocations; for as the understanding, when perplexed with several objects, is intent upon none of them as it ought, so the soul, divided between heaven and earth, and the cares of each, makes slow progress, and soars not to perfection. This is particularly true of prayer; if the spirit of a man is busied with a variety of worldly intervening cares, they will intrude themselves unseasonably, and abate the fervour of devotion. We may also hence see the danger of a hurrying life in general; the soul, through a multitude of secular business, or a continual round of pleasures succeeding thick one upon another, is apt to forget herself, and her true concerns, and grow careless about what passes within. At first she makes a faint resistance; but, by degrees, being accustomed to a life made up of trifles and pleasures, she at length becomes reconciled to it, and takes delight in it, and so is carried with the many down the stream, and makes shipwreck.

If thou meddle much, thou shalt not be innocent; and if thou follow after, thou shalt not obtain, neither shalt thou escape by fleeing.] Ἐὰν πληθυνθῇς. The advice here is not to avoid business proportionable to our strength or leisure, but employs of such a nature as require our whole time, to the injury and neglect of our ownselves, or which cannot be sufficiently managed by dividing our time; for by such sort of business one can get no good; it must be done by halves, or every thing else must be neglected for it. We cannot, by undertaking such variety of business, answer at the same time the trust reposed in us by others, and the

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duty which we owe to our ownselves. *If thou meddle much* (says the wise man), *thou shalt not be innocent;* rather, thou shalt not come off harmless or unhurt; the reason immediately follows, καὶ (which I would here, with the oriental versions, render *etenim*) for if you *follow after*, i. e. attempt them, *thou shalt not obtain*, i. e. thou canst not manage them (being many), *neither shalt thou escape by fleeing*, i. e. neither can you clear your hands of them: the consequence is, you can get no good, but must get trouble, and may get mischief by them; or, as the margin is, *Thou shalt not escape hurt.* Bossuet's exposition is to the same effect, "Multis implicitus negotiis multa peccat, multa sectatus nihil capit, multa conatus, expedire se non potest." The Vulgate here renders, *Et si dives fueris, non eris immunis a delicto;* following a copy which read πλουτήσῃς, and with it agree the Tigurine, Geneva, and Coverdale's versions. The sense of the whole verse, according to this reading, is, Be not too intent upon getting riches; for as it is always dangerous to pursue them with too much eagerness, so, when gotten, they do not always satisfy, and oftentimes endeavours for obtaining them prove ineffectual. For the providence of God governs all things, and if it is not his will that a man shall be rich, in vain does he run after them, they shall flee from him. If he allots a state of poverty to a man, it shall constantly pursue him, he shall not escape from it by any art or endeavours; but with the blessing of God, riches shall court a man, and shall come to him without his labour or seeking.

Ver. 11. *There is one that laboureth, and taketh pains, and maketh haste, and is so much the more behind.*] Τόσῳ μᾶλλον ὑστερεῖται. The Vulgate renders, *Est homo laborans, et festinans et dolens impius, et tanto magis non abundabit.* The latter part is but indifferently rendered; for poverty is a negative term, and is better expressed, as it is in the Greek, by *want*, than by *not abounding*, and is even more proper and expressive than πτωχείᾳ περισσεύων in the following verse. Seneca well defines it, "Paupertas non ab eo dicitur, quod habet, sed ab eo quod ei deest." And therefore, Luke xxi. 4. αὕτη ἐκ τοῦ ὑστερήματος αὐτῆς, is excellently well translated by the Vulgate, *Ex eo quod deest illi.* The Vulgate properly inserts *impius*, in the passage before us, for a wicked man; above all others, even though he *hastes to rise up early, and eats the bread of carefulness*, and employs the most usual and probable means, shall not have the success he proposes in the world, for want of the blessing of God going along with him, which alone maketh rich. (Prov. x. 22.) Messieurs of Port-Royal expound this in a spiritual sense. The proud pharisee in the gospel, whose life was irreproachable, who fasted at all the stated seasons, and paid tithes with the greatest exactness, but yet through his spiritual pride was rejected, is an instance of what is mentioned in this verse, as the publican is likewise, according to them, of the verse following: that a sinner like him, under a true poverty of spirit, who has a sense of his guilt, and acknowledges his own vileness, has the best prospect of advancement; that though men despise him, as the pharisee did the publican, yet God looks favourably upon him, and will regard him the more for not daring to lift up his eyes to heaven; he will exalt him from his low estate, because by smiting his breast he testifies his true penitence, and sues for mercy in the posture and language of the greatest of sinners.

Ver. 15. *Love and the way of good works are from him.*] The wise man, after having shewn that temporal goods come from the Lord, such as prosperity, riches, health, long life, proceeds to shew that spiritual goods, the endowments of the mind and the affections of the heart, are from the same originals, and the gifts of his bounty and liberality. Not only the knowledge of human arts, and proficiency in science, but all virtues and good qualities, such as love, both of God and our neighbour, good dispositions, and good works, their natural fruit, come from the Lord. This verse and the following are omitted in the Vatican, and many other Greek copies, nor do they occur in all the Latin ones. The Syriac has them, and the Complut. and this last probably our translators follow.

Ver. 16. *Error and darkness had their beginning together with sinners, and evil shall wax old with them that glory therein.*] God made man originally upright with the sense, and knowledge of his duty clearly stamped upon his mind; he created him not unto error or sin, his will was as perfect as his understanding; but since the fall, he has been less able both to discern and practise his duty, and darkness and error are as it were natural to the whole species; but in sinners the sad consequences of the fall are most visible and melancholy. Vicious inclinations so early appear in them, that they may seem to be born with them, according to that of the Psalmist, *The ungodly are froward even from their mother's womb, as soon as they are born they go astray and speak lies*, Psal. lviii. 3. Though all men are born in sin, it is certain the wicked seem to have brought into the world with them worse dispositions than others; whether owing to their natural temperament and constitution, or to the increasing the evil leaven through their own fault, they have the habit of sin so deeply rooted, as if it was even natural; instead of growing in grace, they pride themselves in sin, and glory in their shame, and, through a long continuance in it, strengthen themselves, as the Psalmist expresses it, in their wickedness; and so they grow old in it, *Consenescunt in malo*, Vulg. and die without repentance or amendment.

Ver. 17. *The gift of the Lord remaineth with the godly, and his favour bringeth prosperity for ever.*] The gifts, favours, or graces which God gives to pious and good men, are durable and permanent, nor is he easily induced to withdraw his loving-kindness, according to that of St. Paul, *The gifts of God are without repentance;* (Rom. xi. 29.) *i. e.* he does not hastily revoke what he has granted, nor recall the favours which he has once vouchsafed, arbitrarily, and without reason. The author having before established these two great truths, that all the good things of this life come from God, and that all the evils of it are so many punishments sent by him, he adds here, that the gifts of God to the righteous are attended with happy success, they thrive with them, and are productive of more good; but to the wicked, whom sometimes the same favours are vouchsafed to, they often prove to them the means of their ruin, and snares to take them withal. This observation is equally true, if applied to spiritual favours. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, received into a heart well disposed, like the seed which fell upon good ground, take deep root there, and bring forth fruit, which is always renewing and increasing; for the good man is daily improving the talents received, is continually adding to his virtues, and proceeding from grace to grace, till he arrives at perfection; but

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the wicked, by the neglect or abuse of the same proffered help, increase unto more ungodliness.

Ver. 18, 19. *There is that waxeth rich by his wariness and pinching, and this is the portion of his reward: Whereas he saith, I have found rest, and now will eat continually of my goods, and yet he knoweth not what time shall come upon him, and that he must leave those things to others, and die.*] This is not rightly translated; it should be rendered, *This is the portion of his reward;* or, *This is all he gets by his pinching;* viz. ἐν τῷ εἰπεῖν αὐτὸν, *to say,* or *flatter himself, that he can now take his ease, and live upon what he has hoarded up.* Μισθὸς is thus used, Matt. vi. 2. Luke vi. 24. Phil. iv. 8. and by this writer, xiv. 6. upon the same subject. Horace too, (epist. 16. lib. i.) and other pure writers, use *pretium* in the like sense. The parable of the rich man, Luke xii. 19, 20. very much resembles the description of this writer, who said to himself, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* And the inference from both is nearly the same; *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee; and then, whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* And it is observed of the rich miser here, that, notwithstanding his laying up great stock for futurity, he knoweth not what may happen, or how long time he shall have to live, or what opportunity of using them; nor considereth how uncertain life is, and that he may soon die, and leave his riches for others. In the Greek there is ὕστερον πρότερον; for death precedes the leaving our goods to others. We have the like inverted order, Luke xx. 15. 31. Solomon well exposes the fruitless labour of such a worldling, *There is one alone, and there is not a second* (*i. e.* no heir); *he hath neither child nor brother, yet is there no end of his labour, neither is he satisfied with riches, neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good?* (Eccles. iv. 8.) The observation of the son of Sirach is a consequence of the former verse, where he says, that the gifts of God to good men are lasting, and blessed with success; here he shews, by way of contrast, that the good things which he sometimes bestows upon the wicked, who please themselves with the hopes of long enjoying them, are soon taken from them, and when they imagine themselves most at ease, and in the greatest security of the fruits of their labour, God suddenly takes from them what they so much set their hearts upon, and summons them to give an account of their stewardship.

Ver. 20. *Be steadfast in thy covenant.*] In the covenant made with God, in which all the Jewish posterity were included, as well as their forefathers, and each one personally, by undergoing the rite of circumcision, the seal of the covenant. This the Israelites first entered into in the person of Abraham, the founder of their race; (Gen. xv. 8.) next, by that made with their fathers in the wilderness at Mount Sinai; (Exod. xix. 6—8.) after, by the covenant with Joshua upon their entrance into the promised land; (Josh. viii. 32, 33.) and, lastly, at their return from the captivity under Nehemiah, when the original covenant was solemnly renewed. (Neh. ix. 38. x. 1, 2.) The latter part of this verse, *wax old in thy work,* is rendered by the Vulgate, *In opere mandatorum tuorum veterasce.* This advice may also be applied to the Christian sacraments, to holy orders, religious vows, promissory oaths, matrimonial faith, &c. in all which, as an obligation is brought upon persons by their stipulations, so are they in conscience bound carefully to fulfil their respective engagements, to be conversant, and steadfast in their covenant.

Ver. 21. *Marvel not at the works of sinners,—for it is an easy thing in the sight of the Lord, on the sudden to make a poor man rich.*] Μὴ θαύμαζε ἐν ἔργοις ἁμαρτωλοῦ. Θαυμάζειν is taken in a different sense here from what it is ver. 13. For besides the common sense of *wondering,* it may either be expounded, *Praise* or *extol not the works of sinners;* and in this sense it is used, Job xxxii. 22. Ecclus. vii. 31. xxxviii. 3. or, *Do not envy* or *desire the riches and prosperity of the wicked;* or, *Be not offended at the works of sinners;* and thus it is used, Eccles. v. 8. *When thou seest the oppression of the poor, μὴ θαυμάσῃς, be not troubled* or *offended at the matter.* See also John vii. 21. where πάντες θαυμάζετε is explained, ver. 23. by χολᾶτε. And the reason follows immediately, why we should neither extol, envy, nor be offended at the prosperity of the ungodly; because the power of God can immediately alter the state and condition of his creatures, and deal with them as he wills, or sees proper, in an instant, διὰ τάχους, ἐξάπινα; a pleonasm, to express the swiftness of his dealing. He can suddenly overturn the high estate of a rich sinner, and, as suddenly, make his blessing to flourish upon the godly. And thus God enriched the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for their piety, with the blessings of plenty and abundance, which the law promised to the faithful and obedient.

Ver. 23. *Say not, What profit is there of my service? and what good things shall I have hereafter?*] These seem to be the words of a poor man in despair, pouring forth his complaint in some such melancholy strain; What reason is there for me to desire to live? Of what use am I in life, what advantage can I propose by a longer stay, or what hopes have I of bettering my condition? After all the care I have taken to give proofs of my duty and faithfulness to God, and an inviolable attachment to his service, what good have I received from him in return? Am I the happier, or more at ease in my condition; have I received any or more comforts from his liberality than others on that account? In the like strain Job's wife tries to subdue his integrity. After all the misfortunes which are come upon thee, the loss of thy goods and children, which with such pain and danger I brought forth, and which is a visible token of his displeasure, the fire of God falling from heaven, dost thou still retain thy integrity, and continue to serve him? What more or worse can he do to you, except taking away your life, as a return for all your fruitless services? *Curse God, and die.* The speech of Job's wife is indeed but short in the English version; but the curious, by consulting the LXX. where it is continued to a great length, may see enough of her outrageous temper. Tobit's wife too insults the goodness of her husband in the like sneering manner. Where are thine alms, and thy righteous deeds? All thy fine hopes and expectations are plainly vanished, the charities which you have exercised all your life profit you nothing; they have not kept you from blindness, which deprives you of all comfort,—behold, thou and all thy pious works are laughed at, and every one is sensible of, and makes sport with, thy disgrace.—Imitate not, says this pious writer, such idle persons in their profane talk, entertain no such disrespectful sentiments of God, nor dare to utter any evil blasphemy against him, or to murmur at the methods of

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his providence. He will reward your service and faithfulness, when and in what manner he sees proper; and if in this life you fail of a reward, you may be assured of a future and better recompence. In the next verse we have a rich, insolent person described, triumphing in his imagined self-sufficiency, as above the reach and power of fortune, sporting himself in the luxury of present enjoyments, and quite indifferent and unconcerned about what may happen to him hereafter; like the worldling described in the gospel, an equal monument of weakness and folly.

Ver. 25. *In the day of prosperity there is a forgetfulness of affliction, and in the day of affliction there is no remembrance of prosperity.*] The author here replies to and reproves the faults usually attending each extreme. He begins with the last first, that the conduct of the conceited rich man is entirely owing to his forgetfulness, and want of reflection upon the uncertainty of all human happiness and greatness, which God delights to overthrow and confound, when men affect to be independent, and are regardless of his power and providence. On the other hand, the poor man, who is so dispirited and dejected with his present calamitous circumstances as to think of nothing else, forgets how things were with him formerly, how he has been hitherto sustained by the bounty of indulgent Heaven, and if not by the bounty, yet with necessaries, such as were most convenient for him. As if the present cloud which hangs over him could never be removed, nor his sun rise again in glory, he forgets his duty of patience and trust in God, and that it is an easy thing in the sight of the Lord on a sudden to make a poor man rich; or if he does not do it instantly, or even at all, that he can bless his latter end, (ver. 26.) and make his death comfortable; and, because he has in this life received his evil things, place him, with Lazarus, in Abraham's bosom. The Vulgate gives this by way of advice, and it is worthy of remembrance: *In die bonorum ne immemor sis malorum, et in die malorum ne immemor sis bonorum:* by thus prudently managing the two different states, by reflecting often that a change may come, we shall avoid pride, and not sink into despair.

Ver. 27. *The affliction of an hour maketh a man forget pleasure.*] Nothing shews more the vanity of worldly pleasures, than the shortness of their continuance, and the weakness of the impression made by them; the sense of them is interrupted, and even effaced, by any vexation of the mind or present indisposition of the body. Any acute pain or disease shall make us disrelish every thing about us; nor will the anxiety be relieved or suspended by any reflection on past delights or present amusements; even the voice of melody is then harsh and ungrateful. This observation is equally true, applied to times of public calamity, when diversions, entertainments, and the usual expressions of joy, lose all their former relish, and are as disagreeable to the inclination of all serious and considerate persons, as they are then unseasonable and misbecoming. It was a just reply of the Jewish exiles, to those who required of them melody in their heaviness, *How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?* (Psal. cxxxvii. 3, 4.) To propose scenes of mirth of any kind to persons in a state of trouble, whether in captivity, or mourning some domestic evil and misfortune, is impertinence, insult, cruelty: or the meaning may be, in a moral sense, That men are apt, when evils and calamities are upon them, and they lie under the smart of present sufferings, ungratefully to overlook past instances of the Divine goodness to them, and not to reflect on former mercies and blessings, with that gratitude and thankfulness which they ought. Agreeably Seneca says, "Hoc habet inter reliqua mala dolor, quod non supervacuus tantum, sed et ingratus est." (Epist. 99.) Some, and particularly Calmet, understand by *the hour of affliction,* the hour of death, which so absolutely effaces all that the world has in it which is charming and inviting, that one in those melancholy circumstances cannot in the least attend to any of its pleasures or allurements. The dying person is insensible of all that passes; every thing before him is mist and darkness, and the thought of former delights and regalements, either pleases him not at all, or, if he has been intemperate in the use of them, fills his soul with cutting remorse at the remembrance of them, and a lively apprehension of misery on that account. This sense seems favoured by the following sentence, *In his end his deeds shall be discovered; i. e.* while a man is alive he may act under a disguise, or envy may detract from him, or malice blacken him; in death only we truly view and judge of the man; their respective works discover then both the good and bad man, and follow them accordingly. Messieurs of Port-Royal understand the place also in this latter sense, and have this beautiful reflection upon it, "The prospect of death is a most necessary and useful admonition to the living; it is that which forces men at length in some sort to despise the world, and to prepare for a better. The last hour expels all those clouds which darkened and intercepted the soul; it represents to a man, in a moment, all the folly and vanity of his life past, and convinces him of the extravagance of his desires, the deceit of his pleasures, and the nothingness of worldly hopes. It is the view of this only that gives a man a right sense of things, and enables him to form a true judgment of himself and his state, persuades him in time to provide for his future safety, and properly to bid adieu to the world, before he is forced to leave it."

Ver. 28. *Judge none blessed before his death; for a man shall be known in his children.*] St. Chrysostom very highly commends the son of Sirach for this fine reflection, in terms of great honour and respect, Hom. 51. in S. Eustath. Antioch. which he expatiates upon after his oratorical manner. The ancient sages, upon the view of the uncertainty of human happiness, have been almost unanimous in subscribing to this aphorism, That none can be pronounced happy before his death; for the most glorious and happy life may be blemished by the concluding stroke, and the last period may sully the beauty and glory of all that went before. This truth Crœsus, when his boasted happiness was near expiring, by the prospect of a miserable death, was at length sensible of, and acknowledged before Cyrus the justness of Solon's judgment, who, from a sense of the frailty of human greatness, had pronounced that a man's happiness could only be determined truly by the circumstances of his death. This writer rests the verdict of a man's happiness upon the condition of his children, their state, and circumstances in the world, and especially their good or evil disposition, and moral conduct in life: for the judgment of a man's felicity is not always to be taken singly from himself: if his children are unsuccessful, and come to misfortunes, or, which is worse, if they prove extravagant and vicious, we account such a

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father truly unhappy, and his grave, to which their evil conduct will the sooner hasten him, to be strewed with disgrace and sorrow. When degenerate and unworthy sons succeed to a father of distinguished merit and character, and by their misconduct or weakness sully the great name of their ancestors, the world sympathizes and weeps over the monuments of their great progenitors, and is convinced that misery and unhappiness can overtake a man even in his grave. When parents have taken all the care they can about the education of their children, and to give them, as it were, a second birth by the nurture of their souls, it must doubtless be an uncommon affliction to them, if, instead of answering their hopes and expectations, their name and family are dishonoured by their evil conduct; especially as the world is generally so ill-natured, as to ascribe the miscarriage of children to the negligence of their parents, and to suspect even *their* virtue on that account. According to the observation of St. Ambrose upon the place, "Unusquisque in novissimis suis agnoscitur, et in filiis suis æstimatur, si bene filios suos instituit, et disciplinis competentibus erudivit; si quidem ad negligentiam Patris refertur dissolutio filiorum." (De bono Mortis, cap. 8.) Many are the instances, both in sacred and profane history, of children degenerating from the virtue and probity of ancestors peculiarly eminent in their generations, and thereby disturbing their domestic peace, and making their exit less glorious and comfortable. That Moses died upon Mount Nebo, in the sight of Canaan, was not so great a trial, as that his sons were unworthy to succeed him in the priesthood: and that Eli's children proved so corrupt, such sons of Belial, as to know not the Lord, and to be set aside from officiating before him for their unworthiness, was a great allay to his honour and comfort. The like may be said of Solomon, whose glory and happiness were much sullied by the evil conduct of Rehoboam, as Hezekiah's fame was by that of his son Manasses. Amongst the Romans, the reputation of the brave Germanicus was eclipsed by the succession of an infamous Caligula; and Commodus, the unworthy son of the wise Antoninus, gave a check to the great name of his father. These instances are sufficient to shew that the measure of our happiness is not always to be taken from ourselves, but from our descendants and relations; and he that is cursed in his children, however other things may favour him, cannot be reckoned among the fortunate. But neither the ancient philosophers, nor even this writer, have carried this matter far enough: in the delivery of this maxim, they considered only the present life; and pronounced that one could not congratulate a person upon a complete happiness before his death, because so many accidents might happen to him, or to his children, which would give him uneasiness: but take this maxim in a more extended view, and apply it to another life, and then both the sense and prospect will be greatly enlarged; for Scripture acquaints us, that the happiness of a good man begins, properly speaking, at his death; till that time he is subject, and perhaps more exposed to injuries than others; and from the frail condition of his nature liable to fall into sin, especially as the artifice of the devil is principally levelled against every good man, to seduce him, if possible, from his duty, and to leave that good way which he so long hopefully went on in; but when once he has finished his course, fought the good fight, and come off conqueror, we can then pronounce him completely safe and happy, he enters upon his rest, a state of present comfort and security; and when the sensual man's happiness ends, his begins.

Ver. 30. *Like as a partridge taken, and kept in a cage, so is the heart of the proud.*] Πέρδιξ θηρευτὴς ἐν καρτάλλῳ; *i.e.* As a tame partridge, kept in a cage, by its art decoys others of the like kind into the nets spread for them, and then prides itself over them: so the proud man watches for another's fall, and insults over him in his misfortune. Bochart understands the passage in this sense, "Hominem superbum, altero in ruinam impulso, sic in illum insultare, quomodo Perdix venator, seu cicer in cavea, sui generis aves, quas suis artibus in laqueum induxit." (Hieroz. lib. i. cap. 13. par. ii.) Pliny and Aristotle both take notice of the game-partridge, and of its cunning to entice others; the latter calls it πέρδιξ θηρευτὴς, as this writer does. (Hist. Anim. lib. ix. cap. 8. Plin. lib. x. cap. 33.) St. Austin observes, that the other partridges are taken by their eagerness to fight with that in the cage. (Const. Faust.) The proud man here is the same with the deceitful one, mentioned in the former verse, and means a false friend who intrudes upon families with an air of confidence and respect; but his design only is, out of an ill-natured curiosity, to pry into their secrets, and to expose them, *Scire volunt secreta domus, atque inde timeri.* Grotius thinks ὑπερηφάνου a corrupt reading, and puts instead of it ὑπερφιάλου, i.e. *perfidi*, which indeed seems more agreeable to the context.

Ver. 31. *And in things worthy praise will lay blame upon thee.*] Most editions have ἐν τοῖς αἱρετικοῖς, but the true reading is either αἰνετοῖς, which our translators follow, or ἀἱρετοῖς, which the Vulgate favours, *Et in electis imponit maculam; i.e.* he will spy out some fault, or lay something to the charge of the elect: the best and most innocent persons cannot escape him: for this is applicable to persons as well as things (σοι being generally omitted), though our version renders otherwise.

Ver. 34. *Receive a stranger into thy house, and he will disturb thee, and turn thee out of thine own.*] Ἀπαλλοτριώσει σε ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων σου, either out of thine own house, or thy goods and possessions. In this latter sense the Vulgate takes it, *Abalienabit te a tuis propriis;* and the Tigurine version, *Cum perturbatione subvertet, exuetque te tuis possessionibus;* διαστρέψει σε ἐν ταραχαῖς is badly rendered by the Vulgate, *Subvertet te in turbine.* The meaning rather is, He will overturn your house, and distract the peace of it, ἐν ταραχαῖς, by the disturbances which he will occasion. The sense is the same with ver. 29. One cannot but observe a remarkable paronomasia in the words ἐνοίκισον ἀλλότριον, — καὶ ἀπαλλοτριώσει σε. Instances of this, besides those which occur in private life daily, are Massinissa, king of Numidia, who receiving Jugurtha into his familiarity and house, occasioned such disturbances as to prove his ruin. The like may be observed of Menelaus entertaining Paris, who, in return, stole his fair wife Helen, and kindled thereby the long war between the Greeks and the Trojans. Herod, too, coming into the family of Hyrcanus, by the marriage of Mariamne, seized their kingdom, and was the ruin of the Asmonean race. (See his life in Josephus.)

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CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *WHEN thou wilt do good, know to whom thou dost it; so shalt thou be thanked for thy benefits.*] This is a consequence of the last verse in the former chapter, wherein we are advised not to receive a stranger into our house; for often, without knowing it, one admits a worthless, treacherous, designing person, who will either pry into and discover the secrets of the family, or may attempt improper or indecent liberties in it, and thereby give much trouble, and occasion great disturbance. The advice here in general is, to make a prudent choice of the persons to whom we do the favour of an entertainment, or other good turn, that we may have the pleasure of obliging worthy objects, and such as will have the gratitude to thank us for our kindness, and the ingenuity to acknowledge the obligation. Or the direction here may be, that when there is a contest about disposing of a post of some trust and consequence, or of a gift and benefaction of value and worth, and there are many candidates for the same place or favour,—in such a competition to deliberate on the merit of each, and prefer one that is most worthy, or has most need, to one that is less so, or has less occasion. Or if this is extended to charity, as it is most commonly understood, and which the context seems to favour, it then points out the great discernment and caution which are necessary to be used, to know who are real and proper objects. The direction does not seem to include common and daily charities, which offer themselves continually, almost in every quarter, wherein one need not be so scrupulous as to examine strictly into the merit or the particular wants and circumstances of all that apply to us; lest, if we are too nice and exact in our inquiry, we lose frequent opportunities of exercising our liberality, and, being too wary in the distribution of our alms, draw upon ourselves the murmurs and curses of the poor; but rather to be inquisitive after and assist distressed merit or persecuted piety, such as are come to poverty not through their own fault or idleness, as is the case of such as make a trade of begging, but unfortunate persons, unhappily reduced through some sudden calamity or accident, modestly concealing their misfortunes, or silently declaring their wants by a sad expressive countenance, or such as suffer for righteousness' sake, and are in bonds and afflictions for the testimony of the truth. It is of charity done to such worthy objects as these, we are to understand our Saviour when he says, *I was a hungry, and ye gave me meat;* and not "to imitate (says St. Jerome) the custom of many in the world, who are unwilling to distribute to the necessities of the saints, and are regardless of the real wants of their poor neighbours, and yet lavish away the superfluity of their money, which would make many distressed families happy, upon entertainments and diversions."

Ver. 3. *There can no good come to him that is always occupied in evil, nor to him that giveth no alms.*] This does not seem rightly translated. By the disjunction it looks as if two different persons were here spoken of, whereas the fate only of the uncharitable sinner is hinted at. The sense is, that the sinner who giveth no alms, cannot expect to be forgiven; charity being an appointed means of procuring God's favour and reconciliation, and an atonement that will be accepted for the multitude of sins. And so the Vulgate seems to take it, *Non est ei bene, qui assiduus est in malis, et Eleemosynas non danti.* Alms-giving was accounted by the Jewish doctors, one of the essential parts of their religion; and the rabbins call it, as well as the sacred writers, by the name of righteousness. As by this merciful appointment, God has shewed his tender regard for even the meanest of his creatures, so the Jewish synagogue was very careful to execute the orders of God in this respect. We learn from their writers, that in every synagogue there were two treasury chests; one for poor strangers, and the other for their own poor. Those that were charitably inclined, put their alms into these chests at their coming into the synagogue to pray, thereby to recommend their devotions, and forward the holy work they met about. Upon extraordinary occasions, when times and cases of calamity called for it, they made collections, upon which occasions the ruler of the synagogue gave orders to ask every body for his charity. And the primitive Christians were so exemplary for their charity, that no beggars were seen among them, nor did they extend their benevolence to their own poor only, but even to those of their enemies; which behaviour was so affecting, that even Julian the Apostate proposed it as a pattern to his own subjects. (Sozom. Eccl. Hist. lib. v. cap. 16. Just. Mart. Apol. 2.)

Ver. 4, 5. *Give to the godly man, and help not a sinner; do well unto him that is lowly, but give not to the ungodly,* &c.] The former part is repeated, ver. 7. not by any mistake, but to inculcate, probably, that in the distribution of our charity, we must make a distinction of the persons or objects on whom we bestow it. The godly and lowly man (for they are equivalent terms in Scripture), as most deserving of our help, is most entitled to it; and we have this farther comfort and encouragement, that he will not abuse our kindness, but be thankful to us for all the good offices which he receives, and to God for every benefactor he raises him up. But the sinner will be so far from making any acknowledgment of our kindness, or indeed any good use of it, that probably he may strengthen himself in his wickedness thereby, or abuse our kindness, and apply the means afforded him to our prejudice and disadvantage. And therefore, in the following part of the verse, the advice is, *Hold back thy bread, lest he overmatch thee thereby. Prohibe panes illi dari,* Vulg. Which not only seems to mean, that we should not support the sinner, or any worthless object, in his indigence, as we do others in the same condition, but that we should discourage others from being kind to him, acquaint such as are strangers to him with his character, and how unworthy he is of their favour and charity, and not suffer one of so little worth to receive what others want as much, and deserve much better. From hence it appears, that the duty of alms-giving, as it was enjoined and practised in the times of this writer, was more restrained, than under the gospel. For under the latter, every person, though he be as odious to us as a Jew to a Samaritan, is to be esteemed our neighbour, and as such to be relieved by us; nor are our good offices and kindness to be refused even unto sinners, as the merit of persons is to be no rule of our charity, and the doing acts of benevolence to those that least deserve it, is the very

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method of the Divine goodness, and as such, is recommended in Scripture to our imitation. I shall only observe, that the construction of the Greek in the latter part of the fifth verse, ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς οἷς ἂν ποιήσῃς αὐτῷ, is very singular, but agreeable to the Attic dialect. There are several instances of this syntax in the New Testament. (See Mark xiii. 19. John ii. 22. iv. 50. 1 Cor. vi. 19.) But Ephes. ii. 10. κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς, οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ Θεὸς, κ. τ. λ. comes nearest this passage. (See more instances, Glass. Philol. Sac. lib. iii. de pronomine.)

Ver. 6. *For the Most High hateth sinners,—and keepeth them against the mighty day of their punishment.*] This last sentence is omitted in the Vatican edition. The Vulgate transposes it, and joins it to the end of the fourth verse, rendering, *Custodiens eos in diem vindictæ*, without the epithet. The *mighty day of punishment* is equivalent to ἡμέρα κρίσεως, (2 Pet. ii. 9. iii. 7. 1 John iv. 17.) and to κρίσις μεγάλης ἡμέρας, Jude 6. Τηρεῖσθαι and φυλάττεσθαι among the Greeks answer to *reservari*, and *custodiri* among the Latins, and are all of them elegantly used of delinquents reserved and secured for future punishment. Thus Prov. xvi. 4. φυλάσσεται ὁ ἀσεβὴς εἰς ἡμέραν κακὴν, an expression similar to that of this writer. (See also, Acts xxv. 21.) Ovid too has, "Pœnæ crucianda reservor."

Ver. 10. *Never trust thy enemy.*] Neither thy present nor quondam enemy, because he will not soon forget former injuries received, but will revenge himself when opportunity offers. Nothing is more rare than a solid and lasting reconciliation, according to that of Horace:—

"Male sarta
Gratia nequaquam coit, et rescinditur."
(Epist. lib. i. ep. 3.)

He that is hurt and injured, with difficulty forgets it, and he that hath done the wrong, cannot easily persuade himself that the other has forgot it, so always suspects him; he hates him, because the injured person is a constant reproach to him, whenever he meets or thinks of him, and imagining him to resent the first injury, is always ready to return a second. Mr. Pope has excellently described this,

"Forgiveness to the injur'd does belong,
But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong."

For like as iron rusteth, so is his wickedness.] The ancients, speaking of envy, malice, and hatred, often make use of the comparison of rust to display their ill effects. Thus Horace:—

—"Hic nigræ succus loliginis, hæc est
Æruginо mera." (Lib. i. Serm.)

And Martial:—

——"Nimiaque ærugine captus
Allatras omnem, quod tibi cunque datum est."

The sense is, that as brass (Χαλκὸς in the Greek, *Æramentum* in the Vulgate), though you take never so much pains to rub it clean and polish it, will quickly again contract a green rust; so an enemy, though seemingly reconciled, will hide his evil dispositions and lurking intention for a time, but will sooner or later return to his old rancour and wickedness; for though he knows how to dissemble to advantage, yet the root of malice and bitterness being still in him, it will be sure to put forth.

Ver. 11. *Though he humble himself, and go crouching, yet take good heed, and beware of him.*] *i. e.* Such a designing person will put on a friendly appearance, will look humbly, and act submissively, that the person on whom he intends to seize and vent his malice, may lie the more open to his premeditated assault. He is, therefore, the more to be suspected for this piece of artifice, and to be looked upon as concealing some design of mischief, under such a cringing behaviour; he only waits an opportunity, when he may be revenged more securely, and injure you most effectually, for the disagreeable submissions he has been obliged to, so much against his inclination. The Psalmist describes such a designing and dangerous person in the selfsame terms, *He falleth down and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall into the hands of his captains.* (Psal. x. 11.) Nor is such a prudent caution inconsistent with the behaviour required towards enemies, even under the gospel. For though we are commanded to love them, yet are we not commanded to make them our confidants; though it condemns hatred, and returning evil for evil, yet it allows a proper care and reasonable distrust of such, as we know bear us no good will. For there is a great difference between not injuring, or even being ready to assist them, and the putting ourselves in their power, and making them our bosom friends, and lying at their mercy by too great a freedom and open-heartedness. Even among our confessed friends, all are not intimates, nor have we the same confidence in or equal reliance upon all; we know and can judge how far each may be trusted and depended on, and deserves to have a greater or less share in our esteem and confidence: and with respect to our enemies, prudence does not certainly require less care and circumspection to be observed, whose pretended friendship is only for their own advantage. Ecclesiastical history furnishes us with many instances of saints and holy fathers, who, being upright and well-meaning themselves, and suspecting no harm from others' affected civility, have been deceived, imposed upon, and almost ruined, by the artifice of false and designing friends. Such was Greg. Nazianzen, whom Maximus, the cynic philosopher, having gained upon by his complaisance, address, and insinuation, the use this subtle impostor made of the friendship indulged him was, to decry his patron and master secretly, to set himself up as his rival, and to endeavour to dispossess him of his bishopric; concealing his ambitious design under the deceitful veil of being his disciple and admirer. (Cave's Lives of the Fath. 296, 7.) This instance shews us the justness of our author's observation in this and the following verse, to take good heed and beware of such intriguing persons, whose friendship is self-interest, and their familiarity a view only to their own gain or promotion; who, however humble they appear, mean to stand up in thy place, to seize upon thy office or dignity, τὴν καθέδραν σου, and hope to rise by thy fall.

Thou shalt be unto him as if thou hadst wiped a looking-glass, and thou shalt know that his rust hath not been altogether wiped away.] The Vulgate and Jerome's Bible wholly omit this. The present reading of the Greek, γνώσῃ ὅτι οὐκ εἰς τέλος κατίωσε, seems to be corrupt, and yet it is in all the editions: I would either read ἀκατίωσε, or with

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Grotius, ἐκκατίωσε, *Cognosces non esse planè emaculatum.* And thus Tacitus, "Cavendos esse flagitiis commaculatos," (Annal. lib. vi.) This writer here alludes to mirrors of metal, generally of brass, which were used in ancient times; of some of which was the laver of brass made, Exod. xxxviii. 8. The nature of these is such, that when once the rust has eaten into them, though they are wiped carefully, and all endeavours used to remove it, it will be perpetually returning, and sometimes is confirmed to that degree, that it can never be gotten out, and quite spoils the polish of the mirror, and by that means renders it useless. Such is the concealed hatred of a false friend, reconciled only in appearance; his resentment, which is firmly riveted, will soon break out again, and you will perceive and experience his old rancour.

Ver. 13. *Who will pity a charmer that is bitten with a serpent, or any such as come nigh wild beasts?*] Θηρία may either mean wild beasts in general, or serpents and vipers, and such-like venomous creatures. There were a sort of physicians among the Hebrews, Calmet calls them *enchanters,* who took upon them to charm serpents, and hinder them from stinging, or to cure those that were stung, by enchantments and spells. It does not appear there was anciently any medicine invented or found out for the cure of the bite of a venomous animal, such as modern times have discovered; and therefore these enchanters often failed of success, and their pretended charms proved ineffectual. They were, notwithstanding their boasted spells, sometimes bit by them themselves, and lost their life by their poison. Jeremiah alludes to these noxious creatures, and the supposed cure by spells, when he says, *I will send serpents and cockatrices among you, which will not be charmed;* (viii. 17.) as does the Psalmist, who describes the adder as sometimes stopping her ears, and refusing to hear the voice of the charmer, though he charmed never so wisely. (Psal. lviii. 4, 5.) The sense of the author in this passage either is, that the keeping company with sinners is contracting a certain infection, and sucking in a deadly poison; that they are like so many wild beasts, slaying the souls of men; that persons, warned of the danger of such evil communication, who will, notwithstanding, associate with them and run into mischief, fall unpitied, and may thank themselves for their ruin; or, from the context we may suppose the meaning rather to be, that as one does not pity those who boast of their skill to charm serpents, and have the rashness often to handle them, if they are at last bitten by them, because they voluntarily run into such danger, and vainly thought to escape that harm by art, which St. Paul once did by miracle: so neither is any pity due to one who trusts to a seeming and false friend, one suddenly taken into favour from an inveterate enemy, a person that one knows not thoroughly, or has reason to know by past experience too well, ever to expect any good from him for the future; to adopt such a one, upon whom so little dependance can be fixed, either as a companion or friend, is courting danger, and betraying one's own safety.

Ver. 16. *An enemy speaketh sweetly with his lips, but in his heart he imagineth how to throw thee into a pit; he will weep with his eyes, but if he find opportunity, will not be satisfied with blood.*] This is a fine description of the fawning parasite, who flattereth with his lips, but imagineth mischief in his heart. The Psalmist describes such, when he says, *They give good words with their lips, but dissemble in their double heart.* They have honey upon their tongue, and the poison of asps under it, which Plautus well expresses,

"In melle linguæ sunt sitæ atque orationes
Lacteque: corda felle sunt sita, atque acerbo aceto."
(In Trucul.)

Believe, therefore, neither their words, looks, nor even their tears, they are false and designing, the tears of a crocodile, who aims to devour its prey the next moment; "Nullæ sunt majores, periculosioresque insidiæ, quam quæ sub nomine amicitiæ, et officii simulatione occultantur," says Cicero. It was by her false tears that Samson's wife deceived him, and got from him the secret of the riddle; and, through her deceit, *unto the strong came forth bitterness:* and by the same artifice Delilah stole the intelligence from him wherein his mighty strength lay. Against such sort of deceivers, who have the art of moving by their tears, Ovid gives this caution,

"Neve puellarum lachrymis moveare, caveto;
Ut flerent, oculos erudiere suos."
(De Remed. Amor.)

It was thus that Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, slew all those Jews that were marching to join Gedaliah, by going out in a friendly manner to meet them, by discoursing freely with them, and treacherously weeping all along as he went. (Jer. xli. 6, 7.) By which artful deceit he prevailed to slay numbers of them, and cast their dead bodies into the midst of a pit. Solomon gives the like description of such dangerous dissemblers, *He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him; when he speaketh fair, believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart: i. e.* many artifices and tricks lie concealed there to surprise and ruin thee. The rendering of the LXX. is much stronger and closer to our purpose, χείλεσι πάντα ἐπινεύει ἀποκλαιόμενος ἐχθρὸς, ἐν δὲ τῇ καρδίᾳ τεκταίνεται δόλους· ἐάν σου δέηται ὁ ἐχθρὸς μεγάλῃ τῇ φωνῇ, μὴ πεισθῇς. κ. τ. λ. (Prov. xxvi. 24, 25. see Psal. xii. 2. lxii. 4. Jer. ix. 8. 12. Ezek. xxxiii. 31.)

Ver. 17. *If adversity come upon thee, thou shalt find him there first.*] Πρότερον, *i. e.* first before others, either to satisfy his ill-natured curiosity, and to be a witness of your disgrace, or that he may have the pleasure to insult you under your humiliation and affliction. Some editions have πρότερόν σου, *i. e.* first or nearest to your person. And thus Calmet and Messieurs of Port-Royal render, *Vous le trouverez le premier aupres de vous.* If πρότερόν σου seems harsh in this sense, might not πρὸ ἑταίρων σοῦ be the true reading? *i. e.* he will be the first officiously to intrude himself, even before your friends and acquaintance.

Ver. 18. *He will shake his head, and clap his hands, and whisper much, and change his countenance.*] *i. e.* He will shake his head at thee by way of contempt and insult; (see Ecclus. xiii. 7.) clap his hands, in token of his rejoicing at thy misfortunes, and spread many false reports about thee secretly, by insinuations and whispers, and be quite another person from what he appeared to be; or rather, the man will then shew himself in his true colours.

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CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 2. *BURDEN not thyself above thy power, and have no fellowship with one that is mightier and richer than thyself; for how agree the kettle and the earthen pot together? for if the one be smitten against the other, it shall be broken.*] When thou choosest a friend, choose an equal, one of the like state and condition with thyself. In friendship, as in marriage, too great a difference of circumstances, age, and condition is dangerous, and often the occasion of unhappiness. *Pares amici*, is the poet's advice in friendship, as *nube pari* is in marriage. The friendship and confidence of great folks flatter indeed the ambition of persons of a lower rank, they think it an honour to be distinguished by them, and propose great advantage to themselves by such an acquaintance, but at length they are convinced of their folly, and have cause to repent of their intimacy. According to that of Horace,

> "Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
> Expertus metuit."

They propose, indeed, to raise themselves, and make their fortunes by paying their court to great men; but they are often disappointed in their pursuit, sacrificing in the mean time their liberty to a prospect of grandeur, and are at best but splendid slaves. "Nunquam est fidelis cum potente societas," is the motto of one of Phædrus's fables, which he illustrates also by the instance of the kettle and earthen pot. There is the like comparison, too, in Æsop, and upon the same occasion, near three hundred years before this writer, to which probably he alludes. The man of wealth and power encourages the weaker vessel in the language of the brazen pot, "Ne metuas, curabo enim ego ne tu allidaris;" but the answer of the other contains a fine moral, "Collisio certe cum meo fiet periculo, decretum mihi est a te disjungi;" for when either the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, engage together, the weak are sure to be sufferers, and to lose the little they have, and sometimes their liberty and lives. Plautus illustrates the inconvenience of an unequal match by the simile of an ass sinking under too great a burden,

> "Venit mihi in mentem, te esse hominem divitem
> Factiosum: me item esse hominem hominum pauperrimum,
> Nunc si filiam locassem meam tibi, in mentem venit,
> Te bovem esse et me esse asellum: ubi tecum conjunctus siem,
> Ubi onus nequeam ferre pariter, jaceam ego asinus in luto."

Where the poet, like our author, compares an unequal engagement to an over-heavy burden, and makes such a match to be no less a folly, than for a contemptible animal to vie with one of an overgrown size. We have a celebrated instance of the danger of having fellowship with one too mighty, and depending upon such a one for safety and protection, in what happened to Ahaz, king of Judah; he called into his assistance Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, and made an alliance with him; the consequence was, he secured himself against Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Syria, but he delivered himself into the hands of a more formidable and powerful enemy, who, as the text expresses it, distressed him, but strengthened him not. (2 Kings xvi. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 20.)

Ver. 3. *The rich man hath done wrong, and yet he threateneth withal; the poor is wronged, and he must entreat also.*] The rich man adds one injury to another, evil and abusive language to some act of violence and oppression. He invades others' rights, and then, to justify himself, is angry as if he was the sufferer. The poor man is forced to submit to, and even ask pardon of, the rich oppressor, and to ask pardon as if he was the aggressor. This passage seems to be an imitation of Prov. xviii. 23. *The poor useth entreaties, but the rich answereth roughly.* The reading of the Greek here is very different; that followed by our translators gives the best sense, and the truth of it is confirmed by history and experience. Men are often obliged in the neighbourhood of the great, and find it to be their best way, to buy their peace by submission, and to compound for and dispense with lesser injuries, to prevent more and greater. One reads of fathers not only dissembling their grief and concern before a merciless tyrant, for the death of some of their children, but even flattering and commending him to appease his brutality, and to prevail on him to spare the rest. Thus Seneca, "Potentiorum injuriæ hilari vultu, non patienter tantum ferendæ sunt." (Lib. ii. de Ira. cap. 33.) Juvenal well describes the sad state of a poor man under the merciless power of an overgrown imperious person, in the following lines:—

> ——"Libertas pauperis hæc est,
> Pulsatus rogat, et pugnis concisus adorat,
> Ut liceat paucis cum dentibus inde reverti."

Ver. 7. *And he will shame thee by his meats, until he have drawn thee dry twice or thrice, and at the last he will laugh thee to scorn.*] Though you may think it a favour to be invited often to his table, yet by the frequency or magnificence of his entertainments he will at length ruin you; for if you attempt to return his civilities, and treat him in the like manner, with the same elegance that he is used to, as perhaps he will expect two or three such treats, it will occasion much expense, and hurt your circumstances in the end, when he will laugh at your presumption for pretending to vie with men of fortune. The author seems to allude to Prov. xxiii. 1. which in the rendering of the LXX. comes near this place, ἐὰν καθίσῃς δειπνεῖν ἐπὶ τραπέζης δυνάστου, νοητῶς νόει τὰ παρατιθέμενά σοι——εἰδὼς ὅτι τοιαῦτά σε δεῖ παρασκευάσαι. Or the sense may be, He will invite you to his entertainments, and make much of you for a few visits; and when he has got what he wants from you, and drawn out of you what he has occasion for, he will afterward laugh at you, and pretend not to know thee.

Ver. 8. *Beware that thou be not deceived, and brought down in thy jollity.*] Ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ σου; *i. e.* Take heed that thou be not reduced, or suffer in thy fortune by feasting and entertainments, for so εὐφροσύνη sometimes signifies. (See Esth. ix. 19.) Though a grateful temper, and an endeavour to shew civilities to a benefactor, are to be commended; yet the ambition of entertaining the great, merely as such, for the empty pleasure of being thought considerable, or the vain eclat of having such grand acquaintance, is to be condemned in one of a private fortune, and is an instance of extravagance and folly. The marginal reading therefore, *Lest thou be brought down by thy simplicity*, or imprudence, ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ σου, is very proper; which the Vulgate also follows. We have in these, and

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some of the following verses, a lively image and representation of the behaviour of the rich and powerful towards such as are beneath them, and depend upon them. One sees the absoluteness of their will, haughtiness of their temper, the oppression and injustice, false caresses, artificial disguises, and deceitful promises, with which they impose upon their credulity and simplicity, expecting an assiduous and often expensive attendance from them, till at length they have reduced them to a state of indigence; and then they abandon them in their distress, and make them the subject of their contempt and raillery. Those, therefore, says a pious writer, who truly love God, pay not their homage to such golden idols; as faith assures them, that in their state of humility they are greater than the lords of the world, and that they degenerate from the nobleness of their spirit, if their ambition carries them to aspire after any thing but heaven.

Ver. 9. *If thou be invited of a mighty man, withdraw thyself, and so much the more will he invite thee.*] The advice is not to refuse such an invitation, which would be looked upon as rudeness and ill-breeding, but to accept it modestly, to behave decently, to go but rarely, and to withdraw discreetly. Probably this writer alludes to Prov. xxv. 17. *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house, lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.* Where the Interlinear version has, *Rarum fac pedem;* and so the Hebrew and Greek. If such a conduct is advisable with respect to private persons, our neighbours, much more are reservedness and caution to be observed as to frequency of visits, and a proper distance and carriage towards the great, our superiors. Experience confirms this advice of the wise man, to retire from rather than run after persons of figure and distinction, because they usually despise such as press upon them too much; they grow tired of them, and though their politeness keeps them from saying so, they esteem such as officious impertinents. We should therefore approach them, says an ancient writer, as we do the fire, not too near for fear of being scorched, nor at too great a distance, so as to receive no benefit from it. As we should not be too forward and bold in intruding, so neither should we be so negligent of our own interest, as to forego an acquaintance, which may some time or other be beneficial to us: neither offend by our constant presence, and over fondness to be remembered by them, nor yet by so long an absence, as to occasion our being forgotten and overlooked by them. We should be dutiful and respectful to them, but not servile or abject; neither too much admire nor too much fear the persons of the great, so as to betray the cause of virtue by any faulty compliance. This has been the case of many eminent persons in the church, and even some of the great lights of it, as appears from ecclesiastical history, who, having more of the innocence of the lamb, than the courage of the lion, have not been sufficiently upon their guard in treating with persons of great authority and power; but, through promises and caresses, or fear of disgrace and punishment, have abandoned the defence of the truth, and been surprised or rather forced into resolutions, which they have repented afterward.

Ver. 11. *Affect not to be made equal unto him in talk.*] All the printed copies read here, μὴ ἔπεχε εἰσηγορεῖσθαι. The true reading undoubtedly is, μὴ ἔπεχε ἰσηγορεῖσθαι. (See Grabe's Proleg. tom. iii. cap. 2.) The reason for such a reservedness of speech before great persons, follows in the next verse, *Cruelly he will lay up thy words.* The copy which our translators follow, I presume, had ἀνελεημόνως συντηρήσει λόγους σου, but the rest have, ἀνελεήμων ὁ μὴ συντηρῶν λόγους, which, if it has any sense, means, that he that guards not his tongue, and watches not over his words in such company, wants pity for himself, and is unmindful of his own interest. And thus Calmet expounds it, *Celui qui ne garde pas sa langue, ou qui ne veille pas sur son discours, manque de pitié pour soi même.* But the sense given in our version seems preferable, which is confirmed by the Vulgate, *Immitis animus illius conservabit verba tua; i. e.* If a prince or person of great power takes occasion, from your words, of jealousy, mistrust, or offence against you, though he says nothing for a time, he will afterward shew you that he treasured up what was spoken, and give you a proof of his resentment. He will use you here ill, and perhaps imprison you; but whatever treatment you meet with of this sort, ascribe it to your own imprudence, in being too open and unguarded. Thus Tiberius used to do, "Verba, vultus in crimen detorquens, reconderat," as Tacitus observes of him. And Sejanus's temper, as described by that writer, was the same; "Odia in longum jaciebat, quæ reconderet, auctaque promeret."

Ver. 13. *Observe and take good heed, for thou walkest in peril of thy overthrowing; when thou hearest these things, awake in thy sleep.*] The first sentence, as it is in our version, contains a necessary piece of advice and caution as to our general conduct, but the Vulgate confines it to hearing in particular, *Attende diligenter auditui tuo.* And indeed some Greek copies have, συντήρησον καὶ πρόσχες σφόδρα τοῦ ἀκούειν; *i. e.* Listen to a great man when he is talking, with much attention and respect, and at the same time with such circumspection, as not to seem inquisitive, or prying into his affairs; be as watchful and cunning in not being any ways surprised, as one that feigneth him asleep, and is awake all the time. And thus Bossuet, *Vigilem te volo, sed instar somnolenti.* As inattention betrays neglect and contempt, so too much attention in you, and too great a curiosity, may raise jealousy and suspicions in him against you. In the court of princes, and levees of great men, the grand secret of behaviour is, says Calmet, to have ears and hear not, eyes and see not, and a tongue and speak not. To hear every thing, and divulge nothing; to observe all that passes, and in appearance to be quite absent; to make just reflections on men and things, and seemingly to mind nothing, and be wholly incurious as to every body, and their concerns. Such a conduct, if it raises not to a man friends, will be sure to create him no enemies. This masterly stroke in politics, and many others which might be mentioned, shew this writer's nice discernment, his knowledge of courts and public life, and the justness of his observations made on both; and contains a higher sense, and more agreeable to the context, than the common interpretation of attending to, and meditating upon, what is delivered and spoken.

Ver. 17. *What fellowship hath the wolf with the lamb? so the sinner with the godly.*] The wise man having taken notice of the inconvenience and often danger of the poor keeping company with the rich, the weak with the powerful, the slavery of courts, and the proper carriage to be

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observed towards great men, he farther confirms his first thesis, that all persons ought to cultivate fellowship with those of the same rank and condition, by instancing in the godly and the sinner, who can much less than the other maintain friendship, and keep up an intimacy together, because their way of life, sentiments, inclinations, morals, and conduct, are disagreeable to each other, as dissonant as those of the wolf and the lamb: the one innocent, gentle, and amiable; the other, mischievous, outrageous, and devouring. For as a mutual resemblance of manners, likeness of views, interests, and designs, and as it were a sympathy of souls, are no less approved means of uniting persons, than equality of state and condition; so, where these are wanting, or disagree, an intimacy cannot long subsist, and extremes may as well be supposed to meet, or contraries coalesce, as a harmony subsist between the godly and the sinner, whose pursuits are so widely different. Thus Cicero, "Ob nullam aliam causam boni improbis, improbi bonis amici esse non possunt, nisi quod tanta est inter eos, quanta maxima esse potest, morum studiorumque distantia." (De Amicit.) The comparison of the wolf and the lamb, whose union is inconsistent in nature, is often made use of by Horace, and other writers, to shew the impossibility of a friendship improperly contracted. And when Isaiah, prophetically to shew the blessed effects of the gospel, and the great change it should produce in men's sentiments, uses the comparison of the wolf and the lamb dwelling and feeding together; he introduces that allusion to intimate, that the true religion should reconcile, and make one, those whom the vices of heathenism had so variously distracted and divided; that persons, the most separated in interest, inclination, religion, and climate, should then happily unite, and compose one church. (Isa. xi. 6.) In Scripture, the disagreement of God and Belial, and their respective votaries, is well represented by the metaphor of light and darkness, which are quite incompatible, and mutually destroy each other.

Ver. 18. *What agreement is there between the hyena and the dog?*] As to the fact of the natural antipathy between these two animals, it is confirmed by various testimonies. There is a remarkable one in Oppian; after having mentioned that the skin of the hyena will fright away all dogs, he adds, that if a man makes shoes of the skin, the dogs will not follow after nor bark at him:

Καί σε κύνες κεινοῖσιν ἐμβεβαῶτα πεδίλοις
Ἀντίον οὐχ ὑλάουσι. (De Venat. lib. iii.)

Pliny mentions the like of the tongue, "Eos qui hyænæ linguam in calceamento sub pede habeant, non latrari a canibus." (Lib. xxviii. 8. Nat. Hist.) Ælian likewise confirms the account of this irreconcilable hatred between them; he says, that the hyena is a voracious animal, that imitates the voice and vomiting of a man, and by that artifice entices the dogs out, whom it instantly devours. (Hist. Animal. lib. vii.) And with this account agree Arist. Hist. lib. viii. cap. 5. Plin. lib. viii. cap. 30. Chrysost. in S. Marc. Hom. 13. This father adds another remarkable particular, that dogs are struck instantly dumb, and cannot open, when they approach the very shadow of the hyena: others say, that it stupifies and makes them giddy, and that the flesh of it eaten is good against the bite of a mad dog. Bochart enumerates many such whims, and calls them, "Magorum atque Arabum nugas." (Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 56.) The Arabic version of this place changes the hyena into another animal, *Quorsum versetur canis cum lacerto*, which he shews to be a mistake. The Vulgate, too, wholly omits the hyena, nor does it substitute any other animal to form the comparison, *Quæ communicatio sancto homini ad canem?* This mistake, he thinks, arose from the transcriber not understanding what the hyena meant, and therefore changed it for *homini*, and afterward added *sancto*, to preserve the opposition between holy and impure persons, called dogs, Rev. xxii. 15. in loc. sup. citat. The Greek copies all agree in ὑαίνη, and countenance the literal, rather than a metaphorical sense; which probably was a marginal gloss, and crept into the text. However this be, the author introduces this simile to intimate, that the rich are often great oppressors, that they swallow up the needy, and *make the poor of the land to fail.* (Amos viii. 4.) That what a lion is in the forest, as it follows in the next verse, such is an over-wealthy, powerful person, with respect to the helpless and poor.

Ver. 22. *When a rich man is fallen, he hath many helpers: he speaketh things not to be spoken, and yet men justify him. The poor man slipped, and yet they rebuked him too; he spake wisely, and could have no place.* Ver. 23. *When a rich man speaketh, every man holdeth his tongue, and look what he saith, they extol it to the clouds; but if the poor man speak, they say, What fellow is this? and if he stumble, they will help to overthrow him.*] If riches are wanting, the best qualifications are taken no notice of; you are on that account esteemed as a person of no consequence or worth, and instead of being befriended in a low condition, you will meet with affronts and injuries sooner. According to that of Horace,

"Est animus tibi, sunt mores, et lingua, fidesque;
Si quadringentis sex septem millia desint,
Plebs eris." (Epist. lib. i.)

But the rich man is caressed and courted; he has instantly all endowments and qualifications, all good qualities both of body and mind. Thus the same poet:

"Omnis enim res
Divitiis paret; quas qui construxerit, ille
Clarus erit, fortis, justus, sapiens etiam, et rex,
Et quicquid volet." (Sat. lib. ii.)

Thucydides well observes, δεινὰ εὐπραξίαι συγκρύψαι καὶ συσκιάσαι τὰ ἑκάστων ἁμαρτήματα, that prosperity is of great advantage to hide men's failings and defects, which Sallust has imitated with great conciseness and strength, "Res secundæ mire vitiis sunt obtentui." And Theognis as beautifully expresses the disadvantage of poverty, to disparage all that a necessitous man can offer, or speak, when he says, that it makes a man tongue-tied, γλῶσσα δέ οἱ δέδεται. But none of the sayings of the ancients exceed the beauty of our author's sentiments on the occasion, particularly in ver. 21—23. where the antithesis is elegant, and well preserved. I shall only observe, that our version has not fully expressed οὐκ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ τόπος, which means more than that he could have no place; *viz.* that he was not commended or honoured for his wise reflections: and so τόπον διδόναι is to be understood in many places of this writer: (see xvi. 3. 14. xxxviii. 12.) whereas if the rich man talks loosely or

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profanely, speaks ἀπόῤῥητα, things not fit to be named or repeated, the sparkling of his wit is admired, as if wit was consistent with indecency, or what is shocking can be pleasing.

Ver. 24. *Riches are good unto him that hath no sin, and poverty is evil in the mouth of the ungodly.*] Ὧι μὴ πρόσεστιν ἁμαρτία, in which there is no sin by the means of acquiring them, or when they are honestly got; which is a better sense, than that of our version. The author in the observations he has made above on the different states, does not condemn riches as such, nor universally justify or approve a state of poverty. For there are rich men who do honour to their great fortunes by the good use which they make of them, and there are poor men who disgrace even their low estate, by their pitch of wickedness. To the one, riches are good when gotten lawfully, enjoyed moderately, and dispensed liberally; and when they are free from the sins of avarice, pride, luxury, and forgetfulness of God, which too commonly attend them, they are blessings. To the other, poverty is an evil when it is accompanied with impatience, murmuring, coveting other men's goods, or actually seizing upon them, which persons of a very indigent condition are often guilty of. It appears, therefore, that riches are not positively good in themselves, but it is the good or ill use of them only that denominates their worth and value: by the one they become the means of blessedness, and by the other they are made the occasion of falling. St. Bernard has wisely determined this point, "Aurum et argentum, et cætera hujusmodi, quantum ad animi bonum spectat, nec bona sunt, nec mala: usus horum bonus, abusio mala, sollicitudo pejor, quæstus turpior." (Lib. iv. de Considerat.) And so St. Chrysostom, commenting on this passage, οὐκ ἁπλῶς ἀπὸ κτημάτων, κ. τ. λ. *Non simpliciter a divitiis nascuntur mala, sed ideo quia qui illas receperunt, eis nesciunt recte uti. Quia et Abraham dives erat et Job, et non solum nihil damni eis accidit a divitiis, sed et clariores fuere: quia non in usum suum tantum has possidebant, sed ut eis juvarent etiam alios, quorum succurrerent inopiæ.* (Hom. 66. in cap. 48. Gen.)

Ver. 26. *A cheerful countenance is a token of a heart that is in prosperity, and the finding out of parables is a wearisome labour of the mind.*] *i. e.* The studious and contemplative man employed in deep researches, or in writing and expounding dark and obscure parables, has not that gay brisk countenance, as one that is at ease, and whose mind is perfectly without care. Study and intense application are apt to abate a man's vivacity, to flatten the spirits, and give a serious and grave turn to the countenance. For whereas joy discovers itself by sparkling eyes, an elevated brow, a free air, and an open aspect; intense contemplation, on the contrary, is denoted by fixed eyes, a contracted brow, a composed air, a settled or stern countenance, deliberate speech, or profound silence. These are tokens of a mind deeply engaged in intricate speculations, in painful and recondite disquisitions: and so laborious and fatiguing is close application both to body and mind, that Solomon very justly pronounced, *much study to be a weariness of the flesh;* (Eccles. xii. 12.) and that great experience of wisdom and knowledge was, as well as other pursuits, a vexation of spirit.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *BLESSED is he that hath not slipped with his mouth, and is not pricked with the multitude of sins.*] Our translators follow the Complut. edition, which reads, ἐν πλήθει ἁμαρτιῶν, but the more general reading is, ἐν λύπῃ ἁμαρτίας, *in tristitia delicti;* as the Vulgate has it. And so the marginal reading is, which does not mean, as some have interpreted, that a man is happy who is not affected with sorrow and remorse for his sins, for he that is so affected, and has a true inward compunction on that account, has the best title to, and prospect of, blessedness; but the sense of the whole verse is, that the man is happy, and highly to be commended, who, when poverty or any outward calamity lies heavy upon him, betrays no impatience, nor charges God foolishly by any murmur against him or the dispensations of his providence, nor, by a criminal dejection and sinful despondency, utters any thing reflecting upon his honour or justice.

Ver. 2. *Blessed is he whose conscience hath not condemned him.*] Μακάριος οὗ οὐ κατέγνω ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ. This is a Hebraism. Glassius produces many instances in the New Testament and other writings of this construction. Grotius contends, that the true reading is, μακάριος οὗ οὐ ἀπέγνω ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ, *Blessed is he who does not despond or despair under tribulation;* which is confirmed by the next sentence, *Who is not fallen from his hope in the Lord.* And this seems to be the sense of the Vulgate, *Felix qui non habuit animi sui tristitiam.* And thus Calmet, *Heureux celui dont l'ame n'est point tombée dans le decouragement.* Or the sense may be, That a good conscience is the ground of a religious assurance, like that of the apostle, *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.*

Ver. 3. *Riches are not comely for a niggard, and what should an envious man do with money?*] *i. e.* Riches do not become the sordid person, are of little service to ἀνδρὶ μικρολόγῳ, *viro cupido et tenaci,* in the Vulgate, which is hardly expressive enough; for it means one who is sparing of using them even upon necessary occasions. Theophrastus well defines μικρολογία to be, φειδωλία τοῦ διαφόρου ὑπὲρ τὸν καιρόν. Βάσκανος, though it is often used in the sense of *envious,* as our translators and the Vulgate render, yet here means *covetous:* and so it is often used in this book. (See ver. 6. 8. of this chapter, &c. xviii. 18. xxxvii. 11.) And so Grotius and Bossuet take it. The covetous man is so far justly styled envious, as he grudges the use and enjoyment of his wealth both to himself and others. This vice of covetousness so blinds the minds and hearts of those that are possessed with it, that they do not see its folly and deformity; they are apt to give the name of prudence, frugality, economy, or of some other virtue to a detestable sordid passion, which makes them enemies to God, to mankind, and even themselves.

Ver. 4. *He that gathereth by defrauding his own soul, gathereth for others that shall spend his goods riotously.*] The Vulgate rendering, *qui acervat ex animo suo,* probably is a mistake; it would have been better expressed by *anima sua.* The Greek ὁ συνάγων ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ, literally rendered, is, *He that gathereth from his life, i. e.* by his pinching manner of living, by depriving himself of even necessaries to enrich himself the more, lays up only for an

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extravagant heir, who will spend profusely in riot and luxury what he had been amassing with so much care and solicitude. And thus the Syriac, *Qui sibimet detrahit, colligit aliis.* And the Arabic is to the same effect. Our author has the same observation, xi. 18. *There is that waxeth rich by his wariness and pinching, and yet he knoweth not what time shall come upon him, and that he must leave those things to others, and die.* (See note on that place.) Solomon has many fine thoughts upon the occasion: (see Eccles. ii. 18. v. 7, 8. vi. 2.) and the poets have with great sharpness exposed this vice in their satires. Juvenal particularly takes notice of the vanity of starving a man's self to raise a family, and calls such a mean and sordid way of living, in order to die rich, folly and madness.

"Sed quò divitias hæc per tormenta coactas?
Cum furor haud dubius, cùm sit manifesta phrenesis,
Ut locuples moriaris, egenti vivere fato." (Sat. xiv.)

But nothing can be more just than our author's reflections upon this vice, and the reasons which he gives against it, which he pursues to the end of the nineteenth verse.

Ver. 7. *If he doth good, he doth it unwillingly; and at last he will declare his wickedness.*] Κἂν εὐποιῇ, ἐν λήθῃ ποιεῖ. If he does any good, he does it ignorantly, he forgets himself, or does it by chance and accident. And thus the Syriac: *Quod si casu benefecerit, imprudens, ac per errorem facit,* with which the Arabic agrees. The copy which our translators follow reads, καὶ ἐὰν εὐποιήσῃ, οὐκ ἐκὼν ποιεῖ. The Vulgate, it is observable, retains both; *Si bene fecerit, ignoranter et non volens facit.* Nor is Drusius's conjecture to be despised, who would read, ἐν λύπῃ, καὶ οὐκ ἐκὼν ποιεῖ, *dolens, et invitus facit.* The sense of the latter clause is, that if such a wretch stumbles upon a good action, yet the manner of his doing it in such a grudging way, as if it was extorted from him, quite spoils the grace of it, and takes off from its merit. It is, in the language of Isocrates, τὰς χάριτας ἀχαρίστως χαρίζεσθαι. Some tincture of sordidness will discover itself, and adhere to all he does. And if a good action by accident drops from him, the miser soon again stands confessed. Grotius by ἐπ' ἐσχάτων understands the end of his life; that he will maintain this niggardly temper to the last, and manifest it in some instances at his death, particularly in the ordering of his funeral, and preventing the expenses of it. Phædrus well exposes such a stingy carefulness:

"Tibi dico, avare, gaudium hæredis tui,
.
Qui circumcidis omnem impensam funeris,
Libitina ne quid de tuo faciat lucri."

Ver. 8. *The envious man hath a wicked eye, he turneth away his face, and despiseth men.*] Ὑπερορῶν ψυχὰς; *i. e.* He overlooks the wants and misery of other men. The Vulgate has, *Despiciens animam suam; i. e.* the covetous man overlooks himself, disregards his own soul or life, and will not allow himself necessary food to keep himself in health, nor proper and convenient help and remedies in his sickness. By a wicked, evil, and envious eye, both in this and the sacred writings, is meant, the covetous man, and by a good eye, the liberal person. Thus, Prov. xxiii. 6. *Eat not the bread of him that hath an evil eye; i. e.* of one that is grudging and covetous. See also xxviii. 22. Tob. iv. 16. Ecclus. xxxi. 13. xxxv. 10. Matt. vi. 22. Mark vii. 22. where ἀγαθὸς ὀφθαλμὸς, *the good* or *liberal eye,* is opposed to πονηρὸς ὀφθαλμὸς, *the evil* or *covetous eye.* The reason of applying this epithet more particularly to the eye, seems to be, because the eye is that part of the body which takes most satisfaction in wealth, in beholding, contemplating, and turning it over. (Eccles. v. 11.) Hence covetousness is called *the lust of the eye,* 1 John ii. 16. though, more properly speaking, this should be referred to the inward mind or judgment, as envy, covetousness, evil concupiscence, and the like vices, are said in Scripture to proceed from the heart.

Ver. 9. *A covetous man's eye is not satisfied with his portion, and the iniquity of the wicked drieth up his soul.*] Like an insatiable guest, he thinks he never has enough, and is not pleased with part, οὐκ ἐμπίπλαται μερίδι; the ordinary portion which the master of the feast gives to each of his guests does not content him; he grasps at, and devours in his imagination and wishes, what is helped to others; and his iniquity, *i. e.* his envy at what others have, gnaws and consumes his soul. He is just in no other instance but in punishing himself as he deserves; he is ingenious in contriving ways to torment himself, and by denying himself the comforts, and even necessaries of life, condemns himself as unworthy to live. The author alludes, says Calmet, to the ancient custom of dividing the victuals among the guests by equal portions, in which sense the miser is not pleased to be put upon the level with others. Or it may mean, that be his portion of good things in this life what it will, he still wishes for and covets more; and this is the recompence of his wickedness, that his unsatisfied desires make him continually uneasy.

Ver. 10. *A wicked eye envieth his bread, and he is a niggard at his table.*] Φθονερὸς ἐπ' ἄρτῳ, grudges himself or others their bread, and pines himself and them by his coarse food and sordid entertainment. The Vulgate renders, *Oculus malus indigens, et in tristitia erit super mensam,* following a copy probably which had, ἐν λύπῃ. And indeed this circumstance is a true test likewise of the covetous man, who is generally observed to be dull, dejected, and out of humour at his own table; he is uneasy at the expense, has not the heart to help his guests plentifully, or to make them welcome, but wishes them to be gone, or forces them by his cold reception to depart the sooner. Whereas the person of an open and generous temper invites you by his very looks, thinks he can never entertain his guests enough, and is always happiest when he has his friends about him. St. Chrysostom, enumerating the several particulars set down by this writer, which make up the covetous man, adds, Certainly this picture cannot suit any thing in the shape of human nature, it can be neither man nor beast, but a picture made up of both, the stupidity of the one with the greatest degeneracy of the other.

Ver. 11. *According to thy ability do good to thyself, and give the Lord his due offering.*] *i. e.* Do not through covetousness defraud thyself of necessaries and conveniences, by forbearing to make use of those good things which God has given thee richly to enjoy, nor rob God of his offerings; but give him not only in proportion to thy substance, and what is strictly due, but freely, and of the best likewise, such choice offerings as are worthy of his majesty, *Deo dignas oblationes,* as St. Cyprian here renders, with

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the Vulgate. For the offering of the blind, or lame, or sick, for sacrifice, is, according to the prophet, *making the table of the Lord contemptible.* (Mal. i. 7, 8.) This also may be extended to tithes and offerings, that a man should not grudge to pay them to the Levite, God's minister, according to his appointment, nor diminish from the quantity, or injure him in the quality of them, nor alter the time or manner of paying them. The author having fully described the vice of avarice, and the folly, malignity, and injustice of it, proceeds next to propose some remedies against it—as, to use the good things of life in the manner they were designed, to be hospitable to our friends and neighbours; to be charitable to the poor and distressed; to stop the immoderate cravings of avarice, by reflecting on the certainty and often suddenness of death, which will take away all at once a man has been so long amassing; (ver. 12.) to give liberally, therefore, before it seizes us, to be willing and have the merit of parting with some of our beloved wealth, before it of course leaves us, and we can hold it no longer, to lay up thereby a good foundation for ourselves against the time to come, and so far prevent the extravagance of a spendthrift heir, who perhaps will neither thank us for what we leave him, nor take care to keep it, and may expose and droll on our memory for having been so tenacious and saving for him.

Ver. 16. *Give, and take, and sanctify thy soul; for there is no seeking of dainties in the grave.*] Deprive not thyself of the innocent mirth and pleasure which the law permits on good days, for so the Hebrews styled their festivals, and rejoice with and entertain your family and friends on such public occasions. Nor at other times deny yourself the enjoyment of such good things as God has blessed you with, and given for your present use and comfort; but use them in the manner which God approves, free from intemperance and luxury, free from covetousness, and a criminal attachment to them. This seems to be the sense of *ἁγίασον τὴν ψυχήν σου*, which is the reading in many Greek copies, and of *δικαίωσον τὴν ψυχὴν*, which obtains in others. The Vatican edition has *ἀπάτησον τὴν ψυχήν σου*; *i. e.* live an agreeable life, deceive your cares, and let innocent pleasures and amusements divert any thing that may lie heavy upon your spirits. But possibly the true reading may be *ἀγάπησον τὴν ψυψὴν, hilariter excipe animam;* which seems confirmed by the context, particularly from the reflection that all dainties, in the Greek *τρυφὴ*, cease in the grave. The advice here given of living freely, and at large, on account of the shortness of life, is not, says Calmet, to be extended to all persons indifferently, but should be considered as directed by this writer, either to misers in particular, as a motive to engage them to enjoy their wealth and plenty whilst they have them, or to heathens in general, whose views going no farther than this life might properly enough be admonished, from the uncertainty of it, to make the most of it. Many of the poets give the like advice, and for the same reason. Thus Phocylides:

Πλούτου μὴ φείδου· μέμνησ' ὅτι θνητὸς ὑπάρχεις.
Οὐκ ἔν' ἐς ᾅδην ὄλβον ἔχειν καὶ χρήματ' ἄγεσθαι.
Οὐ πολὺν ἄνθρωποι ζῶμεν χρόνον, ἀλλ' ἐπίκαιρον·
Σῶμα γὰρ ἐκ γαίης ἔχομεν, καὶ πάντες ἐς αὐτὴν
Λυόμενοι κόνις ἐσμέν.

Ver. 17. *For the covenant from the beginning is, Thou shalt die the death.*] *Θανάτῳ ἀποθανῇ.* This refers to Gen. ii. 17. where the rendering of the Hebrew is, *Dying thou shalt die;* which, though spoken to Adam personally, yet included his whole posterity. The original covenant or law of mortality was, that all flesh should, by the transgression, see corruption. *Πᾶσα σὰρξ θανάτῳ ἀποθανῇ.* The Vulgate joins this to the end of the twelfth verse, where Calmet thinks it would come in better. The comparison of leaves, by which the succession and mortality of mankind are expressed in the following verse, is very ancient and natural. The writer of this book, living after many of the celebrated sages of Greece, has occasionally borrowed from them some of their sentiments, of which this among others is an instance. There is exactly the same thought in Homer,

Οἵη περ φύλλων γενεὴ, τοιήδε καὶ ἀνδρῶν.
Φύλλα τὰ μέν τ' ἄνεμος χαμάδις χέει, ἄλλα δέ θ' ὕλη
Τηλεθόωσα φύει, ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη·
Ὣς ἀνδρῶν γενεὴ, ἡ μὲν φύει, ἡ δ' ἀπολήγει. (Il. vi.)

There is also a parallel passage in Iliad. xxi. which Mr. Pope compares with that before us, and in his excellent translation runs thus,—

"For what is man? calamitous by birth,
They owe their life and nourishment to earth;
Like yearly leaves, that now, with beauty crown'd,
Smile on the sun; now, wither on the ground."

The same comparison is likewise to be found in a fragment of Musæus, preserved by Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vi. The ancients have contended who should describe the shortness of human life in terms most expressive of its vanity. As some of them with this writer compare it to the falling of a leaf, the smallest and weakest piece of a short-lived unsteady plant, so others resemble it, no less aptly, to a dream, a shadow, and smoke. St. James, who spake by a more excellent spirit, calls our life a vapour, and, which is yet lighter, a fantastic one, *ἀτμὶς φαινομένη*, a mere apparition, and nothing real, and yet the expression by what follows is made still more diminutive; for this mere appearance is but for a little while, *πρὸς ὀλίγον*, and then the phantom instantly disappears, (iv. 14.) St. Austin expresses very strongly the frailty of the human state, when he calls man, "Terræ filius, nihili nepos;" *the son of earth, and grandchild of nothing.* I shall only observe farther, that as the best heathen writers agree in comparing life and its sensible decay to the fading of a leaf or flower, so the sacred ones express an immortal state under the image of the never-failing tree of life.

Ver. 20. *Blessed is the man that doth meditate good things in wisdom, and that reasoneth of holy things by his understanding.*] Grotius says, that *καλὰ καὶ ἅγια*, are an addition to the text, and makes the sense barely to be,—Blessed is the man that meditates on wisdom, and can reason well with his understanding; which, though it be an accomplishment much admired, yet the sense which our version furnishes seems preferable; *i. e.* Blessed is he whose wisdom carries him to the study of holy things, and whose chief delight is to be employed upon good and religious subjects, who aspires after heavenly truths, and prefers the consideration and study of these to dry speculations, and science falsely so called; which, though they may amuse

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and entertain for a time, yet edify not, nor promote the main end of man; for however extensive a man's knowledge may be in human learning, or whatever progress he may make in philosophical researches, yet the good man will at last be found the truly wise man, which seems confirmed by the next verse, *He that considereth his ways in his heart, shall also have understanding in her secrets;* which is the reading of one copy, and preferred by Grotius and Calmet; and the sense is the same with that in the gospel, *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine;* his obedience shall be his teacher, and as he improves in grace, he shall increase in wisdom.

Ver. 23. *He that prieth in at her windows, shall also hearken at her doors.*] We have here, and in the context, an assemblage of images to encourage the pursuit after wisdom. In the preceding verse, all the vigilance of the hunter and the sagacity and attention of the spy are recommended for that purpose. There is the same metaphor in Plato, where Socrates, describing the inquisitive philosopher, calls him θηρευτὴν, or *the hunter*. The author adds farther here, You must pursue her with all the eagerness of a passionate lover (which comparison is continued to the end of the chapter), who hangs about the house of his beloved fair, "Nec vultum dulci detinet a domo," *watching and observing every thing that passes.* I think this verse not accurately translated; I would either render, after the manner of the former verse, *Go after her, like an assiduous lover, that prieth in at the windows, and hearkens at the doors of his mistress;* or rather, to go a little farther back still, *Blessed is the man that is so desirous of, and inquisitive after wisdom, as to pry in at her windows, and listen at her doors.* Solomon makes use of the same comparison; for thus wisdom speaks of herself, *Blessed is the man that heareth me, and watcheth daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.* (Prov. viii. 34.)

Ver. 24. *He that doth lodge near her house, shall also fasten a pin in her walls.* Ver. 25. *He shall pitch his tent nigh unto her, and shall lodge in a lodging where good things are.*] The translation should rather be as before, *Blessed is the man who lodgeth near her house, and is desirous to join his habitation to hers, who will pitch his tent nigh unto her, and partake of the advantages of so commodious a situation.* By *fastening a pin in her walls* is meant, that such a one who seeks her intimacy and acquaintance shall have a constant and sure abode with her, his dwelling shall be as secure, and his tent as unmoveable, as if by pins or nails fastened to the ground. We have the like expression, Ezra ix. 8. where, speaking of God's giving them a little reviving in their bondage, and an opportunity of setting up and repairing the house of God, he expresses this advantage and security, by God's giving them a nail in his holy place; which the margin expounds to the same sense. (See also, Isa. xxii. 23.) The sense of the whole is,—Blessed or happy is the man, that is not content to follow after wisdom for a little time only, or to see and speak to her *en passant*, and as it were by accident; but is desirous of a long continuance with her, to be known to and converse often with her, for he that is ambitious to fix his abode and dwelling near her, will find there a lodging stocked with all conveniences and goods: for so advantageous is her neighbourhood, that a little hut near to the seat of wisdom is preferable to the most stately palaces, and the superb magnificence of kings. This was holy David's opinion, who says, *I had rather be a door-keeper,* even the meanest servant, *in the house of God, than to dwell in the most stately pavilions of ungodliness.* (Psal. lxxxiv. 11.) And speaking of the wise man, or one that feareth the Lord, he expresses himself like this writer, Τίς ἐστιν ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν Κύριον; ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀγαθοῖς αὐλισθήσεται, (Psal. xxv. 13. see also Ezek. xxxiv. 14. John x. 9.)

Ver. 26. *He shall set his children under her shelter, and shall lodge under her branches.* Ver. 27. *By her he shall be covered from heat, and in her glory shall he dwell.*] *i. e.* Happy is the man who will commit his children to her care, and bring them up under her nurture and admonition; who will, with his young, lodge or repose himself under the hospitable security of her branches: for wisdom will protect him under her shade against all inconveniences, like the cloudy pillar which attended upon and sheltered the Israelites in the wilderness, she will enlighten him with her glory, which shall be reflected upon him, and by the brightness of its presence shall he be known and distinguished. By δόξα, the term here used, the LXX. express the Schechinah, or the radiant presence of God in the sanctuary. The representing wisdom under the image of a spreading tree, is common in this and the other sapiential books: but the prophet's description of the visionary tree, whose *height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth, whose leaves were fair, and on it meat enough for all,* Dan. iv. 20, 21. is truly applicable unto wisdom, and her fruits.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 2. *AND as a mother shall she meet him, and receive him as a wife married of a virgin.*] Ὡς γυνὴ παρθενίας. The version of this place is very inaccurate and indeterminate, which means neither more nor less than a virgin, whether γυνὴ be interpreted *mulier* (as in the Latin version of the Greek in the Polyglot), or a *betrothed virgin.* If γυνὴ be taken for a wife, as the Syriac version has it, and as it is used, 2 Cor. xi. 2. γυνὴ παρθενίας probably is the same with γυνὴ παρθένος. (See Deut. xxii. 23.) Instances of this construction, which is called apposition, may be seen in Glass. Philol. Sac. p. 386. But *in regimine,* the genitive is also used as here. (See Gen. xv. 18. Ezek. iii. 15. Amos v. 2. Matt. xii. 39. xxiv. 30. Acts viii. 5. Rom. iv. 11.) I make no doubt but the original had אשה בתולים *a woman,* or *a wife of virginities,* according to the Hebrew phraseology, like *a wife of whoredoms,* Hos. i. 2. which yet is the very same with *mulier meretrix,* Lev. xxi. 1. *a wife that is a whore* (for so it is there rendered); and then the sense of the present passage is clear enough: As a mother shall she meet him, and receive him, as a bride, or an espoused virgin, in the possession of whom he will rejoice and be made happy. There is indeed another good sense suggested in the Arabic and Syriac versions. One has it, *more puellæ;* the other, *uxor adolescentiæ, a young wife,* or *the wife of his youth.* And if the original Hebrew included a woman of youths, a young woman, or wife, or the wife of his youth, as עלמות it is certain signifies all these, then those versions (supposing them taken from the original) may be justified, as well as γυνὴ παρθενίας: but the first sense is to be preferred as being the best, and most natural. Messieurs of

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Port-Royal observe, that this writer makes use of the image of a mother and a spouse, to denote that wisdom loves her children with the most tender affection, and that it is she that produces the fruits of justice, holiness, and understanding in them, and is the parent of all good things to them. She is represented here as going out to meet them with a sort of rapturous joy; to denote, that we do not come to God till he first comes to us, and that it is his goodness that conducts us to himself, and puts us in possession of happiness.

Ver. 3. *With the bread of understanding shall she feed him, and give him the water of wisdom to drink.*] See xxiv. 21. As Divine grace is often represented under the emblem of springs and streams of water; so wisdom or Divine knowledge, the food and support of the soul, is expressed by the metaphor of meat and drink, which sustains the body. Expressions very familiar to the eastern nations, and frequent in the Jewish writings. Under this image the wise man here advises to make use of those means of instruction which wisdom offers, from the certain advantages she has to bestow. Solomon uses the like, Prov. ix. 5. where wisdom calls out to every simple soul that wants understanding, *Come, eat of the bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.* And that we may know what is meant by this metaphor, it follows, *Forsake the foolish, and live, and go in the way of understanding.* There is the same comparison, Isa. lv. 1. and when God in his anger threatens to deprive his people of the comfort and benefit of hearing his word, the prophet calls the withdrawing this blessedness a famine, Amos viii. 11. pursuing the same metaphor taken from the ordinary refreshment of meat and drink; because, when we want the support of God's word, we want that bread which nourishes the soul unto everlasting life, and without which it dies with spiritual hunger. The gospel too uses the same comparison, and advises us to hunger and thirst after righteousness. The rabbins observe, that wherever mention is made in the book of Proverbs of eating and drinking, there is meant principally wisdom, and the keeping of the law.

Ver. 5. *She shall exalt him above his neighbours, and in the midst of the congregation shall she open his mouth.*] Thus the Psalmist describes his happy success and advancement through wisdom, or the study and observance of God's laws, *Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies, for they are ever with me: I have more understanding than my teachers; for thy testimonies are my study: I am wiser than the aged, because I keep thy commandments.* (Psal. cxix. 98, 99.) Ἐκκλησία may either signify the *church* or the *senate;* in both which, a man of superior parts and consummate wisdom (for to human learning it may also be applied) is attended to with great respect, and even admiration and applause. Unto him men give ear, as Job speaks upon another occasion, *and wait as for the rain, when his speech drops from him: they open their mouth wide to receive his instruction, and keep silence at his counsel. Before him the aged arise and stand up, and nobles hold their peace; princes also refrain talking, and lay their hands on their mouth.* (Chap. xxix.)

Ver. 8. *For she is far from pride; and men that are liars cannot remember her.*] This writer often inculcates that wisdom will not continue in a wicked, proud, and lying spirit, which frequently meet together in the same person, and as such are mentioned together in Scripture. Thus, Prov. viii. 12, 13. wisdom says, *I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions: pride and arrogancy, and the evil way and the froward mouth do I hate;* as if true wisdom and sin were incompatible. Wisdom requires innocence of manners, humbleness of mind, and uprightness of intention. The writer of the book of Wisdom well observes, that the Holy Spirit will have no fellowship with the wicked and deceitful, *Into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter, nor dwell in a body that is subject to sin; for the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in,* (i. 4, 5.)

Ver. 9. *Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner, for it was not sent him of the Lord.*] Οὐχ ὡραῖος αἶνος. It is strange that our translators should prefer a remote and secondary sense of both these words to their first and primary signification: αἶνος is *sermo proverbialis, sententia,* a parable, as the margin has it, such as these sapiential books wholly consist of: ὡραῖος is properly *tempestivus,* or *seasonable.* Thus, xx. 1. ἔστιν ἔλεγχος ὃς οὐκ ἔστιν ὡραῖος, which in the margin is properly rendered *seasonable.* I take the meaning to be, that a wise saying is out of season in the mouth of a sinner; be it never so good in itself, it comes awkwardly and without effect out of such a mouth: And this our author says expressly, xx. 19, 20. *An unseasonable tale will always be in the mouth of the unwise: a wise sentence shall be rejected when it cometh out of a fool's mouth, for he will not speak it in due season.* The reason immediately follows, why this is not to be expected from such a one, because it does not proceed from its true source of wisdom; *viz. it was not sent of the Lord,* from whom comes every good and profitable sentiment: or, as the margin has it, because the sinner was not sent of the Lord to deliver instructions, which will be despised and laughed at from such a teacher. Things spoken lose their excellence, and change their nature when spoken by improper persons, and at unseasonable times: but proverbs and profitable sayings must proceed from wisdom; *viz.* from men of wisdom, as is observed in the next verse. So the Syriac and Arabic versions render ἐν σοφίᾳ, *ore sapientum,* Syr.; *ex ore prudentum,* Arab. Clem. Alex. reads, ἐν στόματι πιστῶν, (Strom. lib. ii.) which the Vulgate seems to confirm; *and then the Lord will prosper them: viz.* they shall have a good effect, they come seasonable, ὡραῖοι, *ripe, mature,* and will profit the hearer. Solomon has the same observation, and illustrates it beautifully; *viz.* that a fool is as unequal to a parable, as a lame man is to walk, *The legs of the lame are not equal; so is a parable in the mouth of fools.* (Prov. xxvi. 7.) All the editions of the LXX. read here by mistake, παρανομίαν ἐκ στόματος ἀφρόνων, which Dr. Grabe by a happy conjecture restores to παροίμιαν, the true reading, as the Hebrew manifestly shews. See also ver. 9. and again, xvii. 7. *Excellent speech becometh not a fool.* When the servant in the play affected a gravity of speech misbecoming his place and condition, and to talk sententiously; the master's reply is, condemning his pretence to wisdom, "Etenim hic carnifex sententias loquitur." (Plaut.) There is also another sense of αἶνος, which our translators follow, Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner; which means not praise in general, but

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the praise of God: *Dei laus,* as the Vulgate has it, which the Lord inspires into a wise and faithful heart, as he did into David's, Moses's, and other composers of sacred hymns and thanksgivings. Or it may refer to the performance of religious duties, which sinners disgrace, who officiate publicly, and through their evil conduct render the sacrifice of the Lord contemptible; according to that of the Psalmist, *Unto the ungodly says God, Why dost thou preach my laws, and take my covenant in thy mouth? whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee.* (Psal. l. 16, 17.)

Ver. 11. *Say not, It is through the Lord that I fell away.*] Some copies have, μὴ εἴπῃς, ὅτι διὰ Κύριον ἀπέστην. And so the Vulgate, *Ne dixeris, per Deum abest; i.e. Sapientia.* Say not that God is the cause that I have not wisdom; for God is not the cause of our weakness, ignorance, or want of knowledge; nor are mere privations, such as darkness, chargeable upon him. He has given us a soul capable of learning and improvement; and we should ask of God such good qualities as we stand in need of, and have not, and be careful to increase those we have. While we are petitioning for any blessing, we should ourselves take pains to obtain it, as far as human industry and care can contribute to that end; for the goodness and grace of God do not exclude our own endeavours and co-operations. But, above all things, we should take care not to commit wickedness, to deprive us of the grace of God, or that wisdom which cometh from above, *which will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in.* (Wisd. i. 5.) This sense Grotius favours, as most agreeable to the context, particularly ver. 7, 8. But there is another reading, μὴ εἴπῃς, ὅτι διὰ Κυρίου ἀπέστην, which is followed by our translators, and authorized by the greater number of copies. According to this reading the meaning is, Say not that the Lord made me to wander from the right path, or that through him I departed from it; and thus ἀπέστην is used in several parts of this book, ii. 3. x. 12. xvi. 8. xix. 2. Such evil sentiments and unworthy notions of the Deity obtained in the prophet's time, and are expressly condemned by him, *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, when ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them.* (Mal. ii. 17.) The Psalmist truly describes his nature, when he says, *That he is a God that hath no pleasure in wickedness; neither shall any evil dwell with him.* (Psal. v. 4.) Our author here confutes some objectors that ascribe too much to God, even men's vices, as in the following chapter, ver. 17. he condemns those that impute too little to him.

For thou oughtest not to do the thing which he hateth.] Ἃ γὰρ ἐμίσησεν, οὐ ποιήσεις. I think the connexion between this and the former sentence not close and just; nor is this an adequate answer or reason against what is advanced in the first part. In the following verse, which is drawn up much after the same manner, the reasoning is just, and each part answers to the other with great strength and exactness. I conjecture the true reading to be, ὃ γὰρ ἐμίσησεν, οὐ ποιήσει· *i.e.* what he hates, or hath expressed his abhorrence of, *viz.* the falling away of any man from his duty, whether Adam, or any of his descendants, he will not do, occasion, or be the author of. And thus the Syriac, *Ne dicas, impulsu Dei deliqui et peccavi, quia rem turpem nunquam commisit;* and if that translator had pleased, it might, by changing the points, have been as well translated *what he hates,* as *rem turpem, what is hateful.* The Arabic too, though it understands the former part of falling into adversity, yet agrees in applying the latter to God; for *neque enim proficiscitur ab eo,* seems to be the same with *neque enim facit.* The present reasoning indeed is just, applied to adversity, in the sense of the Arabic translator, Blame not God for any adversity that hath befallen thee; but rather blame thyself for doing those things which he hateth, and have brought his displeasure and judgments upon thee.

Ver. 12. *Say not he hath caused me to err.*] Ὅτι αὐτός με ἐπλάνησεν. Some copies read, ὅτι αὐτός με ἔπλασεν. That God hath created me so, or formed me such, by a temperament of body inclinable to such and such vices; which reading Grotius prefers, as most agreeably to the place. The Vulgate has, *Ille me decepit.* (See St. James i. 13.) Ὅ, τι ἂν κακὸν πράττεις (says Lucan) μέμνησο τοῦ σοφοῦ λέγοντος, ὡς θεὸς ἀναίτιος, αἴτια δ' ἑλομένου. (De Merc. Conduct.) The wise man here referred to is probably Plato, whose words are, Κακῶν ἄιτιον φάναι θεόν τινι γίγνεσθαι, ἀγαθὸν ὄντα, παντὶ τρόπῳ διαμαχητέον. (De Rep. lib. ii.) *i.e.* Since God is good, we must by no means allow any to say, that he is the cause of any evil that is done, but must reject such a wild opinion. All the ancient sages held, that neither prophecies, nor prescience, nor the decrees of God, lay any necessity upon the will of man; they who assert this, says Origen in Genes. absolve the sinner from all guilt, and lay it upon God, as if by his decree of foreknowledge he laid such men under an unavoidable necessity of acting wickedly. And so Prosper, "Non casus ruentium, nec cupiditates peccantium prædestinatio Dei aut excitavit, aut suasit, aut impulit." (Ad. Vincent. Object.) St. Austin blames such as pretend in their own excuse; "Venus hoc fecit, aut Saturnus, aut Mars; scilicet ut homo sine culpa sit, culpandus autem sit cœli ac siderum creator." (Confess. lib. iv. cap. 3.) And Maximus Tyrius has much the same thought, Τὸ φάναι ὅτι ὁ Ἔρως μοιχείαν ἀνάπτει, κ. τ. λ. To say that love forced a man into adultery, and to charge that, or any such wicked transgression upon the Deity, is very shocking and profane. (Dissert. xi.) Tully also pronounces the same concerning the amours of Paris, &c. which, says he, are not chargeable upon God, but upon their own lusts and passions. (De Nat. Deor. lib. iii.)

He hath no need of the sinful man.] *i.e.* He can have no motive to deceive any of his creatures, or to oblige them to commit any sin. For what glory, profit, or advantage, can he possibly reap from wickedness or injustice, the two things which he principally hateth, and are most contrary to his nature? Does he do this out of hatred to his creatures, or can we suppose him hereby to intend to vex and torment himself? Or the sense may be, That God hath no need of sinners to execute the determined ends of his providence; for though it be necessary that God should permit men to do that which he hath foretold, yet he does not incline or force the sinful man to accomplish his designs, but rather foreseeing that he will do so, he lets him follow his own wicked inclination and temper, and so accidentally makes him his instrument; which was the case of Judas in the crucifixion of our Lord. The same may be said of the oppression of the Hebrews by the Assyrians and Babylonians, which is mentioned as God's doing; God, to chastise the

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ingratitude and wickedness of his own people, permitted the rage and fury of these tyrants to have its full swing; he did not think it proper by any secret motions, or open judgments to turn the hearts of those conquerors, or to stop the progress of their arms—but he neither forced nor compelled them to the evil, nor necessarily determined them to act in that manner. St. Austin's words are a complete comment upon this whole verse: "We ought never to make God the author of any fault we have, nor charge him for the want of any grace which we have not. He is not the cause of any man's irregularity or falling; but he that is wicked, is so through his own fault, and he that is good, is so only by his grace. Neither sinners, nor even good men, are any other ways necessary to him, than as the wilful wickedness of the one serves to exemplify his power and justice, and the grace which he bestows upon the other to display his mercy. So that no one can in the least impeach the equity of his conduct; nor, under his government, which is altogether just, suffer the least hardship, without having really deserved it. If he punishes, it is exactly only what is his due; and if he spares and forgives, it is remitting what he might justly have required and inflicted."

Ver. 14. *He himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his counsel.*] This may either refer to the state of our first parent in Paradise, whom God endowed with a full sense of his duty, yet laid him not under an unavoidable necessity of being good; he may be considered as under a perfect equilibrium with respect to good and evil; he was neither determined to evil by the superior weight of his concupiscence; nor was the attraction to goodness so forcible and strong, as not to be resisted; so that it was absolutely in his power to have made himself either happy or miserable. Or it may mean, that when God gave his law to the Israelites in particular, by the disposition of angels, and with such pomp and terror, though his will was declared therein in the strongest and most affecting manner, yet he imposed upon them no such necessity of keeping it, as that it was impossible for them to act otherwise, but left it to their own choice and counsel, whether they would live according to the precepts of it, and be happy, or forfeit the glorious promises of the covenant by transgression, and incur the punishment denounced. This God proposes to them in the most solemn manner, Deut. xxx. 19. Or it may relate to mankind in general, That God does neither compel any to do evil, nor necessitate them to do good, though he is always ready with his preventing grace to assist them towards doing well. In the business of religion, and matters of salvation, free-will is as evidently exercised, as in any thing else, wherein one man covenants or contracts with another; and the evils of the soul are not the fault of nature, but of the will, which, being free, uses its liberty to choose either good or evil. The author's design here is to take from the wicked all the excuses and pretexts, which they make use of to cast upon God their vices and irregularities, pretending, that God has given them strong and even invincible inclinations towards sin; that they find in themselves the seeds of natural corruption, of which they are not the cause or authors. To this plea the wise man replies, that God cannot be justly charged with the leaven of wickedness, because he abhors it, forbids, and even punishes it: that it was not God that originally placed in men such evil inclinations; neither is such a corruption invincible, as he has created men free, and at their own disposal, capable of either following what is good, and affording them his assisting grace for that purpose, in order to make them happy; or of choosing evil, through the sway of their own corrupt will, and thereby making themselves miserable. St. Chrysostom, as if he had been directly commenting upon the place, hath well observed, Τὰ ἐν ᾅδου κακὰ οὐ θεὸν ἔχει τὸν αἴτιον, κ. τ. λ. *Deus non est autor malorum apud inferos, sed nos ipsi. Radix enim peccati est arbitrium nostrum, et voluntatis nostræ libertas.*

Ver. 15. *If thou wilt, to keep the commandments, and to perform acceptable faithfulness.*] The reading in all the Greek copies is, ἐὰν θέλῃς, συντηρήσεις ἐντολὰς, καὶ πίστιν ποιῆσαι εὐδοκίας. But would not the reading be better, ἐὰν θέλῃ, συντηρῆσαι ἐντολὰς, καὶ πίστιν ποιῆσαι εὐδοκίας; *i. e.* He originally made man, and left him from the beginning, ἐν χειρὶ διαβουλίου αὐτοῦ, which is a Hebraism; *i. e.* in his own power, and to his own choice, to keep God's commandments, and to perform πίστιν εὐδοκίας, faithfulness of acceptance, or acceptable faithfulness, as the Hebraism is rightly rendered in our version; *i. e.* faithfully to discharge his duty, if it be not his fault; ἐὰν θέλῃ, if he wills, or pleases. A farther proof of man's free agency may be drawn from hence; *viz.* from God's giving commandments to mankind to follow and obey; which necessarily supposes a choice, and indeed the very nature of a covenant between God and man implies it, nor without it can the neglect of the conditions of it be justly punishable. A right direction of the will is indeed to be asked of God, whose grace is compatible with human liberty. "Certum est (says St. Austin, commenting upon this place) nos servare mandata, si volumus, sed quia præparatur voluntas a Domino, ab illo petendum est, ut tantum velimus, quantum sufficit ut volendo faciamus. Certum est nos velle cum volumus; sed ille facit ut velimus bonum. Certum est nos facere cum facimus, sed ille facit ut faciamus bonum, præbendo vires efficacissimas voluntati." (De Grat. et Lib. Arbitr. cap. 16.)

Ver. 16. *He hath set fire and water before thee.*] Some hereby understand, that God hath given man the free use of the things of this life, and hath placed him as a sort of sovereign in the world, entirely free himself, and lord of the elements, and possessed of every convenience, denoted by the two principal ones, that may make life happy and easy, which God has put in his power, and under his command; as earth and water were wont to be given to the kings of Persia anciently, (Judith ii. 7.) to acknowledge that they were lords of land and sea. But more seems here intended than barely man's prerogative and dominion; it contains the test of man's obedience, a proposal of happiness or misery to him, according to a wise or indiscreet choice. It is observable, that the Vulgate changes the order here, and puts water first, *apposuit tibi aquam et ignem,* and so indeed the opposition is in the following verse, *Before man are life and death,* giving the precedence to what is best and most useful, and so water is here manifestly taken in contradistinction to fire, which is generally more dangerous and destructive. But in xxxix. 26. this writer places them both among the principal necessaries of life. Grotius says, by these elements is denoted a state of lusts and passions, and a state of innocence; the former by fire, the latter by water.

Ver. 18. *For the wisdom of the Lord is great, and he is mighty in power, and beholdeth all things.* Ver. 19. *He hath*

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commanded no man to do wickedly, neither hath he given any man licence to sin.] Ἰσχυρὸς ἐν δυναστείᾳ. This is a strong and vigorous expression: the Hellenists often style God ὁ ἰσχυρὸς simply; see Job xxiii. 13. And in another passage of that writer we have ταῦτα πάντα ἐργᾶται ὁ ἰσχυρός. God is also called ὁ δυνάστης, 2 Macc. xv. 3. and δυνάστης μέγας τοῦ κόσμου, and δυνάστης τῶν οὐρανῶν. This writer also has, ὁ δυνάστης, ὕψιστος δυνάστης, and ὁ κύριος δυνάστης, all in xlvi. 6. 19. But ἰσχυρὸς ἐν δυναστείᾳ, exceeds all these, and must express the superlativeness of God's power. The sense of this and the following verses is—God, by his infinite wisdom, has given man every thing that will make him happy, if he does not obstruct his own happiness; and by his almighty power is able also to render him as completely miserable, if he disobeys him. He likewise, as our sovereign judge, examines every work of man, and will make a proportionable difference in their state, according to their respective merit. He hates, he forbids, he threatens, he punishes, all wilful sin; the sinner therefore cannot with reason promise himself impunity, or think to excuse himself by any pretended necessity laid on him to commit sin; he cannot plead that he wants freedom and liberty to act otherwise, or that God has given him or others any licence or indulgence for committing evil.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *DESIRE not a multitude of unprofitable children, neither delight in ungodly sons: though they multiply, rejoice not in them, except the fear of the Lord be with them.*] The Vulgate joins the first verse to the former chapter, and renders, *Non enim concupiscit multitudinem filiorum infidelium et inutilium;* applying it to God, in the sense of the latter part of ver. 12. of that chapter. In the second verse, the wise man teaches parents the great importance of a good education, to bring them up, and settle them in the way wherein they should go; that neither the great number of children, nor their beauty, shape, or strength, or any bodily accomplishment, can give any true delight or satisfaction to a parent, but their good dispositions and moral conduct only; that it is better to have only one that is virtuous and well inclined, than a number of loose and profligate ones, who will bring certain ruin and disgrace into the family, and that even the having none at all is far preferable to bad ones. Aristotle, therefore, with great judgment requires εὐτεκνίαν, as well as πολυτεκνίαν, i. e. *a virtuous, and not a numerous race only*, towards a parent's content and happiness. For one child of bad morals and scandalous behaviour, is enough to take away all satisfaction from a parent, however happy he may be in the rest of his children; such a one will give more real plague and vexation, than the others can administer comfort, and few families are there, where there is a number of children, but have some domestic evil of this sort. Messieurs of Port-Royal apply what is here said, and in the context, to the children of our spiritual mother, the church, the governors whereof ought not to rejoice at merely seeing great numbers making profession of the faith, except they are in reality what they appear to be, and their life answers to the holiness of their calling. If they truly fear God, and make a visible progress in the ways of godliness, they are then a pastor's glory and joy; but if, through their bad conduct and wickedness of life, some of her members dishonour God, and disgrace their profession, they are then the occasion of much real concern and affliction to him, which increase in proportion to the number of such bad disciples, and the power which they have to seduce others also. St. Chrysostom, therefore, wishes that such as dishonour God, by their immoralities, would in earnest leave the church, and those only who devoutly serve him, and are a credit to their religion, would continue in it; that a few so disposed are more to be valued, than a vast mixed multitude of nominal professors only, whose affection is not right, and their attachment to her service indifferent and insincere.

Ver. 3. *Trust not thou in their life, neither respect their multitude.*] *i. e.* Flatter not thyself that children of such vicious dispositions shall live long, and carry thy name to any distant time, for life at best is uncertain, its continuance depends upon God's blessing, which the wicked have the least reason to expect, and by their own immoralities they often shorten its period, and hasten their miserable end. Nor boast thyself in a numerous issue, as if that was a security to thy race, that it shall not be extinct. Ahab had seventy sons, and none of them succeeded him, but Jehu put them all to death. (2 Kings x. 1.) Gideon had the like number, and Abimelech slew them all, but Jotham the youngest, who hid himself. (Judg. ix. 5.) Abraham, on the contrary, had but one son, and his posterity was as numerous as the stars of heaven for multitude. The Vatican edition reads, καὶ μὴ ἔπεχε ἐπὶ τὸν τόπον αὐτῶν, which may either mean, Depend not upon their place, or continuance, for, according to that of the Psalmist, *Thou shalt look after their place, and they shall be away.* Or, Depend not on the rank and dignity in which they may be placed, for they shall suddenly be overthrown; and thus τόπος is used by this writer, xiii. 22. xvi. 14. xxxviii. 12.

Ver. 4. *For by one that hath understanding shall the city be replenished, but the kindred of the wicked shall speedily become desolate.*] *i. e.* By wise men cities and empires were founded, as anciently Rome and Athens, and owed their greatness to the policy and counsels of good legislators. Such by their knowledge of learning were meet for the people, and being wise and eloquent, profited them by their instructions; *Their seed stood fast, and their children for their sakes,* (xliv. 4. 12.) In such sons, either a family or kingdom may glory, for they will adorn both public and private life. But degenerate and profligate children add affliction to an aged parent, and, instead of being serviceable to the public good and welfare, often contribute to their country's ruin: thus Priam, through the ill conduct of his son Paris, saw his capital and numerous family in the utmost circumstances of distress, and fell himself a victim to the merciless enemy. By φυλὴ ἀσεβῶν we may not only understand the company or society, the kindred or tribe, of the wicked, as the margin has it, but the very place or land where they dwell, which shall suffer for their sakes. And so Calmet understands it, *Le pays de mechans deviendra desert,* according to the observation of the Psalmist, *A fruitful land maketh he barren, for the wickedness of those that dwell therein.* And so, in Scripture history, the people of the Jews, which sprang from one, even Abraham, increased so incredibly, as to be at least six hundred thousand at their going out of Egypt; and on the other hand,

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the Canaanites, though so numerous and powerful, were destroyed and overthrown, and their land, the type of heaven, given to God's own people. Many such instances, the author says, he had both seen and heard of; of multitudes springing from one good and pious root, and large and rich families dwindling through their wickedness, and in time entirely forgot.

Ver. 6. *In the congregation of the ungodly shall a fire be kindled, and in a rebellious nation wrath is set on fire.*] There is much the same sentiment, xxi. 9. *The congregation of the wicked is like tow wrapped together, and the end of them is a flame of fire to destroy them.* By *fire* we may understand the Divine vengeance, as when God says, *A fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase;* it afterward follows, by way of explanation, *I will heap mischief upon them, they shall be burned with hunger, and devoured with bitter destruction.* (Deut. xxxii. 22—24.) Or *fire* may be understood literally, as it is sometimes the effect of God's displeasure: thus it was when the company raised by Korah were smitten with lightning, *The fire was kindled among them, and the flame burnt up the ungodly.* (Psal. cvi. 18.) Lightning particularly is called the *fire* of the Lord, as being a known instrument of his vengeance. By *fire* also is sometimes meant war, and so the sense may be,—That war or sedition shall break forth, burn, and destroy the families and territories of a wicked and disobedient people; that God will permit the enemy from without, or civil discord and division to ruin and overthrow them. The author now seems to return to the subject at the end of the last chapter; *viz.* to shew that God will certainly punish the wicked, and is not backward to proceed against them with severity, upon account of their number or power, which he proves by many memorable instances in the following verses.

Ver. 7. *He was not pacified towards the old giants, who fell away in the strength of their foolishness.*] Our translators follow a copy which had οἳ ἀπεστήσαν ἐν τῇ ἰσχύϊ τῆς ἀφροσύνης αὐτῶν, though the generality of editions omit the latter words. It is a Hebraism, and means rather that they fell away, or rebelled, through a foolish conceit of their own strength, and a vain dependance upon it. And thus Calmet, *Qui se sont revoltès par une folle confiance en leur force.* These mighty giants of the old world, trusting in their great number and extraordinary strength, God exterminated for their insolence, and drowned them in the waters of the deluge. (Gen. vi. 4. Wisd. xiv. 6.) They were, says Macrobius, a wicked generation of men, who defied the gods, and renounced their government, and for that reason were represented as attempting to invade heaven, and to depose the gods from their heavenly thrones. (Saturnal. lib. i. cap. 20.) But how would it have adorned his subject, if this writer had instanced in what he could not be unacquainted with, and his design naturally led him to, the apostacy and punishment of the rebel angels? The prophet's description of it is truly sublime, *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will ascend above the clouds, I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell.* (Isa. xiv. 12. 15.) And the inference which might have been drawn from it, would exactly have suited this place,—If God spared not the angels of heaven, how much less will he spare us, the low inhabitants of earth? What this writer mentions about the pride of Sodom, in the next verse, Ezekiel confirms, *Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, these occasioned those abominations for which the Lord took them away,* (xvi. 49, 50.) The same prophet's description of the downfal of the Assyrian and Egyptian pride, under the image of a cedar in Lebanon, with fair branches, (chap. xxxi.) can never be sufficiently admired, and the beauty of it cannot but entertain every judicious reader.

Ver. 9. *He pitied not the people of perdition, who were taken away in their sins.*] Οὐκ ἠλέησεν ἔθνος ἀπωλείας, τοὺς ἐξηρμένους ἐν ἁμαρτίαις αὐτῶν· Ἔθνος ἀπωλείας means *a nation devoted to destruction, or fit to be destroyed;* so Judas, by the evangelists, is called ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, *the son of perdition,* and antichrist is so called, 2 Thess. ii. 3. *a son of death,* 2 Sam. xii. 5. is one worthy of it; and the like may be observed of υἱὸς γεέννης, Matt. xxiii. 15. Almost all the interpreters understand by the *people of perdition* here the Sodomites, and think the subject of the former verse is continued in this, and herein they are warranted by the Vulgate, nor does it suit amiss with the character of that people. There is also another reading in some copies, *viz.* τοὺς ἐξερχομένους ἐν ἁμαρτίαις αὐτῶν, *Qui egrediebantur,* or, as Junius has it, *Qui procedebant cum peccatis suis,* which some understand of the destruction of many of the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness, for their obstinacy, but more of the Egyptians pursuing after them in their departure from Egypt, and perishing in their wicked attempt. The Syriac version furnishes still another sense, *Non est misertus super populo anathematizato.* This is favoured by Corn. a Lapide, who understands by *the people of perdition* the inhabitants of Jericho, which was an accursed city, and all that were therein. (Josh. vi. 17.) Whom then are we to understand at last by the people of perdition? Shall we fix on the Sodomites, or Israelites, or Egyptians, or the people of Jericho? For all these have their advocates. As to the Sodomites, they, I think, must be excluded from being intended here, because they are mentioned just before, and as the two former verses relate to two different subjects, it is natural this third should too. The Israelites who were cut off in the wilderness, were not properly ἔθνος ἀπωλείας, nor would a Jew call them so; but γενεὰ ἀπωλείας only, and besides they are mentioned afterward, and are distinguished by καὶ οὕτως, from those spoken of here. The Egyptians come best in order of time; but though Pharaoh and his host, and perhaps the body of his people, were υἱοὶ ἀπωλείας, yet the nation was not destroyed, and therefore not so properly to be called ἔθνος ἀπωλείας; and as to Jericho, though it had indeed a separate king, yet was it not counted a separate ἔθνος. If I may offer my conjecture among the rest, I think it most probable, that the Canaanites in general are here meant, who were a nation worthy of destruction, were also devoted to it, and at length ἐξηρμένοι, actually taken away in their sins, as our translation rightly has it; or, if we render τοὺς ἐξηρμένους, *proud,* or *elated,* as both Grotius and Drusius translate it, agreeably to the Vulgate and Tigurine versions (which avoids something of a tautology, and answers better to the latter part of the next verse),

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this sense, too, suits the Canaanites, for they defied the Lord, persecuted his chosen, were an idolatrous and savage people, were at the very height of wickedness, and gloried in their shame; (Wisd. xii. 4—6.) and though their punishment, which was adequate to their brutal vices, came after that of the Jews in the next verse, and therefore may seem less proper to be mentioned before it; yet probably the writer chose to finish his gentile examples, before he proceeded to one of his own nation.

Ver. 11. *And if there be one stiff-necked among the people, it is marvel if he escape unpunished.*] The argument proceeds *a majori ad minus;* thus, If God overthrew whole nations for their iniquity, as the Sodomites, the Canaanites, &c. if he spared not even his own people, but slew six hundred thousand of his favourite peculium, who were gathered together, in the hardness of their hearts, nor even the old world itself for its universal corruption, how shall any private person, any single sinner, inconsiderable in all respects, in comparison of the former examples, dare to rebel against his Maker, or promise himself impunity, either for his greatness or his meanness? or hope, because he is as one to infinity, to lie concealed, and escape unpunished, amongst so many thousand transgressors? It is proper and pleasing to observe, in what strong terms the mercy and forgiveness of God are expressed in the latter part of the verse; he is represented there not only as placable, but as mighty to forgive; an expression very singular, and raising comfort from an attribute that usually carries terror in it. And, to invigorate this the more, διατάχους is added in some copies, that he is speedy and impatient, ready and desirous, to forgive upon the first motion of a real change and conversion in the sinner; as it is expressed, Jer. xviii. 7. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation or kingdom, to pull down and to destroy it, if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will* (at that instant) *repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.* Nor is this quickness of God favourably to alter his resolutions and change his manner of acting, less strongly expressed in some copies, which have μαστίγων, ἐλεῶν, τύπτων, ἰώμενος, where the proceeding seems instantaneous, and to be expressed as it were in a breath.

Ver. 12. *As his mercy is great, so is his correction also: he judgeth a man according to his works.*] This follows very properly after what was said of his mercy in the foregoing verse, lest any should be encouraged to sin by a reliance on mercy, and presuming too much upon pardon. For God is infinitely just, as well as good; he neither sacrifices his justice to his goodness, nor his goodness to his justice; these attributes are so compatible in the Deity, as harmoniously to meet together, and lovingly to kiss each other. He pardons those who are truly contrite and penitent, as he is a sincere lover of souls; but he deals not so graciously with the obstinate, and such as will not be reformed; in them he punishes the odiousness of sin with rigour, because he detests their continuance in it, and is as inflexible in the execution of his judgments, as they were in pursuing their evil courses, and will proceed against such sinners, not according to the notions which they fondly conceive of God's acting, or the methods which they sometimes presume to point out to him, but according to the real demerit of their works. Our translators follow a copy which had κρίνει, but more correct ones have κρινεῖ, in the future. And so Clem. Alexand. reads, quoting this passage, which seems confirmed from the parallel sentence, ver. 14. and indeed from the whole context. The union of these two attributes was never more truly displayed than in the case of our first parent; how severe, how dreadful, is his sentence; and yet how mild, how mixed with mercy, in comparison to what Adam might reasonably and probably did expect from his offended God! while infinite justice demanded satisfaction and the death of the offenders, infinite mercy intercedes for their pardon, and comforts them under the present evidence of his indignation, with the promise of a Redeemer, who, by his victory, should recover what they had lost.

Ver. 14. *Make way for every work of mercy, for every man shall find according to his works.*] Our translators follow the Complut. which reads, πάσῃ ἐλεημοσύνῃ ποίησον τόπον, but the other editions have, πάση ἐλεημοσύνη ποιήσει τόπον· ποιεῖν τόπον, in the acceptation of this author, often signifies *to do honour to,* or *to treat with respect and distinction.* (See xiii. 22. xvi. 3. xxxviii. 12.) And so the sense here may be, that God will respect and have a regard to every work of mercy that a man does, and will abundantly recompense it. (See xvii. 22, 23.) A very learned writer offers a different reading, πᾶσα ἐλεημοσύνη ποιήσει τόπον; i. e. *Every work of mercy shall make* or *prepare a place* (*viz.* in heaven) *for the merciful,* which seems confirmed by the next sentence; and then the sense will be the same with that of St. Luke, That charity shall prepare a place for the righteous, and when they die, *they shall be received into everlasting habitations,* xvi. 9. (Hammond in loc.) This reading, it must be confessed, has some countenance too from that of the Vulgate, *Omnis misericordia faciet locum unicuique, secundum meritum operum suorum.* As Bellarmine has abused this passage in favour of the Romish doctrine of merit, it may be proper to observe upon the Vulgate rendering, 1. That it has here confounded two distinct sentences, and made one of them. 2. It has inserted *meritum operum,* which has nothing to answer it in the Greek. 3. The words κατὰ τὰ ἔργα are indefinite, and may respect either good or bad works, and if understood of good works, mean only that a reward is promised to them; not that any is due to the merit of good works, as such, or that they are in themselves strictly meritorious. (See Chamieri Panstrat. de Vulg. edit.)

Ver. 15. *The Lord hardened Pharaoh, that he should not know him, that his powerful works might be known to the world.*] See Exod. vii. 13. from whence this seems to be taken, where our translators render, *He hardened Pharaoh's heart;* which, according to the Hebrew, should have been, *Pharaoh's heart became firm,* or *was hardened,* as the same Hebrew words are rendered, ver. 22. of that chapter. And so the LXX. render καὶ κατίσχυσεν ἡ καρδία Φαραώ· and ver. 22. ἐσκληρύνθη ἡ καρδία Φαραώ. and by Ar. Mont. *Corroboravit se cor Parhoh;* and by the Vulgate, *Induratum est cor Pharaonis;* and so the Chaldee. The same reason which is here assigned for the hardening Pharaoh's heart, we likewise meet with, Exod. ix. 17. Rom. ix. 16. *For this cause have I raised thee up,* or, according to the LXX. *preserved thee, that I might shew* (not *my mercy,* but) *my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.* For the rehardening of Pharaoh's heart upon the removal of any plague, occasioned the shewing so many more signs and wonders to God's greater glory; each re-

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spite renewed his obstinacy, whereas the continuance of any one plague would have made him relent and dismiss the Israelites.

Ver. 16. *He hath separated his light from the darkness with an adamant.*] The meaning either is, that the ways, counsels, and decrees of God, are above our understanding and comprehension, so that to pretend to penetrate into his secrets is presumption: or, that God dwells in a light which no man can approach unto; (1 Tim. vi. 16.) or the sense may be, that God has placed a *strong partition*, as the margin has it, a great chaos, between heaven and hell; or, as the Scripture expresses it, he has fixed a *great gulf* (Luke xvi. 26.) between the seat of the blessed and the wretched abode of the wicked, at such an infinite distance from each other, as to render all approach inaccessible, all communication impossible: or, according to others, that he has made the vicissitude of day and night constant and unalterable, ἐμέρισε ἀδάμαντι, he has divided them by such a law as shall not be broken; accordingly ἀδαμάντινα δέσμα mean, *fetters which cannot be broken;* and to express something unalterable, the epigrammatist says, τοῦτ' ἀδάμαντι μένει. I shall only observe, that this and the foregoing verses seem to have no relation to the context; "Revera huc non pertinent," says Grotius. And indeed they are wholly omitted in the Vulg. Rom. Ald. Bas. and most of the Greek editions.

Ver. 17. *Say not thou, I will hide myself from the Lord; shall any remember me from above? I shall not be remembered among so many people: for what is my soul among such an infinite number of creatures?*] *Quantula est anima mea inter spiritus omnium hominum!* Syr. It is strange to observe, how vain man, who, when fired with ambition, and puffed up with self-conceit, will allow none above him, and durst even aspire to an equality with his Maker, can degrade and depreciate himself upon occasion, when fear of punishment is in the case, and comfort himself in his meanness, as of no worth or consequence in the vast creation, lost among the infinity of creatures, and too inconsiderable to be looked upon, or even remembered, and is happy if he can deceive himself and others with some such-like false reasoning: Does God take cognizance of every thing that passes below? can he enter into an examination of all the thoughts, words, and actions, of each man in particular, throughout the world? He extends his care indeed over the fortune of the great, determines the fate of princes, and the revolutions of states and empires; he directs and guides the principal eras and occurrences of remote time; but it is below his grandeur to descend to mean persons, and to extend his care to trifling matters, and the infinity of human concerns: kings do not condescend to take account or cognizance themselves of petty and diminutive transactions that pass in their kingdom; these would disturb their quiet, and detract from the sovereign dignity. We meet with a like instance of a wicked and shallow reasoner, Job xxii. 12—14. *Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are! and thou sayest therefore, How doth God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud? The thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.* Juvenal introduces an old sinner talking in the like manner:

"Ut sit magna, tamen certe lenta ira Deorum est;
Si curant igitur cunctos punire nocentes,
Quando ad me venient? sed et exorabile numen
Fortasse experiar: solet his ignoscere." (Sat. xiii.)

Such were the subterfuges of sinners, and the objections of the libertines of old, for want of a clear and right notion of God's attributes, his omniscience and immensity in particular. For if God be, as even some of the heathens have acknowledged, "totus sensus, totus auditus, totus visus," (Plin. lib. ii. cap. 7.) the vast number of objects can give no distraction to a being of such perfection; nor the infinite variety of their actions any ways disturb his repose, or escape his notice. For what is the whole earth in his eyes, or all nations in his presence, but, in the language of the prophet, *as a drop of a bucket, as the small dust of the balance?* (Isa. xl. 15.) Nor is the other scruple of giving God too degrading an office, by humbling himself to observe and take care of what passes below, better founded; for none of his creatures are either unworthy of or below his notice. It is the proper business of the Builder and Maker of all things to superintend his work; man, in particular, is by his nature an accountable creature; and a being that styles himself supreme, and either cannot or will not take account of men's behaviour, is no God. To take away all such low conceptions and sentiments of the Deity, the author probably soars on purpose in the two following verses, and excels himself in the lofty description of God's majesty, the effects of his mighty power, and the dreadful consequences of his very looks; not unlike that of the Psalmist, Psal. civ. 7. 32. (See also Nahum i. 5.)

Ver. 21. *It is a tempest which no man can see, for the most parts of his works are lost.*] See Nahum i. 3. καταιγὶς signifies a violent shock of wind, not improperly rendered a tempest, and might perhaps be used here in allusion to, and in concurrence with, the expressions of God's power in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses foregoing, which mention the foundations of the earth, and rocks shaking and trembling when the Lord visits them, or looketh upon them. If by it are metaphorically meant the works of his justice, mentioned in the next verse, it will then resemble ver. 6. of the same prophet, *Who can stand before his indignation, and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger; his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* If it relates to God's judgments, or the secret dispensations of his providence, the meaning then is, that clouds and darkness are round about him, so that one cannot trace out the hidden path of them; that they are, like the great deep, as the Psalmist speaks of them, unfathomable, unattemptable, as when a mighty tempest darkens the face of it. These are the common and most received interpretations of this obscure passage; but, amidst the variety of senses affixed to this place, it is no improbable conjecture, that this, with the foregoing and following verses, contain the answer of the sceptic, to what was said of God's almighty power and all-searching eye in ver. 18, 19. This may be collected, 1. from ver. 23. ἐλαττούμενος καρδίᾳ διανοεῖται ταῦτα; i. e. *the man of a contracted sordid heart,* or *narrow soul,* or, as our version has it, *the man that wants understanding,* thinketh in this manner, fancies, and dwells on μάταια, such idle vain notions as these, as some copies and the Vulgate have it, which our translators here follow. 2. The Syriac and Arabic versions understand it as the foolish reasoning of those that are

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excordes: Excordes talia dicunt, et scelerati hæc cogitant. 3. An answer seems to be given to these foolish surmises, beginning at the next verse, *My son, hearken unto me, and learn knowledge, i. e.* sound knowledge; and is continued in form, and with great closeness of reasoning, through the rest of this chapter, and to the end of the twenty-first verse of the next, as will appear more fully by consulting the objection and answers, placed column-wise for greater clearness, at ver. 6. 4. This is agreeable to the method pursued in the former chapter, where an objection is raised ver. 11, 12. and the answer is continued to ver. 15. of the next, except the five first verses, which seem not to belong to that place or argument.

Ver. 26. *The works of the Lord are done in judgment from the beginning.*] The Epicureans held, that the world was made by a fortuitous concourse of atoms. Against the mistake of these philosophers in so important a point, the author here maintains, that the creation was not the effect of chance, or any blind and insensible principle, but all things were at first made with judgment and wisdom, and the several parts which compose the world not so placed by accident, or at random, but a wise and all-powerful hand placed them in the beautiful order wherein we now see them disposed with the greatest fitness, and exact in all respects, in number, weight, and measure. (Wisd. xi. 20.)

Ver. 27. *He garnished his works for ever, and in his hand are the chief of them unto all generations: they neither labour nor are weary, nor cease from their works.*] Ἐκόσμησεν εἰς αἰῶνα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν. It should seem, according to our translation, that all God's works were not equally in his hand, and under his care and protection, but only the chief or principal of them. Grotius and some few others understand by ἀρχὰς, the heavenly bodies, "Astra, quæ rebus inferioribus præsunt, in Dei potestate sunt in omnia sæcula;" and of these he understands what follows to the twenty-ninth verse. And indeed these, from their presumed power and influence, in the opinion of the ancients, over all things below, especially the sun and moon, which presided over the rest, were esteemed ἀρχαὶ, principalities, powers, or dominions; and they rejoice to run their appointed course, continuing through all ages to perform their settled functions, without any fatigue, hinderance, or confusion; contrary to the opinion of some of the ancient philosophers, who imagined that some parts of the world grew old and decayed, through the disunion and separation of the atoms; and other parts were fashioned anew, and attained more perfection by some lucky jumble. But the following seems a more perfect rendering of the Greek, and to give the truest sense; *viz.* ἐκόσμησεν εἰς αἰῶνα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, *he beautifully prepared his works for ever,* or *to last for ages,* καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν, and their principles in their generations, or according to their kinds, *per genera sua;* meaning the established and unalterable principles of natural bodies, and alluding perhaps to the seed that every thing hath in itself according to its kind. How consistent with this interpretation is the Mosaic history, (Gen. i. 11, 12.) and how doth the wonderful reproduction of every thing in this congenial manner confirm it! which harmony and regularity in God's works are owing to the principles he has established in them, which we call their nature. Calmet concurs in this sense, and gives the like interpretation, "Il a formé ses ouvrages pour durer toujours, ou fort long-tems, et il a mis dans eux des principes pour se reproduire dans la suite de tous les siécles. Depuis la création du monde jusqu' aujourd'hui, et jusqu' à la consommation des tems, ses ouvrages subsistent, et se perpetuent, les uns par la génération, et les autres par d'autres voyes que le créateur leur a ouvertes.' (Com. in loc.)

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 2. *He gave them few days, and a short time.*] The author having briefly described the inanimate, vegetative, and brute creation, in the conclusion of the former chapter, in this proceeds to speak to the formation of man, and to describe the faculties and powers wherewith God had endowed him, his original from the ground, and his short continuance upon earth, before his return into it again, even a few days comparatively, ἡμέρας ἀριθμοῦ, which is a Hebraism. Instances of this manner of expression occur Gen. xxxiv. 30. Deut. iv. 27. where *viri numeri* means few in number. Isa. x. 19. *The trees of his forest shall be* (according to the Hebrew) *number,* i. e. *few, so few that a child may write them,* which the LXX. have exactly expressed, οἱ καταλειφθέντες ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀριθμὸς ἔσονται. But there is a passage in Job parallel to this, both in the sense and manner of expression, *When a few years are come, then shall I go the way whence I shall not return,* where the Hebrew has, *years of number,* and the LXX. ἔτη ἀριθμητὰ, xvi. 22. Or it may mean, that the days of man's life were numbered, and a certain time and length of life fixed and determined for the species, (Job xiv. 5.) which they should not exceed, about nine hundred years, before the flood, but after contracted to four hundred, two hundred, one hundred, and seventy, which was the term in the time of the writer of the ninetieth psalm, whether David or Moses. And thus the Tigurine version, *Attribuit dies numeratos statumque tempus hominibus.* Or it may be applied to Adam personally, as the Vulgate seems to take it; that though originally intended to be immortal, yet, on account of his transgression, God pronounced the sentence of mortality upon him, and fixed a period to his days.

Ver. 3. *He endued them with strength by themselves.*] Καθ' ἑαυτούς. According to themselves, suitable to their nature, *Une force proportionée à sa nature,* as Calmet expounds it. At first God gave them an absolute empire or dominion over the creatures, and after the fall, though it was somewhat diminished, yet he left sufficient authority in them for the state and condition in which he placed them, sufficient for their preservation and defence against injuries, for the procuring the necessary supports of life, and accomplishing their other designs. The Vulgate has *Secundum se vestivit illum virtute,* following a copy which read καθ' ἑαυτὸν; *i. e.* God gave him a sovereignty resembling his own, *Imperium quale suum,* says Grotius, and so the Tigurine version, *Innuit ipsos virtute sua.* And in this dominion, as well as in the perfection of his intellectual nature, his likeness to God consisted: the subjection of the brute creation to man was a consequence of his authority, or of a dread impressed upon them from their great Creator. Seneca has well expressed man's great prerogative in this particular, "Quisquis es iniquus æstimator sortis hu-

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manæ, cogita quanta nobis tribuerit parens noster, quantò valentiora animalia sub jugum miserimus, quantò velociora consequamur; quàm nihil sit mortalo non sub ictu nostro positum." (De Benefic. ii. 20.) And after it follows (which will serve to illustrate the sixth verse), "tot virtutes accepimus, tot artes, animum denique, cui nihil non, eodem quo intendit momento, pervium est, &c. Ita bene æstimatâ naturæ indulgentiâ, confitearis necesse est, te illi in deliciis fuisse."

Ver. 5. *They received the use of the five operations of the Lord, and in the sixth place he imparted them understanding, and in the seventh speech, an interpreter of the cogitations thereof.*] Many editions have not this verse at all, and some few only the latter part. It may properly be inquired what are *the five operations*, as they are here called. Are we to understand by them the five senses, πέντε αἰσθήσεις? the Arabic so takes it, enumerating them severally. Philo resembles this writer upon the subject; αἱ ἐν ἡμῖν δυνάμεις, κ. τ. λ. *Potentiarum, quæ nobis insunt, sex indesinenter terra marique bella concitant, quinque sensus, et sermo qui profertur: illi desiderio sensibilium, quibus se non potiri ægre ferunt, hic per os infræne multa silenda effutiens. At septima potentia est Mens Rector, quæ, quando in potestate sex illas retinet, vitam serenam tranquillamque amplectitur.* (De Abrahamo.) And in another place he has the like division; only instead of the *understanding* he inserts *generatio*, and makes the whole seven, which he calls ἑπτὰ δυνάμεις τοῦ ἀλόγου, *the seven faculties of the sensitive soul*, to serve and act under the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, or *the understanding*. Grotius also intimates as much; but thinks this latter part to be a gloss crept into the text from the margin, by some favourer of the stoic notions; who, besides the five ordinary senses, acknowledged three other; *viz.* τὸ σπερματικὸν, or *generation, speech, and understanding;* but the first of these is now dropped, and omitted. Corn. a Lapide and Calmet reckon the five ἐνεργήματα here to be the powers or privileges given to man at the creation, which are mentioned in the foregoing verses; *viz.* 1. Life. 2. Sovereignty over the earth. 3. Force or strength suitable and proportionate to his nature. 4. Likeness to God's image. 5. Dominion over all manner of living things. Others transpose this verse, or rather the sixth and seventh operations, and put them after the particulars mentioned in the verse following, where indeed they seem to come in better. Thus the Tigurine version ranges them, *Judicium, linguam, oculos, aures, et cor dedit eis ad cogitandum, sexto quoque loco mentem donavit, et septimo sermonem operibus suis explicandis.* But as the two last are omitted in some Greek editions, the Vulgate, and Syriac versions, it is probable they were added by way of explanation, and inserted by mistake.

Speech, an interpreter of the cogitations thereof.] Many have been the conjectures of learned men about the original of speech; a very ingenious writer supposes its origin to be from God, "and that the first man was instructed by him to speak, and that his descendants learnt to speak by imitation from their predecessors. Not that God put into Adam's mouth the very sounds which he designed he should use as the names of things, but gave him the use of an understanding to form notions in his mind of the things about him, and a power to utter sounds, which should be to himself the names of things, according as he might think fit to call them. These he might teach Eve, and in time both of them teach their children, and thus begin and spread the first language of the world. The account which Moses gives of Adam's first use of speech, Gen. ii. 19, 20. is entirely agreeable to this, where God sets before Adam the creatures to put him upon using the power he had of making sounds to stand for names of them, and he had only to fix to himself what sound was to stand for the name of each creature, and what he so fixed, that was the name of it." (Shuckford's Connex. vol. i. p. 3.) Tully dwells upon the privilege of speech in men, and places the difference not only between them and brutes in it, but also between men themselves, according to the degrees of the perfection of it, "Hoc uno præstamus maximè feris, quod colloquimur inter nos, et quod exprimere dicendo sensa possumus. Quamobrem quis hoc non jure miretur, summeque in eo elaborandum esse arbitretur, ut quo uno homines maxime bestiis præstent, in hoc hominibus ipsis antecellant?" (De Orator.)

Ver. 6. The wise man, to inspire his pupil, whom he addressed himself to, xvi. 24. with worthy sentiments of the Deity, proceeds now to answer the loose suggestions made in the twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second verses of that chapter. If the reply be set against the objection, it will best illustrate the argument.—

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CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 20. Καὶ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς οὐ διανοηθήσεται καρδία. *No heart* (here begin the sentiments of ἐλαττούμενος καρδίᾳ, of whom it is said, ver. 23. that he διανοεῖται ταῦτα) *no heart can think upon these things.*

Καὶ τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ τίς ἐνθυμηθήσεται; *Who shall be able to understand or conceive his ways?*

Ver. 21. Καὶ καταιγὶς, ἣν οὐκ ὄψεται ἄνθρωπος. *It is even like a sudden gust of wind* (Drusius and Junius both understand it comparatively), *which a man cannot see, or know whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.*

Τὰ δὲ πλείονα τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀποκρύφοις. *The most part of his works are hid.*

"Omnes pæne veteres nihil cognosci, nihil percipi, nihil sciri posse dixerunt, in profundo veritatem demersam, nihil veritati relinqui, omnia tenebris circumfusa esse dixerunt." (Cic. Acad. Quæst. lib. i.)

This then, it is manifest, was an old objection; and why might not Jesus in Egypt learn this objection from the gentile philosophers?

Ver. 22. Ἔργα δικαιοσύνης τίς ἀναγγελεῖ; *Who shall declare the works of his righteousness?* Who can find, or who can set forth and prove, any moral rectitude or beauty in his ways or proceedings?

Ἢ τίς ὑπομενεῖ; *Or who shall wait for the declaration* or *proof of his righteousness in his works?* μακρὰν γὰρ ἡ διαθήκη, *for his covenant is afar off.* If there be any such thing as a covenant of righteousness and mercy with man, there appear no tokens of it, and why should we wait in expectation of its being fulfilled?

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 6. Καρδίαν ἔδωκε διανοεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς. *He hath given them a heart to think.* Men may think on these things, it is their prerogative, their business.

Ver. 7. Ἐπιστήμην συνέσεως ἐνέπλησεν αὐτούς. *He filled them with the knowledge of understanding;* he hath given them enough to understand and conceive his ways.

Καὶ ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακὰ ὑπέδειξεν αὐτοῖς; *viz.* Though men be not able to discover all the operations of nature, yet they are endowed with a better knowledge, the principles of morality. Thus in Micah vi. 8. we have a parallel passage, *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require,* &c. which is always understood of the natural principles of religion.

Ver. 8. Ἔθηκε τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν, δεῖξαι αὐτοῖς τὸ μεγαλεῖον τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ. Though men with their bodily eyes cannot discover all the operations of nature, yet God has imparted to them the light of reason, ὀφθαλμὸν αὐτοῦ, a perception like his own, intellectual, intuitive, whereby they may discover the true beauty of his works, *viz.* the moral design of them; or if we read ὀφθαλμὸν αὐτῶν here (as below in ver. 15. ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ, in the Alexandrian MS. is αὐτῶν), it will give another, and not a disagreeable sense to the passage. It had been objected, that *the most part of his works were hid, and that no man could see them;* but the wise man answers, that God had placed the eyes wherewith these things are seen in men's hearts; they see with the eyes of their understanding. It is in this sense our Saviour says, ὁ λύχνος τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν ὁ ὀφθαλμός. Matt. vi. 22. Either of these senses will answer the objection.

Ver. 9, 10. Καὶ ὄνομα ἁγιασμοῦ αἰνέσουσιν, ἵνα διηγῶνται τὰ μεγαλεῖα τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ. They to whom he hath imparted the perception abovementioned, will praise his holy name, and by their praise most effectually declare and set forth the excellency of his works and ways; and in particular ἐκλεκτοὶ, Israel his *elect,* his peculiar people are most engaged to do this, as they received and were taught by his law, and were witnesses of so many miracles in Egypt, and in the wilderness. And thus Calmet, *Il les a remplis de ses lumieres et de ses connoisances pour le loüer, et l'adorer dans la consideration de ses ouvrages.*

Ver. 11, 12. Προσέθηκεν αὐτοῖς ἐπιστήμην, καὶ νόμον ζωῆς ἐκληροδότησεν αὐτοῖς. Διαθήκην αἰῶνος ἔστησε μετ' αὐτῶν, καὶ τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ ὑπέδειξεν αὐτοῖς, *viz.* To the knowledge which he imparted to them by nature, προσέθηκε, he hath superadded ἐπιστήμην (*disciplinam,* as the versions have it), a rule of holy living, *viz.* by the law of Moses, and has put them in present possession of a law of life, (or that promises life to them that observe it; Lev. x. 5. Ezek. xx. 11. Rom. x. 5.) He hath established an everlasting covenant with them, and shewed them κρίματα αὐτοῦ, his commands and precepts of righteousness and mercy. And this he did principally with regard to his own people, to whom belonged the law, and the adoption, and the covenant, preferably to all others.

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Here end the objections; for ἐξέτασις ἁπάντων ἐν τελευτῇ, i. e. *The trial of all things is in the end,* according to our version, is not in the Vatican, and some other editions. And it is observable in both columns, that in the order of sentiments (and phrases too) there is a likeness and relation between the verses cited from the former chapter, and those produced as corresponding with them in this: and therefore, though this author's manner of writing in general is rather sententious than argumentative, yet it is no improbable conjecture, that a formal answer is here designed to some sceptical objections before advanced, and it is continued under a little difference of expression, ver. 15. 19, 20, &c. of chap. xvii. where the discipline that the Israelites were under is more plainly spoken of.

Ver. 13. *Their eyes saw the majesty of his glory, and their ears heard his glorious voice.* Ver. 14. *And he said unto them, Beware of all unrighteousness, and he gave every man commandment concerning his neighbour.*] God manifested his glory, when he appeared on Mount Sinai at the delivery of his law, when his people saw the lightnings and heard the thunderings, called here *his glorious voice,* as the Hebrews ordinarily expressed it, Psal. xxix. 4. By giving the law, God did not only provide for the establishment of his own worship, and the decent performance of it, but it was promulgated likewise for the good of man, and of society in general. He therein orders every man to love his neighbour, to live in peace and on terms of friendship with him, to abstain from theft, and to do no act of violence and injustice; to be tender of his reputation, to beware of slander and false witness, and to be aiding and assisting to him under any calamity or distress, as may be seen at large, Exod. xx.—xxiii. By *unrighteousness,* Grotius thinks not any of the instances of wrong, here enumerated, to be meant; but the worship of false gods, and the sin of perjury, in defiance of the true one, which the Israelites expressly engaged to avoid, Josh. xxiv. 16. If this last sense be admitted, the author may be supposed here to refer to both tables of the Decalogue.

Ver. 15. *Their ways are ever before him, and shall not be hid from his eyes.*] This observation is true with regard to the actions of all mankind, but it rather respects the Israelites in particular, who are spoken of before and after, and means, that as God gave them a law, so he took notice how they observed it, his eyes were over them for that purpose. He took cognizance of their whole conduct, as a legislator tender of his rights and jealous of his honour, in order to punish or reward them, as they should respectively deserve. His eye was not so intent upon the behaviour of other nations, who were not favoured with a like knowledge of his laws, nor bound by any positive covenant to the observance of them, nor were under his government so immediately; or, the meaning may be, that during the long march of the Israelites in the wilderness, God went along with them, directed their ways, and conducted them as their guide, in the day-time by a cloudy pillar, and all the night by a light of fire. This sense Grotius prefers: the next verse is not in the Vatican, nor in the Vulgate, it is manifestly taken from Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

Ver. 17. *For in the division of the nations of the whole earth, he set a ruler over every people, but Israel is the Lord's portion.*] Ἑκάστῳ ἔθνει κατέστησεν ἡγούμενον. When God distributed the earth among the several nations, and appointed kings and rulers over the principal parts of it, the people of Israel he reserved for his own peculium; he chose the heritage of Jacob out of all nations to be under his more especial care, and to enjoy great and singular privileges: for he not only put them into possession of a fruitful Canaan, but did them the particular honour of being their king; by him they were directed in all cases which concerned their state, and by him were led forth to battle, so that their form of government was properly a theocracy, till the time of Saul, when, like other nations, they would have a temporal king over them, to their great detriment and disgrace. Josephus gives the like account of the original form of the Jewish polity; that while other nations preferred some monarchy, others aristocracy, or democracy, their legislator overlooked all these, and appointed Θεοκρατίαν τὸ πολίτευμα, θεῷ τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὸ κράτος ἀναθεὶς, καὶ πείσας εἰς ἐκεῖνον ἅπαντας ἀφορᾶν, ὡς αἴτιον ἁπάντων ὄντα τῶν ἀγαθῶν, κ. τ. λ. (Cont. Ap. lib. ii.) Our author here alludes to Deut. xxxii. 8, 9. *When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel; for the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* Both ancient and modern interpreters have thought, that the son of Sirach here, and also the passage just cited, refer to an opinion, which was pretty common, that every nation has its tutelar angel, an ἡγούμενος, or ministering angel, to preside over it, but that God himself was such in a more eminent degree to the people of Israel. The version of the LXX. seems to have given rise to this opinion, for the rendering of Deut. xxxii. 8. is ὅτε διεμέριζεν ὁ ὕψιστος τὰ ἔθνη ἔστησεν ὅρια ἐθνῶν κατ' ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων θεοῦ. And accordingly, by the *prince of Persia* and of *Greece,* mentioned in the book of Daniel, some understand particular angels which presided over those people, as others have asserted, that the care of the Jewish people was committed to the archangel Michael. (See Theod. and Jer. Com. in Dan.) Indeed, this opinion of the kingdoms of the world being subject to the government of angels, was maintained by many of the primitive, especially the Greek fathers; but it is now plain from whence these, who followed the Septuagint translation, borrowed their notion. Bochart and De Muis agree, that those interpreters themselves were mistaken through a bad copy, and that the omission of some letters therein led them into this error. (Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 15.)

Ver. 18. *Whom being his first-born, he nourisheth with discipline, and giving him the light of his love, doth not forsake him.*] Φῶς ἀγαπήσεως is a particular expression, there is a parallel one, ver. 26. φωτισμὸς ὑγείας. Out of the whole race of mankind did God select the Jews, among whom he dwelt in a particular and extraordinary manner, the Divine Majesty residing over the mercy-seat. These he singled out to be a holy nation, and marked them as his own people by circumcision, which was a character of genealogical sanctity, and by instituting the Passover, which federally united them to him, and among one another. This seed of Jacob, so dear and beloved by God, was as much blessed by him above all other people, as the first-born commonly is above the rest of the children. And so, when God calls David his first-born, it follows immediately, *I will make him higher than the kings of the earth.* (Psal. lxxxix. 28.) God always regarded Israel with a favourable eye, and

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though he suffered other nations to walk in their own ways, (Acts xiv. 16.) and looked upon them with a sort of indifference in comparison, yet to Israel he afforded the light of his countenance, and of his saving truth. He gave signal proofs of his affection for them, by continually watching over them for good; he intended their happiness in all his dealings with them, and pursued it even in his corrections and severest dispensations towards them, recalling them to their duty, and inviting them, in the tenderest manner, to return into the right way, and receiving them to mercy and favour upon their repentance and amendment. This whole verse is omitted in the Vatican and in the Vulgate.

Ver. 21. *But the Lord being gracious, and knowing his workmanship, neither left nor forsook them, but spared them.*] As the sense of the foregoing verse is well expressed by the Psalmist, *He set their misdeeds before him, and their secret sins in the light of his countenance;* (Psal. xc. 8.) so this seems to allude to Psal. lxxviii. 37—39. where, speaking of the same Israelites, he says, *That though their heart was not whole with God, neither continued they steadfast in his covenant, yet he was so merciful, that he forgave their misdeeds, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his wrath away, and would not suffer his whole displeasure to arise, for he considered that they were but flesh.* Ἐμνήσθη ὅτι σάρξ εἰσι, which is more fully expressed, Psal. ciii. 13, 14. of the faithful in general; *As a father pitieth his own children, even so hath the Lord mercy on them that fear him, for he knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust.* Αὐτὸς ἔγνω τὸ πλάσμα ἡμῶν; the very expression used by this writer.

Ver. 22. *The alms of a man is as a signet with him, and he will keep the good deeds of man as the apple of his eye.*] By *alms* we may here understand all the good which a man does his neighbour, every action of piety and mercy performed by him, which God will favourably receive, and keep in remembrance, and lay it among his precious treasures, to reward and recompense it to the beneficent man and his posterity. The value God sets upon acts of mercy and kindness, is expressed here by the metaphor of *the apple of the eye*, and the *signet on the right hand:* see Jer. xxii. 24. Haggai ii. 23. Cant. viii. 6. where the *seal* or *signet* denotes what is near and dear to a man, and, as such, is preserved, and always under his eye and care. Messieurs of Port-Royal, from this latter comparison, apply what is here said of alms to acts of charity done in secret, which are as a valuable thing sealed up, till they are laid open by God, and by him publicly rewarded. The connexion of this verse with what precedes is not very clear; Calmet and Bossuet give the following,—That as men's unrighteous deeds are always before the Lord, so are their good deeds likewise, and particularly acts of charity and loving-kindness, which though unobserved of others, and for a time perhaps unanswered to the giver, yet are not fruitless or lost; God deposits them among his treasures, and when he maketh up his precious jewels will remember them.

Ver. 23. *Afterward he will rise up and reward them, and render their recompence upon their heads.*] If we join the words in the latter end of the former verse, *viz. He will give repentance to his sons and daughters,* to this verse, the sense will then be,—That God will not strike or punish a sinner immediately, or in the act and instant of committing the sin, but will give time to repent, and an opportunity to return to him; but if, after allowing him time, he defers his amendment, and shews no sign of sorrow or conversion, God, who seemingly connived at his sins, will then rouse himself in his anger, and punish him the more severely: for so the phrase of *rendering a recompence upon men's heads* is more generally taken. But if we omit that sentence, which is neither in the Vat. nor Ald. edition, nor in the Vulgate, then this verse will admit of another sense, as connected with the foregoing; *viz.* That God keeps the remembrance of alms and good works as precious as a signet, and as dear as the apple of an eye; and though for the present he may not distinguish the donors, yet the time will come when he will arise to reward them, and fill such beneficent souls with peculiar marks of his favour: like a kind master, who recompenses the faithfulness of his servants, or a general, who heaps upon his soldiers such marks of honour, as are proportionate to their merit. And this God will do either in this life, by outward blessings and prosperity, or hereafter, by receiving them into everlasting habitations.

Ver. 24. *But unto them that repent, he granted them return, and comforted those that failed in patience.*] This is but inaccurately rendered; it should either be, *Unto them that will repent, he giveth them grace to return,* as the Geneva version has it; or, Unto them that repented, he granted them a return into his favour, was willing to receive every penitent, and to comfort the broken-hearted. In the former acceptation the sense is, That sinners cannot with reason blame God who uses all methods to reclaim them; he illuminates them by his grace, he instructs them by his word, he admonishes, he threatens, he corrects, he recalls, such as wander from their duty, he waits their return with patience, and receives them upon their repentance, and thereby comforts such as would otherwise be discouraged, and despair. But if we take it in the latter sense, we may then, with Grotius, understand this and the foregoing verse of the persons mentioned ver. 20. whose sins being before the Lord, and obstinately continued in, he will, after waiting some time for their amendment, proceed to punish them; and then it follows, by way of antithesis, But to such as repented, and whose sins were thereby done away from before the Lord, whether Israelites or others, he was disposed to be merciful and gracious, and to bestow his grace upon them, to keep them again from falling.

Ver. 27. *Who shall praise the Most High in the grave, instead of them which live, and give thanks?*] *i. e.* The living only can pay their devotions to God, and therefore repentance should not be deferred till the time of death, when it will be too late to think of it. In this author's time, ᾅδης was used by the Jews, as it was also among the Greeks, to signify *the grave* or *death;* and *death* and *hades* are frequently joined as synonymous. See 2 Sam. xxii. 6. Ecclus. xlviii. 5. and particularly Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19. where οἱ ἐν ᾅδου and οἱ ἀποθανόντες are the same, and opposed to the living, the living, who alone have the ability to praise God; for, as the same inspired writer goes on, such as go down into the pit cannot hope for his truth, τὴν ἐλεημοσύνην, *his mercy. In death,* (says the Psalmist, vi. 5.) *there is no remembrance of thee, and who shall give thee thanks in* שאול, *in the grave,* or *pit?* And so Psal. cxv. 17. *The dead praise not thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into*

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silence, but we will praise the Lord; which the LXX. render more explicitly, οὐκ οἱ νεκροὶ αἰνέσουσί σε, κύριε. . .ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες εὐλογήσομεν τὸν κύριον, κ. τ. λ. Thus also, Psal. lxxxviii. 10. *Dost thou shew wonders among the dead, or shall the dead rise up again and praise thee?* where the rendering of the LXX. is surprisingly faulty, μὴ τοῖς νεκροῖς ποιήσεις θαυμάσια, ἢ ἰατροὶ ἀναστήσουσι καὶ ἐξομολογήσονταί σοι· the Hebrew word is רְפָאִים, and signifies *gigantes* or *mortui;* they fell into this error by mistaking the radix, and deriving the word from רָפָא, *sanatus fuit.* The Vulgate, too, implicitly following that version, retains the same mistake.

Ver. 28. *Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not: the living and sound in heart shall praise the Lord.*] *i. e.* The duties of religion cannot be performed by one who is not in a state of existence, nor by one that is taken away from the land of the living. Νεκρὸς, or μὴ ὢν, means not one that is annihilated, or quite ceased to be, or is become as nothing, as is the Vulgate exceptionable rendering, *Ante mortem confitere, a mortuo quasi nihil, perit confessio.* Josephus, in the very chapter in which he asserts the immortality of the soul, says, We have received from God our being, καὶ τὸ μηκέτι εἶναι πάλιν ἐκείνῳ δίδομεν· *i. e.* to him we render again, or owe our not being, by the return of that soul which he had given us. (De Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 25.) By *the living and sound in heart,* we are not to understand such only as are alive and in health, or who are easy in their minds, and flourishing in their circumstances; but such as are alive unto righteousness, and turn unto the Lord in holiness; who are contrite, and even broken-hearted, who have experienced, or hope to taste of God's mercy to them, under a lively sense of their guilt, or the smart of some great calamity and affliction; and so the sense will be nearly the same with Baruch, ii. 17. *The dead who are in their graves, whose souls are taken from their bodies, will give unto the Lord neither praise nor righteousness; but the soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, shall give thee praise and righteousness, O Lord.*

Ver. 30. *For all things cannot be in men, because the Son of man is not immortal.*] Great reason is there that God should be so merciful to his creatures, and condescend to pardon their weakness and follies, for men are neither impeccable nor immortal; they are so encompassed about with infirmities, that perfection is not to be expected from them; they are, as Abraham in great humility says of himself, sinful dust and ashes, and their days are few, as well as strictly and literally evil, and therefore is the Lord gracious, knowing his workmanship, of what perishable, corrupt, and frail materials it is made. The author enlarges here upon God's mercy, as a farther argument to invite men to repentance, and upon the shortness of life, as a powerful motive to set about it speedily.

Ver. 31. *What is brighter than the sun? yet the light thereof faileth; and flesh and blood will imagine evil.*] Our translators seem to have understood the sentiment expressed here, by their reference to a parallel passage in the margin (Job xxv. 4, 5. which is to the very same sense in other words), but they have not rendered it so accurately as they might have done. *What is brighter than the sun?* καὶ τοῦτο ἐκλείπει, yet it hath its eclipses. If it be said that τοῦτο cannot be referred to ἥλιος, I answer, neither is it necessary that it should, but may be referred to τί φωτεινότερον immediately preceding. If among God's works there be any thing brighter than the sun, yet even that is not without its defects. And thus Bossuet, *Quid lucidius sole? et tamen hoc (lucidissimum) eclipsin patitur:* much less can human nature be accounted perfect, for flesh and blood will imagine evil. I prefer this reading, not only because it is confirmed by the Alexandrian copy, but because the other, πονηρὸς ἐνθυμηθήσεται σάρκα καὶ αἷμα, is limited only to bad men; whereas the passage seems rather to relate to the whole species, which is naturally more subject to failings than the sun is to eclipses, and the defects of both cannot be concealed.

Ver. 32. *He vieweth the power of the height of heaven, and all men are but earth and ashes?*] Δύναμιν ὕψους οὐρανοῦ αὐτὸς ἐπισκέπτεται. It should rather be rendered here, *he visiteth, chideth, finding fault with the powers of heaven:* Syriac, *Virtutes cœli judicat;* as before, xvi. 18. *Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens shall be moved,* ἐν τῇ ἐπισκοπῇ αὐτοῦ, when he shall visit or animadvert upon them. Δύναμιν ὕψους οὐρανοῦ is either the sun mentioned just before, who is represented as going forth in his strength like a giant, &c. or the whole host of heaven; *viz.* the stars, the powers of heaven that shall be shaken at his coming. Δύναμιν ὕψους is only a Hebraism for the high powers. *And all men are but dust and ashes; viz.* greatly abased in God's sight, in comparison of some of his other works. So in Job, *The stars are not pure in his sight, how much less man that is a worm?* These which shine so bright to our view, are but as darkness to his all-piercing eye, and in comparison of the infinite purity of his nature; whom, if God considers and looks down upon as infinitely beneath him, of how small consequence and account is the race of men who are earth in their principle, and ashes at their dissolution? When our author thus beautifully sets forth the greatness of God, and the meanness of man, how affecting is the comparison, and how just the contrast! How does it enlarge our ideas, and exalt our sentiments of the Deity, and at the same time shame and confound all human pride and greatness! The sense given of this passage is confirmed by the true rendering of the first verse of the next chapter.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *HE that liveth for ever created all things in general.*] Ἔκτισε τὰ πάντα κοινῇ. *Creavit omnia simul,* Vulgate, which means, according to some, that without him was not any thing made that was made, in opposition to such as would have God to be an idle spectator, not minding or concerning himself with the world, especially the lesser, and seemingly more insignificant parts of it: or such, especially the Manichees, who held, that part only of the world was created by God, and not the whole. Others, and particularly St. Austin, have from hence maintained, that all things were created by God, not in the interval of six days, as is the Mosaic account, but in "eodem momento, seu in eodem nunc," that the heavens, and the earth, and the future seeds from whence all other things were to be produced, were all created in the same individual instant. Others have held, that God created at once all the matter of the universe, a chaos, to serve as the basis upon

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which all things were to be built, and from whence all things to be produced in the successive work of the six days, were to have their rise and materials. But none of these opinions give so just an account of the creation as that of Moses, for neither were all things created together, nor the shapeless mass of matter by itself, nor were they all made at once in point of time. Κοινῇ in this place does not respect the time of the creation, but rather the universality of it, (see Possel. Præfat. ad Syntax.) *viz.* that all things in general were made by God without exception or distinction; that they were created by him, not merely set in order by intervals, and degrees of time, and particularly that the cosmogony was the successive work of six days. Junius understands by κοινῇ, that God created all things upon a level, *communi lege*, subject to one common law, both of production and dissolution. (Com. in loc.) See Jackson's Works, tom. ii. p. 132. where this passage is very fully and learnedly discussed. But though the sense of our version is a good interpretation of κοινῇ, yet I conceive it is not the true one; for undoubtedly the original, which is rendered κοινῇ, was חל *commune*, in the sense of *profanum*. Κοινὸς is the same as ἀκάθαρτος, and by it the LXX. generally, if not always, express it. It occurs in this sense, 1 Macc. i. 50—69. So κοινὸν ἢ ἀκάθαρτον, in St. Peter's vision, is *common* or *unclean;* and ἔκτισε τὰ πάντα κοινῇ, κύριος μόνος δικαιώθησεται, therefore, means here, that God hath created all things (comparatively) unclean, and the Lord alone will be justified, or found just, when he is judged. (Psal. li.) The Arabic version hath glanced upon this sense, *totus mundus corrumpetur*. But indeed our translators have themselves confirmed it, (ver. 3.) *He is king of all, by his power dividing holy things among them from the profane*. The opposition between חל and קדש is well known; the latter is proper to God alone, in comparison of whom all things besides are common and unclean. From hence to ver. 15. is a continuation of the subject of the last chapter; *viz.* the majesty and power of God, and the weakness and frailty of man. And in the sense which is now offered, the connexion is certainly more visible, and the comparison or contrast better preserved. (See the last note.)

Ver. 3. *Who governeth the world with the palm of his hand, and all things obey his will, for he is the king of all, by his power dividing holy things among them from profane.*] Almost all the editions have οἰκίζων τὸν κόσμον, which Junius and most of the Latin interpreters here follow; but the true reading undoubtedly is οἰακίζων τὸν κόσμον, as Hœschelius and Grabe have it. Our translators have wrongly placed the comma after *king of all*, it should be—*he is the king of all by his power*, which is agreeable to all the Greek copies, which read, αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς πάντων ἐν κράτει αὐτοῦ. And indeed it suits this better than the following sentence, *dividing holy things among them from profane*, which was rather an act of wisdom than of power, for he made some days and places for weighty reasons more holy than others, as some parts of the sacrifices also were more so than the rest: the like may be observed with respect to persons, for he separated the people of Israel from the whole gentile world, to be a holy nation to him, and, among these, the tribe of Levi to be in a more peculiar manner his own. And in general it may be said, that he has put an essential difference between holy and profane, and hath commanded all mankind to be holy, and to touch not the unclean thing. The Vatican wholly omits this verse, as does the Vulgate.

Ver. 5. *Who shall number the strength of his majesty? and who shall also tell out his mercies?*] As his majesty is, so is his mercy infinite, (Ecclus. ii. 18.) and cannot be sufficiently displayed. According to Calmet the sense is, that though a man should be able to speak of and describe the might of his marvellous acts, δυνάμιν τῶν φοβερῶν αὐτοῦ, (Psal. cxlv. 6.) or, according to this writer, κράτος μεγαλωσύνης αὐτοῦ, yet who could be able to declare and publish the many instances of his mercy? which are the most surprising of all his other works, and far beyond them. "Et quand on pourroit annoncer ses grandeurs et ses merveilles, qui pourroit publier ses misericordes? Car sa misericorde est au-dessus de toutes ses œuvres." And in this sense he understands Psal. cxlv. 9. where the Psalmist, after having given this remarkable character of God, *that he is gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and of great goodness*, adds immediately, *Miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus*, which, De Muis says, many expound,—that his mercy is above all his (other) works. But this is not countenanced by the rendering of the LXX. which is not ὑπὲρ, but ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, which expresses his very great regard for all his works, but gives no preference to his mercy: Psal. xl. 5, 6. best expresses the sense of this place.

Ver. 6. *As for the wondrous works of the Lord, there may be nothing taken from them, neither may any thing be put unto them, neither can the ground of them be found out.* Ver. 7. *When a man hath done, then he beginneth; and when he leaveth off, then he shall be doubtful.*] Τότε ἄρχεται, *then he is to begin again;* or perhaps the true reading may be, τότε ἄρχηται, *then he must begin again*, he is as far off as ever, and when he has finished his inquiry or search, he will be doubtful, or rather, as the word is used 1 Macc. iii. 31. he will be perplexed and confounded. The sense of the whole is, Though a man should exert himself to the utmost, to penetrate into and fathom the depth of God's greatness, to explain his nature, or unravel the mysteries of his providence, or should exhaust his whole store of grateful eloquence to praise him for his noble acts, yet he will find, nevertheless, that he can neither conceive nor speak high enough of his perfections, nor invent any thing that can come near or resemble what he is. And when he thinks that he has made a good progress towards a discovery, he will acknowledge, with profound astonishment, that more remains to be added than is hitherto done. One is not properly convinced that he is ignorant of God, that he cannot understand all or any of his secrets, the causes of his will, or the design of his operations, till he has well considered and studied him: the more he meditates and thinks upon him, the more he will find him out of reach, that his counsels are deep, his dispensations mysterious, and his nature as impenetrable, as his glory is inaccessible. Each person will find himself in the condition of Simonides, who, being asked what God was, demanded first two days, then four, afterward a longer time, to deliberate, and at length was obliged to confess, that the more he studied, the less he found himself able to satisfy the inquiry. The attempt to comprehend God, and to account for all his works and proceedings, is, to use the comparison of an ancient writer, like that of numbering the sand of the sea; by going aboutit, you are confounded, and by doing

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something of it, you find it impossible to do the rest. (Nazianz. Orat. i.) Our author speaks of God in the same sublime manner, xlii. 21.

Ver. 8. *What is man, and whereto serveth he? what is his good, and what is his evil?*] Grotius understands this in a sense different from our translators; *i. e.* What profit is there to God from man, what is his (God's) good or advantage from him, and what is his evil or hurt that can come from man? What can he do or render to God by any good or evil which he does? If he is evil, what can he attempt against God; if he is good, what can he do for him, that is of any great moment? See Psal. xvi. 2. where the old translation has, *My goodness is nothing unto thee.* (See De Muis in loc.) God indeed requires us to be good, but it is for our profit, not his own, that he requires it; according to that of Eliphaz, Job xxii. 2, 3. *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous, or is it gain to him that thou makest thy way perfect?* And again, xxxv. 6—8. *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him; or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him; or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the Son of man.* St. Austin, conscious of human imperfection, and the nothingness of our best services to profit God, very justly inquires, "Quid tibi sum, ut amari te jubeas à me, et nisi faciam, irascaris mihi, et mineris ingentes miserias?" (Confess. lib. i. cap. 5.)

Ver. 9. *The number of man's days at the utmost are a hundred years.*] The author of the ninetieth Psalm, composed, as it should seem, in the time of the captivity, fixes the ordinary term of man's life at seventy, or at most eighty years; in this writer's time men sometimes lived to a hundred, but that was the longest term. Macrobius agrees with the former, when he says of his time, "Cum septies deni computantur anni, hoc à physicis creditur meta vivendi, et hoc vitæ humanæ perfectum spatium terminatur:" and Seneca with the latter, "Pervenisse te ad ultimum humanæ ætatis videmus, centesimus tibi, vel supra premitur annus." (De Brevit. Vitæ, cap. 3.) Some Greek copies point the verse thus, ἀριθμὸς ἡμερῶν ἀνθρώπου, πολλὰ ἔτη, ἑκατόν; *i. e.* the number of man's days are many years, even a hundred. But this seems not to agree with what this writer says, xvii. 2. and πολλὰ should rather be taken here adverbially, as our translators and the Vulgate understand it: in some copies also at the end of the verse is added, ἀλόγιστος δὲ ἑκάστου πᾶσιν ἡ κοίμησις, *i. e.* the time of each man's death is unknown, and cannot certainly be fixed; or, as the Geneva version has it, *No man hath certain knowledge of his death; i. e.* of the time or manner of his death, which cannot by art or calculation be determined. *Cuique præfinitum obdormiendi tempus, ratiocinio non potest computari,* as Junius renders.

Ver. 10. *As a drop of water unto the sea, and a gravelstone in comparison of the sand, so are a thousand years unto the days of eternity.*] The sense of this verse, as connected with the former, seems to be this,—that even though a man should live a thousand years, yet is that term nothing to eternity. The Psalmist has a thought not unlike this, *A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, seeing that is past, as a watch in the night.* (Psal. xc. 4.) And St. Peter, *One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* (2 Pet. iii. 8.) And to this latter the oriental versions undoubtedly refer, *Mille anni in sæculo præsenti non sunt comparandi uni diei sæculo justorum.* Αἰὼν is used in the sense it is here taken by Philo, who distinguishes between αἰὼν and χρόνος; the former belongs to incorporeal beings, as the latter is the measure of all sublunary things and persons. Nazianzen hath well noted the difference, ὅπερ ἡμῖν ὁ χρόνος, ἡλίου φόρᾳ μετρούμενος, τοῦτο τοῖς ἀϊδίοις ὁ αἰών. (Orat. xxxviii.) The Vatican omits χίλια, and reads οὕτως ὀλίγα ἔτη ἐν ἡμέρᾳ αἰῶνος, which very much weakens the comparison. Possibly both might have been in the original text to the following sense, That a thousand years are but as a few, compared unto the days of eternity. The author endeavours to illustrate this difference by the diminutive proportion which a drop of water bears to the sea, or a gravelstone to the sand on its shore; but these images do but faintly represent it, for there is a greater disproportion between time and eternity, than between the extremes of any assignable finite quantity whatsoever. But if a thousand years are as nothing with respect to eternity, how short must we account the longest term of man's life, if compared to it? And by what diminutive name shall we call it, when we reflect upon a duration that shall never end? Or what comparison shall we be able to make, between the ages of the world itself, from its first creation to its final dissolution, and eternity, which was from everlasting, and shall be to everlasting?

Ver. 11. *Therefore is God patient with them, and poureth forth his mercy upon them.* Ver. 12. *He saw and perceived their end to be evil, therefore he multiplied his compassion.*] As God knows the weakness of man, and his propensity to evil, the shortness of his life, and the many infirmities which encompass him, therefore he does not proceed against him upon every offence, but bears with him for a time, waits for his amendment, and shews his great tenderness towards him, by giving him many gracious calls and seasonable warnings, to raise in him a sense of his danger, and to put him upon a speedy repentance, in order to prevent his ruin. Καταστροφὴ is thus taken, ix. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 14. 2 Pet. ii. 6. Instead of proceeding against him with extreme rigour, he makes man's misery and infirmities rather a motive for his mercy towards him. Hence mercy is said to rejoice over judgment, and by Philo to be older than justice, and by the Psalmist, to reach unto the heavens, in comparison of the other, which reacheth but to the clouds. (Psal. lvii. 11.)

Ver. 13. *The mercy of man is towards his neighbour; but the mercy of the Lord is on all flesh: he reproveth and nurtureth, and teacheth, and bringeth again, as a shepherd his flock.*] The compassion which a man shews his neighbour, and the inclination which carries him to do good to one like himself, differs in many respects from the mercy of God. The compassion of a man has too often a tincture of self-interest in it: a man expects, if not a return, at least some sort of acknowledgment from the person he obliges; and as God has promised to reward acts of charity and benevolence done to others, he may have a respect unto the recompence of the reward. Besides, the liberal man may be induced thus to act from a motive of prudence, considering himself as subject to accidents, and under the

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like power of fortune with others, and therefore may one day fall into misfortunes, and stand in like need of assistance, which a readiness to serve others may be the most likely means to procure. But the love and compassion of God is entirely gratuitous, and free from any selfish views: he neither needs nor requires any return, but that of duty: he has no view of providing against a day of calamity, as not being liable to be affected by any change or vicissitude of things: he is superior to all accidents, and out of the reach and power of them. Philo has very justly observed of the bounty of God, that he alone gives freely, *μόνος ὁ θεὸς οὐ μὴ πωλητὴρ ἐστι*, whilst all his creatures are to one another no better than cunning hucksters, *Εὑρήσεις ἅπαντας καὶ τοὺς λεγομένους χαρίζεσθαι, πιπράσκοντας μᾶλλον, ἢ δωρουμένους εὐπρεπεῖ δωρεᾶς ὀνόματι κυρίως πράσιν ἐργάζονται.* (Περὶ Χερουβίμ.) The wise man here extols God's mercy from the universality of it, that it extends in general to all creatures, to them that serve him, and them that serve him not: nay, these last seem to have a greater share of it, as indeed they stand more in need of it. These he admonishes, reproves, chastises, and instructs; and such as improve under his kind and wholesome corrections, that receive and profit by his discipline, he hath mercy on them, and receiveth as his own again after their wandering, and, like a true shepherd, bringeth them home on his shoulders rejoicing. Here the author finishes his answer to the objections brought, xv. 11, 12. xvi. 17. 20—22.

Ver. 15. *Blemish not thy good deeds, neither use uncomfortable words when thou givest any thing.*] *Λύπην λόγων· Non des tristitiam verbi mali,* Vulg. The author begins here a new subject, which regards principally the manner of doing a kindness: he recommends not only doing good to our neighbour, but the doing it with a good grace, to give willingly and cheerfully, without delay or excuses, with kind words, and affectionate and winning looks: for the manner of doing a kindness is often beyond the act itself, and gives as much or more satisfaction to the receiver. Seneca has a most apposite passage to this purpose: "Lætus facit [beneficus], et induit sibi animi sui vultum. Ingentia quorundam beneficia silentium aut loquendi tarditas, imitata gravitatem et tristitiam, corrupit, cum promitterent vultu negantium. Quanto melius adjicere bona verba rebus bonis, et prædicatione benigna commendare quæ præstes? Sic efficies, ut animum tuum pluris æstimet, quam illud, quicquid est, ad quod petendum venerat. Tunc est summa virtus tribuentis, ubi ille qui discessit dicit sibi, Magnum hodie lucrum feci. Malo quod illum talem inveni, quam si multiplicatum hoc ad me alia via pervenisset, huic enim animo nunquam parem referam gratiam." (Lib. ii. de Beneficiis, cap. 3.)

Ver. 16. *Shall not the dew assuage the heat? so is a word better than a gift.*] The sense may either be, As the heat is refreshed by the coming dew; so a gift pleases more, accompanied with kind expressions: or the comparison may perhaps be made out thus, That as the dew, a gentle thing, and of small force in appearance, assuages the heat, or lays the hot wind (for so I think *καύσων* always signifies in the LXX. and may signify in the places where it is used by this writer); so a word, especially a mild one, (which is compared to the dew, Deut. xxxii. 2.) produces a more powerful effect than a gift; which may either mean a gift from the same person (which agrees best with the preceding verse), or one offered by another person by way of bribe, *ἀργύριον διδόμενον μετὰ δόλου*, according to the LXX. Prov. xxvi. 23. so I apprehend the Syriac understood it, translating it, *A word will turn back a gift.* Or may not the sense be, As the cooling dew is more agreeable than the scorching air, so is a (kind) word than a gift? *i. e.* such a gift as that of the envious and churlish upbraider, ver. 18. Lastly, which seems the best and closest, As the dew moderates and assuages the heat; so a word, or soft answer, turneth away wrath, (Prov. xv. 1.) sooner than a gift.

Ver. 17. *Lo, is not a word better than a gift?*] *Οὐκ ἰδοὺ λόγος ὑπὲρ δόμα ἀγαθόν*; Is not the sense of this exactly the same, according to the present reading, with the end of the former verse? and does *ἰδοὺ* any way alter or enlarge the sense? What then is the use of it here, or to what does it particularly point? I suspect the reading to be corrupt, and that the true one is, *οὐ καὶ ἡδὺς λόγος ὑπὲρ δόμα ἀγαθὸν*, and then the sense of the whole will be, As the cooling refreshing dew is preferable to the scorching heat; so is a word to some sort of gifts: nay, is not sweet obliging speech even above a good gift itself, which loses its value when given churlishly, and is enhanced when accompanied with kind expressions? As *ἀγαθὸν* is added to invigorate the expression; so *ἡδὺς*, or some such word, seems necessary to help forward the comparison. This may seem confirmed by the Syriac, which has, *Est sermo bonus qui dono præstantior est;* and by St. Chrysostom's comment upon this passage, "Sæpe sermonis obsequium, *ἡδὺς λόγος*, magis recreat accipientem, quam donum ipsum. Proinde scientes hæc, ne simus difficiles erga eos qui ad nos accedunt. Quòd si poterimus eorum inopiam sublevare, hoc faciamus cum gaudio; quod si non possumus, ne simus asperi in eos, sed vel verbis eorum curam agamus, et in mansuetudine respondeamus eis," &c. (Hom. 41. in cap. 18. Gen.)

But both are with a gracious man.] *Ἀμφότερα παρὰ ἀνθρώπῳ κεχαριτωμένῳ· i. e.* Both gifts and good words come from a kind beneficent person. Such a one will add comfortable words to the good deeds he does: he will not content himself with kind salutations, with saying, Go in peace, be thou warm or filled, but will likewise give what is wanted; nor will he barely give, but in such an obliging manner as to double the gift. *Κεχαριτωμένος* signifies an acceptable person, or one possessed of the qualities that make persons so. Thus Symmachus uses it, Psal. xviii. 25. see also Luke i. 28. Capellus prefers *κεχαριτωμένα* here; (Spicileg. p. 52.) *i. e.* Both gifts and kind speeches are agreeable to men. But had this been the true reading, which the Syriac and Vulgate both oppose, I think *ἀνδρὶ* would have been *ἀνδράσι* or *ἀνθρώποις*· for the plural seems fittest to express all men, or mankind. Besides, I think the common reading gives the stronger sense: it scarce need be said that men love both good words and gifts. But that one who would be acceptable, must be ready to give both, is an observation of some importance; because there may be persons apt to think either that liberality without affability, or affability without liberality, will answer the purpose of being agreeable and popular. The Port-Royal comment has a fine reflection here: There are some who give liberally to the poor, and at the same time speak roughly or reproachfully to them; and there are others who speak to them with great humanity and tenderness, but

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give them nothing. True charity does not consist in either the one or the other of these; for the liberality of the former is spoiled by his churlishness, and the affability of the other by his covetousness; but both these meet in a truly good man. He gives liberally to the poor, and is so far from exalting himself above him through pride, by speaking haughtily or contemptuously to him, that he learns humility from such an object.

Ver. 18. *A fool will upbraid churlishly; and a gift of the envious consumeth the eyes.*] *i. e.* The gift of a covetous man, who grudges and even seems to envy what others receive from him, is the occasion of great grief and concern to the poor, who is rebuked and reproached by him for what he cannot help. A civil denial would be preferable to charity so extorted and ill-conditioned. The advice here to give in an obliging manner, not only respects our behaviour to such as are poor, but, according to St. Austin, to all others, whom at any time we do kind offices to. To give in a taunting and contemptuous manner is sure to give offence; instead of obliging, it grieves the eyes of the receiver. A reproachful answer to a supplicant is changing liberality into a sort of tyranny; and he that upbraids others with favours done them, and expects a servile compliance in return, makes his gifts as so many chains to entangle another's liberty, and which they had better have refused than to have bought them so dearly. It is therefore a wise remark of an ancient philosopher, That he that receives a favour should never forget it; and he that confers it should never remember it. A polite person is admired and commended for the complaisant and obliging manner in which he does a favour, which gains more upon the hearts of men than the favour itself. (See xx. 13—15. xli. 22.)

Ver. 19. *Learn before thou speak, and use physic or ever thou be sick.*] This advice respects the body, and includes diet, exercise, evacuations, and other such-like preservatives of health; but, as it stands connected with the context, it regards the soul likewise, and its diseases, which, with care, may as easily be prevented as those of the body; for the latter are generally unknown to us, and unforeseen by us, and often attack us in a way and manner that we could not be aware of: whereas the diseases of the soul are in some sense voluntary, and the danger of falling into them well known, and might easily be prevented, either by avoiding such inviting occasions and temptations as betray us into sin, or resisting and subduing the evil before it be grown too strong, and is become a habit; or by following the caution and advice of friends, or listening to the directions of an able spiritual guide; or, lastly, by preventing grace added to all these, to be obtained by earnest prayer. Messieurs of Port-Royal apply the former part of the verse to the pastors of the church, who should be well instructed and grounded themselves before they attempt to teach others. A maxim often inculcated in the sapiential books, and of the last importance towards the right discharge of the ministerial office, as upon their knowledge and skill in the respective offices of their function, the good and improvement of others in a great measure depends; who can neither be fit guides, if they either wander or are not well acquainted with the right way of salvation, nor proper physicians to superintend the cure of others, if they themselves are often out of order, and want to be reminded; *Physician, heal thyself.*

Ver. 21. *Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the time of sins shew repentance.*] The advice in this and the foregoing and following verses is nearly the same; *viz.* to begin in time. As applied to the body the sense is,—Use abstinence before you are sick; for so we may understand humility here. The Hebrews express fasting by ταπεινοῦν, (Lev. xvi. 29. 31. xxiii. 29.) as fasting brings the body low; and this is confirmed by ἐγκράτεια being joined to it in some copies. As applied to the soul, the direction is, That a man should often examine his conscience, even in the pride of health; should review his past life in order to be acquainted thoroughly with the state of his soul; should not wait till the last gasp before he asks God pardon for his sins, nor defer to alter an evil course of life, till sickness, as it were, compels him. The meaning of the whole is, If when you perceive any symptoms of an approaching illness, you prudently endeavour to prevent its coming to a dangerous height by diet and abstinence, use the like circumspection and care as to the diseases of your soul; let an early application prevent all danger, that so you may find favour before the great Judge, ἐν ὥρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς, in the day of his visitation. If pride be the sin that most easily besets thee, learn to practise humility; if intemperance, subdue thyself by fasting; lie in sackcloth and ashes, and take away the fuel that inflames thy passions, and feeds thy distemper. And if thou hast at any time fallen into sin, restore thyself by a speedy repentance, and let a thorough reformation effect the cure.

Ver. 23. *Before thou prayest, prepare thyself, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord.*] Before we presume to address ourselves to God in prayer, we should remove the impressions of all sensible objects, all earthly cares, and wandering thoughts; we should purify our hearts by faith, contrition, and repentance, and endeavour to possess our souls with the idea of the presence and infinite majesty of the great God. To approach him rudely, without any preparation or respect, without fear and trembling, with a soul taken up with trifles and impertinences, is an affront to him, and betrays a mean opinion of him, as if God was obliged to hear our prayers, and to grant us what we ask of him with so much carelessness and indifference. God expects that we should prepare our own hearts, and also pray to him to assist us in that holy work. There may also another sense be given of this place; *viz.* Engage not lightly or rashly in vows, consider first whether you are resolved, and are likely to be able to fulfil them; for God looks upon such promises and engagements as an insult, where there is no intention of making them good. This seems to be countenanced by the foregoing verse.

Ver. 27. *A wise man will fear in every thing, and in the day of sinning he will be aware of offence.*] Ἐν παντὶ εὐλαβηθήσεται will be careful to keep from sinning in every thing he says or does, or will in all times and places be upon his guard; and so it will be parallel to that of Solomon, *Happy is the man that feareth always.* (Prov. xxviii. 14.) And especially in times of general corruption and degeneracy, and when evil examples are many and powerful, he will be more watchful and circumspect, that he be not led away with the multitude to do evil, nor be infected with the reigning and popular contagion. As connected with the

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former verse the sense may be, that a wise man, considering the state of the world as variable and uncertain, will in every condition of life expect and prepare for a change; he will not be dejected in adversity, nor too elate in prosperity, but will demean himself agreeably under either state of fortune, as a change of condition can soon and easily be effected by God; but a fool, who attends not to such revolutions, provides not against accidents, nor in any respect consults his safety.

Ver. 28. *Every man of understanding knoweth wisdom, and will give praise unto him that found her.*] To understand mankind, is a piece of useful knowledge, but the most valuable and important part is to find out, and be well acquainted with, persons of the most worth; and after having discovered true merit, to do justice to it, to set it in the most advantageous light, to commend and speak of it without jealousy, envy, or detraction, and upon all occasions to give it its due praise, and the testimony of our acknowledgment and approbation, ἐξομολόγησιν ἡμῶν.

Ver. 29. *They that were of understanding in sayings, became also wise themselves, and poured forth exquisite parables.*] Συνετοὶ ἐν λόγοις καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐσοφίσαντο. There may be several senses given of this passage; *viz.* Men of understanding are wise in their talk, they know when and what to speak: this is Drusius's exposition, who points the Greek thus, συνετοὶ, ἐν λόγοις καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐσοφίσαντο. Or the meaning may be, Persons wise in their talk and of understanding in discourse, will themselves be prudent also in their conduct, for wisdom is best displayed by an exactness in both; and according to this sense, the Greek should thus be pointed, συνετοὶ ἐν λόγοις, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐσοφίσαντο. And thus the Syriac understands it, *Scientes doctrinam, ipsi quoque sapienter se gerent.* There may be also a third sense, That such as have attained unto great skill and experience, made just observations upon men and things, and have formed upon them useful maxims for the conduct of life, will not only be beneficial to themselves, but improve others by communicating sound rules of economy and morality for the use and convenience of life, παροιμίας ἀκριβεῖς εἰς ζωήν. And thus σοφίζεσθαι is used in the sense of teaching, Psal. xix. 7. cv. 22.

Ver. 32. *Take not pleasure in much good cheer, neither be tied to the expense thereof.*] In the foregoing verse the wise man observes, that luxury or voluptuousness will expose a man to the censure of the world, and particularly that his enemies, βασκανοῦσι, will reproach him for it; here he takes notice of the inconvenience arising from it, and the damage it does to men's circumstances. It may also be a prohibition not to keep disorderly and extravagant company, not to link one's self with libertines and spendthrifts, nor lavish away a fortune by high living and expensive entertainments. The Vulgate renders, "Ne oblecteris in turbis, assidua est enim commissio illorum;" *i. e. Delight not in crowds and assemblies, which are full of irregularities and temptations to sin,* following a copy which read, μὴ εὐφραίνου ἐπὶ πολλῇ τύρβῃ, μηδὲ προσδεθῇς συμβουλῇ αὐτῆς, but the true reading is, μὴ εὐφραίνου ἐπὶ πολλῇ τρυφῇ, μηδὲ προσδεθῇς συμβολῇ αὐτῆς, which our translation follows. The Geneva seems to comprise both these, *Take not pleasure in great voluptuousness, and entangle not thyself with such company.*

Ver. 33. *Be not made a beggar by banqueting upon borrowing, when thou hast nothing in thy purse, for thou shalt lie in wait for thine own life, and be talked on.*] Profuseness is a reproach to men's discretion, and a reflection upon their judgment; for they that suffer their expenses to swallow up their revenues, are sure to be stigmatized with folly as well as beggary, and the weight of their calamity has sometimes been so heavy and intolerable, that men have chose to force themselves out of life in a violent manner, rather than endure the smart and anguish of poverty, and others' severe reflections upon them. The civil law, which is the result of the wisdom of many ages, ranks prodigals in the class of children and madmen, and appoints curators for the management of their concerns; but to be made a beggar by banqueting, and to borrow and take up money to supply such extravagance, is still a higher instance of folly; it is purchasing superfluities at the hazard of wanting necessaries, for the tedious remainder of a mispent life. And they who lend to such extravagants, supply them with no other view, but to undo them, and could not afford to trust them in the manner they do, if they did not propose excessive gain by them. If men contracted debts for the necessaries of life, which they could not otherwise procure, they were excusable; but to purchase niceties, and furnish out needless entertainments, at the expense of character, fortune, and liberty, at the hazard of every thing that is dear and valuable in life, is folly past forgiveness. How far do such men outdo the folly of Esau? He sold his birthright to satisfy a real and craving want, and yet he sinned in selling it; but these spendthrifts sacrifice theirs to such wants as are false and fantastical, to fashion and affectation, to pride and emulation, and their healths to appetites that will not be satisfied, and ought not to be indulged, even to wantonness, and fulness, a nice palate, and fondness for rarities. (See Delany's Social Duties, p. 242, &c.)

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *A LABOURING man that is given to drunkenness shall not be rich.*] At the end of the last chapter the wise man advises not to take pleasure in much good cheer, nor to frequent meetings, assemblies, or entertainments, where great expenses are incurred, especially if a man's circumstances are but indifferent, and his business or way of life does not comport with such extravagance. It is spending money foolishly, in fashionable, perhaps, but not good company, and is the ruin of private persons especially, without any real necessity or obligation. What this writer says of the labourer, is applicable to all artisans and mechanics who are fond of company, and neglect their occupation and business, through debauchery and excess. Their intemperance disqualifies them for their work, and squanders away all the former gains by their labour; as their expense is too great for their income, every sum that goes out unnecessarily, the want of it, and of what might have been industriously gotten in the meantime, will be felt in their families; and it is generally seen, that poverty is the lot of such as neglect business, and the advantages of a good calling, to pursue diversions, and join in the revels of disorderly and loose company. Solomon hath expressed the same thought in more general terms, *He that*

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loveth pleasure shall be a poor man, and he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich. (Prov. xxi. 17.)

He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little.] This maxim, which is of consequence in economy and politics, is more so when applied to morality. A man should be careless and negligent in no part of his conduct, should continually make a fresh progress in goodness; not to advance is to go back. One should carefully avoid the very least faults, for fear of falling into greater, and what the world calls venial sins are perhaps more carefully to be guarded against, than what it calls mortal ones, as the latter are more shocking in their own nature, and inspire a sort of horror in the committing them; but the other, through their smallness, are generally overlooked, and being thought of no consequence are not attended to, questioned, or startled at: as a man is shocked at jumping down a precipice, but scruples not to attempt the same by gentle approaches, and to descend insensibly by small steps and degrees. (See Chrysost. Hom. 87. in Matt.) It is a just observation of an ancient writer, μικρὸν οὐ μικρὸν ὅταν εἰς μέγα ἐκφέρῃ, a small sin ceases to be so when it leads to a greater, and besides they are so many, and so often returning, that these little indiscretions, to say no worse of them, combine and cluster to such a degree, that like the grapes mentioned Numb. xiii. 23. they become too great a load for one man to carry.

Ver. 2. *Wine and women will make men of understanding to fall away, and he that cleaveth to harlots will become impudent.*] The prophet Hosea accordingly observes, that *whoredom and wine take away the heart,* (iv. 11.) *i. e.* from God; they incline men to renounce him, to rebel against him, and even to turn apostates. These are the two rocks upon which there is so much danger of splitting, that few approach them, but make shipwreck. Solomon has the like observation in some of his writings, and was himself a melancholy instance of the truth of one part; and to him we may add Samson, and the whole people of Israel, whose defection was occasioned by the seducement of the Midianitish women. The consequence of such company is here very justly observed to be effrontery and impudence. Some copies read τολμηρότερος, which improves the sense, and is more proper; for he that cleaveth to harlots, is not only in danger of becoming impudent, but has already given proofs of his boldness and want of modesty; it means, that such loose company will make a man grow more hardened and profligate, and will strip him of all sense of decency: the abandoned rake in time scruples no vice, and often out of an air adopts some which he never was guilty of, and blushes at modesty, as persons of a better disposition do at wickedness.

Ver. 3. *Moths and worms shall have him to heritage, and a bold man shall be taken away.*] *i. e.* His lewdness and intemperance will throw him into many diseases; corruption and rottenness, and all the dreadful consequences of a vicious life, appear upon his body, he is emaciated and consumptive, the very shadow of himself, and the abhorrence of others, he dies a sad spectacle, and a dreadful monument and warning to men of pleasure; ἐξαρθήσεται ἐν παραδειγματισμῷ μείζονι, as some copies have it, his death shall be in the most scandalous and ignominious manner. Solomon, speaking of the strange woman, lays open her artifices, and the dangers which attend the company of such an enchantress, Prov. v. 3—5. 8. 11. *Her lips drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword; her feet go down to death, and her steps take hold of hell. Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house; lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.*

Ver. 4. *He that is hasty to give credit is light-minded.*] Some interpreters understand this of credulity in general, as a sign of a weak mind; Drusius takes the place in this sense, and refers to Prov. xiv. 15. *The simple believeth every word,* as a parallel passage; and so the oriental versions. Others expound it of a faulty proneness both to believe and speak ill of our neighbour, the crediting and spreading evil reports to his disadvantage, instead of acting the good man, who is cautious, and suspends his assent, and neither believes all he hears, nor officiously reports even what he knows or believes to be true, to the prejudice of another. But Calmet says, the author is here speaking, "de ceux qui se livrent inconsidérément aux plaisirs honteux," of such who give themselves up to shameful and forbidden pleasures, who rashly go after and weakly listen to women of infamous characters, and are drawn into ruin by trusting to their artful insinuations. And Grotius prefers this sense, and indeed the context manifestly leads to it. It follows, *He that sinneth,* by acts of uncleanness, *offends against his own soul, i. e.* sinneth against himself, as well as God; which may either respect his soul, and then the sense will be the same with Prov. vi. 32. *Whoso committeth adultery, lacketh understanding, he that doeth it, destroys his own soul;* or it may refer to his body, that he ruins his health and constitution by such irregularities, and offers a sort of violence to himself; like that of St. Paul, *Flee fornication: every sin that a man doth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.* (1 Cor. vi. 18.)

Ver. 5. *Whoso taketh pleasure in wickedness shall be condemned.*] There are two senses given of this place from the different pointing of the Greek; the first is that followed by our translators, ὁ εὐφραινόμενος ἐπὶ κακοεξίᾳ, καταγνωσθήσεται, the other is, ὁ εὐφραινόμενος, ἐπὶ κακοεξίᾳ καταγνωσθήσεται; *i. e.* The man of pleasure shall be punished with the loss of his health, shall be condemned by God to a bad habit of body: κακοεξία, in this sense, means what the physicians call κακεξία technically. But the virtuous and chaste man, that resisteth such unlawful (venereal) pleasures, as it follows in the next sentence, *crowneth his life,* maketh his life sound and healthful. Ἀντοφθαλμεῖ ἡδοναῖς, is a most beautiful figurative expression, which the versions but faintly reach. We meet with the like expression in Josephus, παθήμασιν ἀντιβλέψαι, (Antiq. lib. vi.) and in Lucretius. "Cupidinibus responsare," in Horace, comes not very short of it. (See Acts xxvii. 15.)

Ver. 6. *He that ruleth his tongue shall live without strife; and he that hateth babbling shall have less evil.*] The first part of this is clear enough, reading ἀμάχως συμβιώσεται, and not ἀμάχῳ, as most copies have it. The latter has two readings, καρδίᾳ and κακίᾳ, the preference of either of which depends upon the construction of λαλιὰ, which, if it be understood properly of *speech* or *discourse,* then he who hateth it, ἐλαττονοῦται καρδίᾳ, *wanteth understanding.* But if λαλιὰ be taken in that other worse and less common sense, for *loquacity* or *babbling,* as our translators render it, then he

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that hateth it, ἐλαττονοῦται κακίᾳ, *is devoid of malice; malitia*, as the Vulgate has it: ἐλαττονούμενος καρδίᾳ seems to mean in this writer, what St. Paul means by παιδία ταῖς φρεσὶ, *children in understanding*, and ἐλαττονούμενος κακίᾳ what he means by τῇ κακίᾳ νήπιοι, (1 Cor. xiv. 20.) And this seems to be a better sense of ἐλαττονούμενος κακίᾳ, than that which our translators give, *He shall have less evil;* for κακίᾳ is more properly a *vice*, a *personal fault*, than an *evil*, or *misfortune*. After the first sentence, *He that ruleth his tongue shall live without strife*, it very naturally follows, *and he that hateth babbling*, shews he hath not a malicious or contentious disposition, though that followed by our translators is good sense, and κακίᾳ is so used Matt. vi. 34. and by the LXX. sometimes.

Ver. 7. *Rehearse not unto another that which is told unto thee, and thou shalt fare never the worse.*] Δευτερώσαι λόγον signifies in general to use repetitions, as it is taken, vii. 14. and then the sense is, Be not troublesome by tedious and unnecessary repetitions, which will not make you better understood, nor get you any credit or advantage. Or it sometimes signifies to reply, contest, or dispute a matter with any one, with asseveration and positiveness, which exchanging of words begets quarrels, and often ends in real hurt and mischief. The Latins use *commutare verba* in this sense. It has also a third meaning; *viz.* to repeat what one hears, which is the sense of our translators here, and xli. 23. and of the Tigurine version. The Vulgate rendering, *Ne iteres verbum nequam et durum*, furnishes yet a fourth sense; *i. e.* If you have said any hard, rash, or unjust thing of any man, do not stand in it, or repeat it, and so make the fault worse: but be silent for the future on that head, or rather endeavour to recall it, and take pains to excuse it. Or it may mean, lastly, If you have heard any thing to the disadvantage of your neighbour, do not repeat it again, or spread the report, and you will gain esteem; *Nemo te criminabitur*, Syr. and have the character of a discreet and friendly person. He that is thus cautious of his conduct with respect to others, taketh the surest way to live peaceably with all men, and not to offend through breach of charity.

Ver. 8. *Whether it be to a friend or foe, talk not of other men's lives.*] Inquire not into other persons' affairs, which no ways concern thee, for such a curiosity is impertinent, and often ends in censure and detraction; or spread not an ill report of any man, neither friend nor foe, as the margin has it, nor say any thing to affect his character, unless you are under a necessity to do it, to save your own, as Junius understands it: for however we may please or satisfy our ill-nature, by publishing the faults of others, yet such a liberty is neither commendable nor allowable, nor should their failings be the subject of our conversation or raillery, either before friends or enemies. The Vulgate renders, *Amico et inimico noli narrare sensum tuum*, which may furnish another sense; *viz.* not to reveal or trust with any body our personal faults, or secrets of importance respecting ourselves, or those of others, which have been imparted to us in confidence. These even our friends have no right to know, much less our enemies, who will make an ill use of such intelligence, and turn the discovery we have made to our damage and disadvantage.

And if thou canst without offence, reveal them not.] The Geneva version has, *If the sin appertain not unto thee, reveal it not:* and Coverdale's, *If thou hast offended, tell it not out.* The Greek is καὶ εἰ (probably for εἰ καὶ *etiamsi*) μὴ ἐστὶ σοὶ ἁμαρτία; *i. e.* Though there be no sin in thee, reveal not the sins of others, on account of the consequences aftermentioned: or, talk not of nor censure other men's faults, unless you be free from faults yourself, in the same sense that our Saviour said, *He that is without sin among you, let him throw the first stone.* (John viii. 7.)

Ver. 10. *If thou hast heard a word, let it die with thee, and be bold, it will not burst thee.*] *i. e.* Says St. Chrysostom, suppress it, forget, extinguish, bury it, be as though thou hadst not heard it, or as one that doth not remember. (Hom. 3. ad Pop.) Some copies have ἐναποθανέτω σοι, *let it die in thee.* The Vulgate properly adds, *Audisti sermonem adversus proximum tuum?* which makes the sense more determinate and clear. The suppressing or concealing within our breasts what we have heard of moment, the wise man elegantly compares to liquor in a cask without any vent. There is a like comparison applied to speech, Job xxxii. 17—20. where Elisha, when about to answer and shew his opinion, says, *I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles; I will speak that I may be refreshed*, &c. On the contrary, such as are too open and communicative, are compared to sieves, or vessels full of holes. "Plenus rimarum sum, hac et illac perfluo." (Ter.) Or the comparison may perhaps be taken from poison, which a person unhappily swallowing, is in danger of swelling to that degree, as to be even burst, unless it be speedily thrown off: this may seem to suit best with the venom of detraction.

Ver. 11. *A fool travaileth with a word, as a woman in labour of a child.*] Ἀπὸ προσώπου λόγου is a Hebraism. The sense is, That an idle person, or a busy body, when he has been told a secret, or has picked up a piece of scandal, is so big with it, that he has no ease or quiet, through a certain levity of mind, or malignancy of spirit, till he has brought it to light; is as impatient to be delivered of it, as a woman of the burden of her child. This too is an elegant comparison, we find it often applied to what passes in the mind, whose thoughts at their birth, and during their continuance, are styled conceptions; when brought forth, and communicated, they are its offspring, and the formation of them is the labour of the brain. Hence Clemens. Alex. describes the wise man, who knows when to speak, and when to be silent, as bringing forth at the full time; and a careless and indiscreet person, as one that suffers abortion. (Strom. lib. vi.) It is also applicable to evil schemes, and clandestine mischief: thus the Psalmist, describing the wicked man, says, *He travaileth with mischief, he hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth ungodliness.* (Psal. vii. 14.) In the following verse, a secret in a fool's breast is compared to an arrow sticking in a man's flesh, which frets and galls him till it is drawn forth. So neither has the other any ease or quiet till he publishes what he knows or has heard, and discharges his arrow at his neighbour. The comparison of detraction to an arrow, is very apposite and beautiful. St. Bernard very frequently uses it; and the Psalmist, speaking of malicious and ill-designed persons says, *That their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.* (Psal. lvii. 5. see also Prov. xxv. 18. Jer. ix. 8.)

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Ver. 13. *Admonish a friend, it may be he hath not done it, and if he have done it, that he do it no more.* Ver. 14. *Admonish thy friend, it may be he hath not said it, and if he have, that he speak it not again.* Ver. 15. *Admonish a friend, for many times it is a slander, and believe not every tale.*] *i. e.* Have an explanation, or an eclaircissement with your friend, when any one acquaints you that he has said or done something contrary to the friendship betwixt you; for such reports are either false or true: if they are absolutely false, you owe him that justice not to condemn him without hearing him; this is due even to an enemy, and much more to a friend. If they are true, it is however just and reasonable, that he should have an opportunity to clear himself, and to state his account of the matter. For often an expression, which was innocent in itself, has appeared harsh and unkind by the particular turn which the relater gave to it, and, through the addition of some ill-natured circumstances, and a partial representation, has had a contrary effect to the intention of the speaker. On such an occasion one should remember and observe the advice of an ancient writer, Not to judge of the person by the words, but of the words by the person; if he is a true friend, and proved himself always such before, you may either conclude he has not said or done what he is charged with; or, if the fact is past doubt, you should inform him of it, that you may know from what cause it proceeds, which you will find rather to be owing to some inadvertence, than to any baseness of heart or alienation of affection. All that the wise man says or means in these verses is briefly this: Remember that almost all reports are false, and therefore you should not make yourself uneasy about uncertain rumours; remember that your friend loves you, and has given you upon different occasions many proofs of his sincerity, and therefore you should not easily be induced to suspect his fidelity; remember that your friend is a man, and you should not be surprised, if now and then he does or says an indiscreet thing; remember that you yourself too are a man, and you will easily excuse in another what you would desire to be pardoned in yourself; remember that it was an accidental slip, and would it be just to take offence, or break friendship, for what may happen to the best of men, and in common almost to all? (Com. Port-Royal.)

Ver. 17. *Admonish thy neighbour before thou threaten him, and not being angry, give place to the law of the Most High.*] Ἔλεγξον τὸν πλησίον. This and the foregoing verses are to be understood of reproof; but before reproof, first know if what your friend is accused of be true, and whether it be not misrepresented, through the adding or omission of some circumstances, which would quite alter the case. If he shews no signs of repentance or concern for what he has done, nor offers to make any excuse or reparation, do not instantly exasperate him by any violent methods, or rough usage; if you would take the likeliest way to soften and recover him, speak to him mildly, and reprove him gently; if he hears thee, and shews signs of amendment, attempt not any thing farther against him. But if he justifies his fault, you may then proceed with more severity, and make him sensible of his obstinacy in a more public manner. And so the law is with respect to a stubborn and rebellious son, Deut. xxi. 18. This is exactly agreeable to what our Saviour appoints upon the like occasion: *If thy brother trespass against thee, tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; and if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican.* (Matt. xviii. 15—17. see Lev. xix. 17. Gal. vi. 1. Ambr. lib. iii. de Offic. Senec. de Ira. i. 16.) Cicero prescribes the like method of proceeding from a son to a father, "Quid si tyrannidem occupare, si patriam prodere conabitur pater? silebitne filius? Imo vero obsecrabit patrem, ne id faciat; si nihil profecerit, accusabit, minabitur etiam." (De Offic.) Where *accusare* means private admonition or reproof; *minari* a public charge or process, *delatio publica*. This the climax seems necessarily to require. The same writer makes mutual brotherly reproof essential to true friendship. "Monere, et moneri proprium est veræ amicitiæ." (De Amicit.) The Port-Royal comment applies this advice to the rulers of the church, whose office as it is to reprove, to exhort, and to admonish, so they should be careful to do it with all long-suffering, not giving ear to every report, nor carried away by uncertain suspicions, but to inquire first with all the caution and circumspection which wisdom directs, and then to censure or reprove according to the merits of the case. For want of observing such caution and rules with respect to reproof, friendship has been often dissolved, and the law of God, which enjoins brotherly love, forgiveness, and peace, slighted and disregarded; δοῦναι τόπον, besides the sense given in our version, signifies to esteem and respect. (See xiii. 22. xvi. 14. xxxviii. 12.)

Ver. 18. *The fear of the Lord is the first step to be accepted of him, and wisdom obtaineth his love.*] Φόβος Κυρίου ἀρχὴ προλήψεως, σοφία δὲ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀγάπησιν περιποιεῖ. I presume προσλήψεως is the true reading, and τὸ προσληφθῆναί σε ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, (xxiii. 38.) seems the right interpretation of it. Our translators manifestly understand this of obtaining God's love; Junius, of the love of our neighbour, and that the fear of the Lord is the root or cause of charity towards him; Grotius, that the fear of the Lord is the recommendation and cause of the intimacy and friendship that are among good men. According to Calmet, the sense is, The wisdom which is from above, which comes from him, σοφία παρ' αὐτοῦ, is amiable, and procures men's favour and love; *La sagesse qui vient de lui, gagne l'amitié, gagne les cœurs.* Some copies for σοφία have σφόδρα, which Grabe prefers, and it makes good sense as well as the other. It should be observed, that this and the following verse, for the sense of which see 2 Esd. vii. 53. Rev. ii. 7. xxii. 2. are not in the Alexandrian, Vatican, nor Vulgate. The twenty-first verse too is generally rejected, as being in very few editions, and having no relation to the context.

Ver. 20. *The fear of the Lord is all wisdom, and in all wisdom is the performance of the law, and the knowledge of his omnipotency.*] Few copies have this last sentence. The sense of the whole is, The fear of the Lord is complete wisdom, which consists in obedience to God's laws, and contains likewise the knowledge of God and his attributes, and so is both speculative and practical.

Ver. 22. *The knowledge of wickedness is not wisdom.*] All the art and invention, cunning and attainments, of the wicked deserve not the name of wisdom. It is the abuse

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of men's faculties (which were given them for noble purposes, to lead them to good, and to point out their duty), to be employed in evil arts or schemes of iniquity. To understand the several ways and sorts of wickedness; to know the most effectual and securest method of acting it; to be acquainted with the vices of past ages, and to improve upon them by inventing new ones; to be ingenious in finding out fresh schemes for luxury and expense, and to stand distinguished for an elegant taste in debauchery and wickedness; in short, to have such a knowledge which a man ought to be ashamed of, and which is a disgrace to his nature,—is far below native simplicity, or ignorance attended with innocence.

Ver. 23. *There is a wickedness, and the same is an abomination, and there is a fool wanting in wisdom.*] Learning and parts do not always command esteem, nor is the want of wisdom always to be ridiculed or despised. There is a wisdom falsely so called, which is often more dangerous than useful; a man of great talents and abilities, or a busy enterprising spirit, and at the same time of a corrupt heart, is infinitely more to be dreaded, than one who is simply evil, and from whose mean capacity no great harm can be apprehended. A person of such a genius, is not to be compared with one whose only misfortune is the want of a more improved and better understanding, especially if he is, though weak, a virtuous and good man. Fine parts are to a man just as he uses them; they are blessings to a man, if employed to right purposes, to the real good of the owner, and to the glory and in the service of the Giver. But if they administer only to pride and self-opinion; if they serve only to give a man a light turn of mind, and, instead of opening to him a clearer insight into his duty, make him think himself above it; if they are made use of to expose what is serious, or burlesque what is sacred, instead of being more worthily employed in the defence of religion and truth,—they are then a curse to him, and enable him to do the greater mischief: as Satan's superior parts qualified him after his fall to be a more effectual seducer of the brethren, and to be the chief among the devils. Some copies, instead of πονηρία, read ἐστὶ πανουργία, καὶ αὐτὴ βδέλυγμα, which is confirmed by the Syriac version, *Est calliditas quæ generat peccata.* Messieurs of Port-Royal prefer this reading, and follows it in their comment, and indeed some such word seems necessary to preserve the antithesis. It seems also from the other reading, as if there were some sorts of wickedness which were not abominations. By πανουργία, which must necessarily be taken in a bad sense here, I would understand that false cunning which, in the esteem of the world, passes for wisdom, and is founded upon self-interest. Its ingenuity lies in doing evil with artifice, and covering its wickedness with the superficial and plausible mask of virtue, though it no otherwise regards virtue, than as a veil which may serve to cover its odious and criminal designs, which not being restrained by any fear of God, or checks of conscience, thinks all means good and allowable, which may promote what it hath in view. This in the opinion of the world is often mistaken for prudence and economy, but as it is devoid of justice should rather be called knavery, or craft; for, according to Plato, Tully, and other moralists, "Scientia quæ remota est a justitia calliditas potius, quam sapientia, appellanda est."

Ver. 25. *There is an exquisite subtilty, and the same is unjust, and there is one that turneth aside to make judgment appear, and there is a wise man that justifieth in judgment.*] There is such a variety and disagreement in the versions here, that the same Greek text could never have produced them; nor is there any passage about the sense of which the interpreters are more at a loss; Ἔστι πανουργία ἀκριβὴς, καὶ αὕτη ἄδικος, καὶ ἔστι διαστρέφων χάριν τοῦ ἐκφᾶναι κρίμα, is the reading of almost all the copies. Πανουργία is used in Scripture in a good sense, particularly in the book of Proverbs; and by this writer, xxi. 12. xxxvii. 15. and may seem to be so taken here by the epithet added to it, ἀκριβὴς, *accurate*, and in that sense just, yet in another sense is unjust. A man of art and exquisite subtilty may keep within the distinctions of the law, nay, and even within truth, and yet plead a bad cause, or may even in a good cause stick too much to the letter and rigour of the law, and offend against equity. There is also a cunning which does evil, or seems to do so, that good may come of it. There is an art of perverting and confounding right and truth in appearance, in order to do justice, and make truth appear: an instance of which we have in Solomon, when he commanded the child to be slain, with an artful design only, that he might discover the true mother. It is one species of art and finesse, says the wise man, to do injustice under the strict forms of law; and another to do strict justice, by seeming to break through the forms and fences of right; but there is a third person, who is wisest of all, who does only what is right, and by rightful means only. Drusius and Junius among the Latin interpreters, understand χάριν, not adverbially, as our translators do, but render it by *gratiam, Est qui pervertat gratiam in proferendo judicio;* joining διαστρέφων χάριν, it may be translated, There is one that turneth aside, disregardeth favour and private friendship, to shew forth judgment. The phrase διαστρέφειν κρίμα, (Exod. xxiii. 6. Heb. i. 4.) might perhaps lead the author to say in opposition to it, διαστρέφων χάριν, τοῦ ἐκφᾶναι κρίμα. Calmet understands the place of craft, or unjust subtilty, of a faulty exactness, and oppressing the innocent, by adhering too rigidly to strict justice; of tempering the severity of the law by mildness and equity, and moderating the *summum jus*, to prevent hardships and injuries. Mr. Pope well expresses the former part,

> "In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,
> Entangle justice in her net of law,
> And right too rigid harden into wrong."
> (Essay on Man.)

The rendering of the last part of the verse is not very accurate; Grotius translates it much better, *He that acteth righteously in judgment is wise,* though I should observe, that neither the Roman edition, nor that of Hœschelius, nor the Vulgate, has that sentence.

Ver. 26. *There is a wicked man that hangeth down his head sadly, but inwardly he is full of deceit.*] Ἔστι πονηρευόμενος, There is one that is meditating and contriving evil, συγκεκυφὼς μελανίᾳ. Grotius says this is a mistake, arising either from affinity of sound, or συγκυφὼν in the next verse. He contends that the true reading is, συγκεκρυφὼς μελανίᾳ, and justifies his conjecture from Horace,—

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"Pulchra Laverna,
Da mihi fallere, da justo sanctoque videri;
Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nubem."
(Epist. lib. i.)

Where *nox*, he says, answers to μελανία; and indeed there seems to be a necessity for an alteration either here, or at the beginning of the next verse, to prevent tautology. Humility is in itself so amiable a quality, that even such as are the farthest from it will assume it, to carry on some sinister end. Pride itself can upon occasion condescend to wear this garb, to serve some vile purpose, and will stoop and cringe where it can gain any thing considerable by it. But excessive complaisance, affected civilities, and studied artifices, are always to be suspected, as carrying some latent design of mischief. The Psalmist accordingly describes the wicked, as *falling down and humbling himself, that the congregation of the poor may fall into the hands of his captains.* (Psal. x. 11. see Prov. xxvi. 24. in the LXX.)

Ver. 29. *A man may be known by his look, and one that hath understanding by his countenance, when thou meetest him.*] This observation is true in general, though one sometimes sees some with an unpromising look and heavy countenance, who are known to be persons of fine understanding and great abilities. Their vivacity is lost in contemplation, and the man appears lifeless and absent, while he retires into himself. There are others who carry modesty and ingenuity in their very aspect, and others whose looks betray a weak intellect, or a loose turn of mind. Socrates acknowledged, that his body testified against him for the deformity of his soul, and that the evidence it gave was naturally true, but that by study he had corrected what was amiss, and by the benefit of a good education had altered and improved his mind. St. Ambrose hath well expressed our author's meaning, "Vultus est quidam cogitationis arbiter, et tacitus cordis interpres: facies index plerumque est conscientiæ, et tacitus sermo mentis." (De Elia. cap. 10.)

Ver. 30. *A man's attire, and excessive laughter and gait, shew what he is.*] If a man's attire be odd and singular, foppish or slovenly, it shews the taste of the man. One may form a pretty true judgment of persons' wisdom and prudence, of their folly and vanity, of their modesty or levity, by the nature of their dress, and their more or less fondness for fine clothes and costly apparel. The like may be said of immoderate laughter, which is no recommendation of a man, nor any sign of his wisdom. That this is the meaning we are assured from xxi. 20. where it is observed of the fool, that *he lifteth up his voice with laughter, but a wise man doth scarce smile a little.* "Seriousness (says a very judicious writer), if it be not a virtue itself, is at least the soil wherein it naturally grows, and the most visible mark whereby to know those that have it. This is that whereby a man is chiefly distinguished from a child, and a wise man from a fool." (Norris's Miscell.) Pliny observes of Socrates, "Clarum sapientiâ, eodem semper visum vultu, nec aut hilari magis, aut turbato." And of a greater it is recorded, that he never laughed. The discipline of silence was a great part of the Pythagoric institution; and therefore loudness and noise, expressed by excessive laughter, were of course banished his school. St. Chrysostom condemns it, on account of its attendants; "Orta ex immoderato risu paulisper scurrilitas, a scurrilitate turpiloquium, a turpiloquio πρᾶξις αἰσχρὰ profecta est." (Hom. 87. in Matt.) To make it innocent and allowable, the moralists insist upon the degree of it, as well as upon the time, the place, the person, and the occasion. Seneca has a pertinent observation, which includes all the particulars here mentioned; "Argumentum morum ex minimis licet capere. Impudicum et incessus ostendit, et manus mota, et unum interdum responsum, et relatus ad caput digitus, et flexus oculorum. Improbum risus, insanum vultus habitusque demonstrant." (Epist. 52.) As religion and goodness do not consist in outward appearance, it may be thought that a judgment cannot be formed of men's morals, or inward qualities, by the outside: but if what is good or evil, faulty or commendable, in outward appearance, has its denomination from the regularity or corruption within, a judgment then may be formed this way. A person, for instance, would not love finery in clothes, or superfluity of dress, if vanity was not in the heart. One would not be excessive or immoderate in fits of laughter, without a certain levity of spirit; and indecent gestures or motions come only from an unsteady or a wanton disposition. "Removeatur ergo (says Tully, whose sentiments often agree with those of this writer) et a forma omnis viro non dignus ornatus, et huic simile vitium in gestu motuque caveatur. Adhibenda est munditia non odiosa, neque exquisita nimis, tantum quæ fugiat agrestem et inhumanam negligentiam. Eadem ratio habenda est vestitûs, in quo, sicut in plerisque rebus, mediocritas optima est. Cavendum autem est, ne aut tarditatibus utamur in gressu mollioribus, aut suscipiamus nimias celeritates: ex quibus magna significatio fit non adesse constantiam." (De Offic. lib. i.)

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *THERE is a reproof that is not comely.*] Ὃς οὐκ ἔστιν ὡραῖος. *i. e.* Which is not well-timed, or seasonable, as the margin has it, and is often attended with bad consequences. The Vulgate confines this to the time when a man is in a passion, when reproof is neither comely, nor like to have any good effect. St. Austin properly compares the reprover to a chirurgeon, who is about to perform some incision upon a distempered or maimed body, which cannot be well executed without great coolness and composure in the operator. Probably this father borrowed the thought from Tully, who says, "Objurgationes etiam nonnunquam incidunt necessariæ; . . . id agendum, ut ne eas facere videamur irati: sed ut ad urendum et secandum, sic et ad hoc genus castigandi raro invitique veniamus. Nec unquam, nisi necessario, si nulla reperietur alia medicina. Sed tamen ira procul absit, cum qua nihil recte fieri, nihil considerate potest." (De Offic. lib. i.) St. Austin adds a necessary piece of advice upon the occasion,—that when we are about to reprove any one, if we perceive passion arising, or any sudden or violent emotion within us, to be then altogether silent, and suspend our intention, and rather think of calming and composing our own spirit, than pretend to meddle with the case of another, when we are not fit for it. This verse, in the Vulgate and many editions, is added to the end of the last chapter, and with some following verses concludes our author's observations on brotherly reproof, begun ver. 13. of the former chapter. The subject seems to end with ver. 3. which seems more properly placed there

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than after the fourth verse, or in the seventh, as some copies have it: the Vatican and Syriac wholly omit it.

Ver. 4. *As is the lust of a eunuch to deflower a virgin, so is he that executeth judgment with violence.*] Justice is, by this writer, as it is also by the poets and philosophers, compared to a chaste and beautiful virgin; and a corrupt judge, who perverts justice, to a eunuch attempting her chastity, though he has the charge of her, and has engaged to watch over her with strictness, and to preserve her with faithfulness. If a judge has sinister inclinations, is covetous, and, like the other, insatiable in his desires; if he is encouraged to make an attempt upon her from a presumed secrecy, and the little or no danger of a discovery; or if he is only disposed to violate her, though impotent perhaps from some accident to effect it,—all the mischief that is done, and even that which was only meditated, is chargeable upon him. This instance of an attempt, in itself the most base and unnatural, is with great judgment applied to discountenance any attack upon equity in judicial proceedings. We meet with the like simile in Tully, who styles Clodius's perverting judgment by corruption, "Emptum constupratumque judicium." (Ep. ad Att. lib. i.) Instead of ἐν βίᾳ, Grotius prefers ἐν βίῳ, which is countenanced only by one copy, As is the impotent desire of a eunuch, so fruitless is the judgment which is made of men's happiness or misery, ἐν βίῳ, in their lifetime: and refers to xi. 28. as a confirmation of this sense. But the former seems preferable.

Ver. 8. *He that useth many words shall be abhorred, and he that taketh to himself authority therein, shall be hated.*] Ὁ ἐνεξουσιαζόμενος. Which means one who assumes such a sway in company and conversation, as is attended with an overbearing tyranny, with a contempt of others, and a prescribing to, and lording it over them. This affected superiority is contrary to that equality and freedom which are the life of conversation, and the right of each person engaged in it. Cicero has well determined this point, "Sit sermo lenis, minimeque pertinax: nec vero, tanquam in possessionem suam venerit, excludat alios; sed cum in reliquis rebus, tum in sermone communi, vicissitudinem non iniquam putet." (De Offic. lib. i.)

Ver. 9. *There is a sinner that hath good success in evil things, and there is a gain that turneth to loss.*] Ἔστιν εὐοδία ἐν κακοῖς ἀνδρὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ, καὶ ἔστιν εὕρημα εἰς ἐλάττωσιν. Besides that of our version the meaning may be, There is a prosperity which happens to a wicked man which may be numbered among evils. Like that of Solomon, *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them.* (Prov. i. 32.) Some editions omit ἁμαρτωλῷ, and thus Bossuet renders, *Est felix successus qui malo vertat;* and Grotius, *Interdum in malis homini prosperitas sita est:* and the Vulgate, *Prosperantur provehunturque nonnulli, at in malum et perniciem suam;* following a copy probably which had εἰς κακὸν, agreeably to εἰς ἐλάττωσιν, which immediately follows; but there needs no alteration, as the Greeks often put ἐν for εἰς. Instances of this observation are Haman, Jehu, Ahab, &c. who made a miserable exit. See Psal. xxxvii. 20. where the Septuagint translation is very full to this purpose. Other copies have ἔστιν εὐδοκία ἐν κακοῖς ἀνδρὶ; i. e. *There are some men, sinners particularly, that take pleasure in evil, or wickedness.* And thus Junius, *Placent mala viro peccatori;* εὕρημα is badly rendered by the Vulgate, and other interpreters, *inventio.* It signifies gain, as it is well translated here, and the antithesis is better preserved. And so εὕρημα is taken by the LXX. But our translators, though they happily succeeded here, yet have generally mistaken the sense of this word. See Ecclus. xxix. 4. 6. Jer. xxxviii. 2. xxxix. 18. xlv. 5. in all which places our version is faulty, and even contrary to the sense of the context.

Ver. 10. *There is a gift that shall not profit thee, and there is a gift whose recompence is double.*] There are some services and favours done by a man, which are lost and signify nothing, which gain him neither credit nor advantage, and others which turn to a good account. Sometimes this is owing to the ingratitude and other ill qualities of the receiver; and sometimes to the manner of bestowing them by the giver himself. For it is a useful piece of knowledge to understand how to give, where, and in what manner to place our favours best, and to do them in a winning and engaging manner. Drusius, by the *gift that does not profit,* understands that which is given to the rich, according to that of Solomon, *He that giveth to the rich shall surely want:* (Prov. xxii. 16.) and by the *gift whose recompence is double,* that which is given to the poor. (Prov. xxviii. 27.)

Ver. 11. *There is an abasement because of glory, and there is that lifteth up the head from a low estate.*] There are posts of honour sought after with great eagerness by the ambitious, which have in the end proved their ruin; through tyranny, pride, oppression, or some mismanagement, they have been deprived of their power and dignity, and sometimes even of life itself. Sometimes a man's advancement to some piece of good fortune, or preferment, turns to his disgrace, as his elevation makes his faults more discernible, which in a private station were not so easily discovered. Galba, before he succeeded to the empire, was thought the most worthy of it, "Omnium consensu capax imperii, si non imperasset:" (Tac. Hist. lib. i.) but upon his promotion he soon forfeited the high opinion which they had conceived of him. Every man before he aspires to a dignity ought to consider what he is, and how far his capacity and abilities will reach; but few are impartial to themselves in the estimate of their own merit, which they are apt to think is greater than it really is, and thereby deceive themselves and disappoint the expectation of others. Haman and Nebuchadnezzar are instances of abasement from a high station, as Joseph, David, Job, are of as remarkable an elevation from a mean one. In like manner he who affected to seat himself in the highest place at the wedding, is threatened to be removed with shame to the lowest; and to him whose modesty is content with the meanest room, the reward is, *Friend, go up higher.* (Luke xiv. 10.)

Ver. 12. *There is that buyeth much for a little, and repayeth it sevenfold.*] The covetous man is here meant, who always purchaseth what is cheapest, and generally what is worst, and therefore is never a gainer by his bargains. He thinks indeed that he has acted cunningly because of the lowness of the price, but in effect he is a loser, because that which is worth little or nothing must always be bought too dear. We see the truth of this observation in those that buy bad goods through cheapness, or unwholesome meat, for the same reason: in those likewise who purchase houses badly built, or estates with bad titles, contenting themselves with the thought of having bought them at a

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lower and easier rate on that account. But in the end they prove dear bargains to them: the house is crazy, and must be speedily rebuilt; and the estate must be parted with at a still lower rate, to pay the expenses in clearing and defending the title.

Ver. 13. *A wise man by his words maketh himself beloved, but the graces of fools shall be poured out.*] Χάριτες rather mean graces or merry conceits, as the margin has it, which do not suit with the character of a fool. (See xxi. 16.) In the next verse it is more plainly expressed, and called the *gift of a fool;* and so χάρις is used xvii. 22. and xl. 17. it is rendered *bountifulness,* and so it is often used in the New Testament, particularly in St. Paul's writings. The sense is, A wise man recommends his kindness by his words, and the agreeable manner in which he does a favour; but a fool, when he does a good turn, loses all the merit of it, by his disobliging way and improper behaviour. His benevolence is lost and disregarded, ἐκχυθήσεται, it shall fall to the ground, like water that runneth apace. What is here said of the fool, may also be observed of the envious or covetous man, mentioned in the next verse, who gives unwillingly διὰ ἀνάγκην αὐτοῦ, as it were through force, or a necessity laid upon him, and expects to receive as much or more in return, πολλὰ ἀνθ' ἑνός. Some copies read ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ πολλοὶ, as the margin also has it. The Vulgate well expresses his greediness, when it renders *oculi ejus septemplices sunt; i. e.* he looketh to receive seven times as much from thee.

Ver. 15. *He giveth little, and upbraideth much, he openeth his mouth like a crier.*] See xviii. 18. This is a farther description of the fool mentioned in the former verse, who spoils all his favours by his impertinent behaviour and discourse. If he makes you a present, he is sure to reproach you with it; so that all the merit, if there be any in so small an act of kindness, as is here mentioned, is taken away by his upbraiding temper. "Isthæc commemoratio est quasi exprobratio immemoris beneficii." It is a wise observation, that we should forget the kindnesses which we ourselves do, and never forget those which we receive. Seneca observes, that it took off from the grace of Dido's hospitality, when she reproachfully told Æneas,

"Ejectum littore, egentem
Excepi, et regni demens in parte locavi."

How contrary is such a selfish, churlish temper to that of the all-sufficient and bountiful God, whose peculiar character it is, that *he giveth liberally and upbraideth not:* he has nothing in view, but the good and happiness of his creatures, and neither wants nor expects any return, but that of a dutiful and grateful heart. He is, as Philo describes him, δωρητικὸς τῶν ἁπάντων, ἀμοιβῆς οὐκ ἐφιέμενος. (De Cherubim.) Another character of the covetous man we have in the latter part of the verse,—that, if he lendeth money, his temper is so uncertain and suspicious that he presently calls it in again; his covetousness not suffering him to be long without the sight of his beloved idol. Such a sudden and hasty demand of the loan is rather insulting him to whom he pretended to do a kindness; it is suspecting his credit, honesty, or circumstances; it is depriving him of the advantage which he proposed by longer use of it, and, by distressing him on a sudden, does him more injury than he received kindness from first advancing it.

Ver. 17. *He knoweth not aright what it is to have, and it is all one unto him as if he had it not.*] This is not in the Roman edition, οὔτε γὰρ τὸ ἔχειν ἐν ὀρθῇ αἰσθήσει εἴληφε; *i. e.* He has not the art, or gift, or blessing, of using what he has well, and it is the same thing to a fool, or a covetous person, to be poor or rich, as to any use of their good things; for neither one nor the other knows what it is to have, *i. e.* to enjoy, or employ their riches. The Vulgate gives another sense of the place, That the fool knows not either to give, or to keep his goods; he gives improperly that which he ought to keep, and he reserves that which he ought to give: he gives to such as ought to have no share of his favours, and refuses to give to such as he ought to distribute them to with liberality and abundance; *Neque enim quod habendum, aut quod non habendum, directo sensu distribuit;* i. e. He doth both without discretion or judgment; following a copy which read διείληφε.

Ver. 18. *To slip upon a pavement is better than to slip with the tongue, so the fall of the wicked cometh speedily.*] *i. e.* It is less dangerous to make a false step in walking, and thereby to stumble upon the ground, than to offend or slip with the tongue, for one unguarded word may be a man's ruin, so great and sudden is the mischief arising from an ungoverned tongue. And as falls of this nature happen more frequently through the abuse of speech, so the danger must consequently be greater. The Vulgate understands this of a false, evil, and malicious tongue, which creates trouble to itself, as well as others. Some copies have instead of ἀπὸ ἐδάφους, ἀπὸ ὀρόφους. Drusius renders according to this reading, *Lapsus de tecto tolerabilior est quam linguæ.* In the next verse ἄνθρωπος ἄχαρις, in all the editions, makes a part of the text, though undoubtedly it was either some marginal annotation, or, which seems more probable, the title only to what follows, of which there are many instances in this book; and in some copies they are in larger letters to distinguish them. Our translators seem to have been of this opinion by flinging the words into the margin.

Ver. 21. *There is that is hindered from sinning through want, and when he taketh rest he shall not be troubled.*] There are many who are regular only through necessity, who would have done as others did, and taken the same liberties, if they had had the means, the opportunity, and power. Such persons are not to be applauded for their self-denial or moderation, since their virtue is wholly involuntary. A man, who, through a bad constitution, or a weak habit of body, is hindered from intemperance, debauchery, or wantonness, has no merit on that account, since not the will was wanting, but the power of sinning.

"Hæc si neque ego, neque tu fecimus,
Non sivit egestas facere nos: tu nunc tibi
Id laudi ducis, quod tum fecisti inopia.
Injurium est: nam si esset unde fieret,
Faceremus." (Ter. in Adelph. v. 104.)

There is, however, this advantage in wanting a power or opportunity to commit a sin, that there is no remorse of conscience attending it. If a man has no merit on that account, he has likewise no after-reflections to torment him; though the will indeed cannot be pronounced innocent if the inclinations were consenting, and nothing wanting but the opportunity.

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Ver. 22. *There is that destroyeth his own soul through bashfulness, and by accepting of persons overthroweth himself.*] Two senses may be given of this place, according as we understand ψυχὴ either of the soul strictly, or of life, and its conveniences only. (See note on iv. 20.) In the former sense it may mean, one who is afraid to shew his zeal, and to appear in behalf of virtue and religion, and to do or commend any good action openly and in public, from some motives of fear or interest: or of one who dares not refuse to do or oppose any evil action pressed upon, or recommended to him, for fear of disobliging company, or being thought precise and singular; whereas, in the exercise of religious duties, or where the cause of truth calls for our testimony and defence, we should rather despise and laugh at any offence of this nature, which shall be taken at us on that account: nothing being a greater impediment to a progress in piety than an attachment to secular interest, and a fantastical concern about pleasing or displeasing others. If ψυχὴ be taken in the latter acceptation, the sense may be, That there are some who hurt their circumstances, and expose themselves to great inconveniences, either in not daring to ask and demand what is necessary for them, or is their due, or in not having resolution enough to refuse what another unreasonably asks of them. One should know both how to ask when there is occasion, and how to refuse when asked improperly. For there is a civil and complaisant way of denying, of which a person cannot justly complain; but if through bashfulness, as it follows in the next verse, or fear of disobliging, we rashly engage our word to do or grant something which we afterward repent of, and find reason not to do; such a breach of our promise will betray our levity, and create us enmity.

Ver. 25. *A thief is better than a man that is accustomed to lie.*] The preference here given may perhaps seem singular, but we may state the comparison thus: The thief only takes away a man's money; the liar attacks his reputation and character, which are more valuable than riches. The thief steals, perhaps through necessity; (Prov. vi. 30.) the liar often does an injury without any reason or occasion. The thief may possibly make restitution when taken, he may restore sevenfold; (Prov. vi. 31.) but the malicious liar cannot, his poison has reached too far. The thief can occasionally keep his word; but the liar is always an enemy to truth. The thief attacks openly; the lying slander is more secret and dangerous. The author does not mean to excuse or justify the thief, but would expose the liar through the odiousness of the comparison.

Ver. 29. *Presents and gifts blind the eyes of the wise, and stop up his mouth that he cannot reprove.*] This seems to relate to magistrates, who sit in judgment, and take cognizance of civil causes, who, if they shew themselves mercenary, and their right hand is full of gifts, will not be disposed to examine into the merits of the cause, nor to determine it impartially; "Male verum examinat omnis corruptus judex." (Hor.) Or it may be applied to persons in authority in the church, and to the ministers and pastors of it, as Messieurs of Port-Royal understand it, who, if moved by flattery or favour, interest or filthy lucre, will palliate or pass over offences, and neither exhort nor reprove, as their station and occasions shall require. Thus, when the prophet complains, that *the heads of the house of Jacob abhor judgment and pervert equity,* he immediately adds, *they judge for reward, the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money.* (Micah iii. 1.) The Egyptians represent their judges without hands, and the chief, or president, with his eyes closed, to intimate, that judges should receive no gifts, and that the chief should pronounce his decree and sentence without any respect of persons.

Ver. 30. *Wisdom that is hid, and treasure that is hoarded up, what profit is in them both?*] We are here advised not to bury or suppress the powers and abilities which God has given us, nor to render useless the means which he has bestowed, not for our own service only, but for the benefit and advantage of others. Wisdom, without the manifestation of it, confined to a man's own breast, is here well compared to valuable treasure hid in the ground, which nobody is the better for. Our Saviour would have our light shine before men, and not be concealed under a bushel; not to imitate the man who, having received a considerable sum from his master to improve, and make the best of, wrapped it in a napkin, and hid it in the earth, without circulating it among the exchangers, or returning any interest or profit to his master. (Matt. xxv. 25.) A wise man should not secret himself, nor be wrapped up in contemplation only, but communicate the word of wisdom and knowledge liberally, (Wisd. vii. 13.) and bring forth out of his treasures, for the convenience and improvement of others, things both new and old. Such as, through pride, or, which may be the case, through an ill-judged humility, will not serve their neighbour with the talents they are possessed of, are not improperly compared by an ancient writer, to one who in a time of scarcity and want shuts up his granary, and lets his corn, which he has in great quantity, rot and be spoiled. Tully therefore well determines; "Pudeat illos qui ita in studiis se abdiderunt, ut ad vitam communem nullum fructum proferre possint." (Pro Arch.)

Ver. 31. *Better is he that hideth his folly, than a man that hideth his wisdom.*] The first does it out of a principle of humility, as conscious of his own weakness and insufficiency; the other hides that which was given for the advantage of others, as well as of himself, through a false modesty. The man who knows how to be silent, and to hide his ignorance and defects, so far gives an instance of his prudence and judgment; but he that ingloriously buries his parts in sullenness or retirement, and deprives his neighbours, or the public, of the advantages which they might hope to receive from so exalted a genius, offends God, in not employing that gift which was given him for the use of edifying and assisting others; and disobliges men for want of kindness, and a public spirit. Here the Vulgate, oriental versions, Vatican, and some other editions, conclude the chapter; but others add, which our translators follow, *Necessary patience in seeking the Lord, is better than he that leadeth his life without a guide.* The sense of which seems to be, That it is far better for a man to live in an humble dependance upon God, in a painful and conscientious search to know his will, and a constant submission and obedience to it, than to be guided by himself only, and be under his own conduct, without any farther help than the feeble light of his own reason. The Greek of this place is pretty remarkable, ἀδέσποτος τροχηλάτης τῆς ἰδίας ζωῆς, which either means, *Propriæ vitæ*

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gubernator absque Domino, one who lives without God in the world, and seeks not the guidance of his Spirit, nor values and regards the light of his revelation, but sets up for his own ruler; or, in general, an uncontrolled director of his own life and actions, driving furiously and madly, without any check or restraint. A life led without the fear of the Lord, or a regard to his precepts, and which consists rather in licentiousness than true liberty, is very properly here compared to a chariot run away with by unruly horses, without a skilful driver to manage them. Such ungovernable things are men's unruly lusts and passions; so helpless is reason itself unassisted!

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *HAST thou sinned? do so no more, but ask pardon for thy former sins.*] The most wise and cautious find themselves frail, and are often falling into sin, but they do not persevere or continue long in it, they rise again by confessing their faults, repenting sincerely of them, and avoiding them for the future. Whereas the wicked are continually relapsing, and by repeated acts strengthen themselves in their iniquities. They are rolling down, as it were, from one precipice to another, and have neither grace nor strength to recover themselves. St. Chrysostom well observes, οὐχ οὕτω τὸ ἁμαρτεῖν χαλεπὸν ὡς τὸ τῷ ἁμαρτήματι ἐπιμένειν, that it is not so bad to fall into sin as to continue in it, and illustrates this from the instance of Noah, whom we may infer, from the silence of Scripture, to have fallen into the sin of drunkenness but once, and that this was recorded in Scripture, that if we should offend in the like particular, we should be more cautious for the future, and not wallow again in the mire. (Hom. 29. in ix. Gen.) The advice of a most learned writer is very seasonable and pertinent: "Let not sin enter the first door of sense, either eye or ear, nor the second of fancy, nor the third of understanding, nor the fourth of will, lest it break out into act; and one act will produce more, and so it will increase infinitely, till the heart is made hard and insensible, and the very principles of nature and grace are obliterated." (Jackson's Works, tom. iii.)

Ver. 2. *Flee from sin as from the face of a serpent, for if thou comest too near it, it will bite thee.*] The Vulgate renders, *Si accesseris ad illa, suscipient te*, following a faulty copy probably, which had δέξεται instead of δήξεται. Sin is what men bring upon themselves, it does not attack them till they go in search of it; like a serpent indeed it is always ready to bite, but it does not seize upon any, but those who rashly come too near it. Solomon uses this comparison with regard to the sin of drunkenness in particular, Prov. xxiii. 31. Our author very probably uses this simile, and mentions it in the first place, as our first parents were deluded under this form, and the effects of its sting are yet felt. And as sin has the venom of the serpent, so it has likewise the fierceness of the lion; but this lion does not prey at random, it fastens upon those only who either imprudently throw themselves into its paws, or whom it finds asleep, and off their guard. It is also well compared in the next verse to a two-edged sword, as it attacks both God and man; the majesty of the former, and the safety of the latter; and its wounds are mortal, and only the sovereign Physician can cure them. The wise man did not without reason make use of so many comparisons, because if we join together all the ideas that can any ways create fear, they are few, and little enough to possess a man with that dread and horror which he ought to have of sin.

Ver. 4. *To terrify and do wrong will waste riches: thus the house of the proud man shall be made desolate.*] The proud and insolent oppress the weak for a time, but by such imperious usage they create themselves enemies, and the great number of those whom they have insulted and injured will at length join together, and prove their overthrow. Rehoboam by the advice and instigation of the young men returned the people, who sued for a removal of some grievances, a haughty and threatening answer, *My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions*, and thereby alienated the hearts of ten tribes from him. (1 Kings xii.) Pride and oppression were the cause of the expulsion of the Tarquins from Rome. And it appears from the annals of almost all histories, that tyranny and arbitrary power have been of short continuance.

Ver. 5. *A prayer out of a poor man's mouth reacheth to the ears of God, and his judgment cometh speedily.*] Δέησις πτωχοῦ ἐκ στόματος ἕως ὠτίων αὐτοῦ. The generality of interpreters, and the oriental versions, understand this of God's care for the poor; that he listens to their cry, is always ready to help them in their affliction, and to revenge the injuries done them. So Coverdale's and the Geneva versions. This, indeed, is a truth confessed by all, and confirmed by numberless passages of Scripture, which may be the reason of its being so expressed here. But the words *of God* are not in any Greek copy, nor in the Vulgate, and, therefore, another sense of this place has been offered: That the prayer of the poor reacheth to the ears of the proud man, mentioned in the former verse, and is neglected and disregarded by him, and toucheth not his heart. *Ad aures solum illius*, according to Junius, as the humble supplications of Lazarus were by the rich man in the gospel; (Luke xvi. 20.) and therefore his judgment, *i. e.* the proud man's punishment, shall not slumber. This is Grotius and Badwell's sense. Castalio is particular in rendering the latter part; viz. *that the poor man ought to be answered speedily, because his case will not admit of delay.* But either of the former seems preferable.

Ver. 6. *He that hateth to be reproved is in the way of sinners, but he that feareth the Lord, will repent from his heart.*] *i. e.* He treads in his steps, and will go on in the way of sinners, and become incorrigible: for if he will not listen to the seasonable advice given him for his good, how shall he reform? If he is angry at the attendance of the physician, and rejects his salutary prescriptions, how shall he be cured? If he throws aside or breaks the mirror which shews him his deformity, how shall he know to remove or correct it? But he that feareth the Lord, ἐπιστρέψει ἐν καρδίᾳ, will sincerely repent, or be converted thoroughly. Clemens Alexandrinus reads, ἐπιστρέψει ἐπὶ καρδίαν αὐτοῦ. And so the Vulgate and Jerome's Bible, *Convertetur ad cor suum, i. e.* will return to himself, like the penitent prodigal, will change his way of life, acknowledge with contrition his past faults, and keep his heart with all diligence for the future.

Ver. 7. *An eloquent man is known far and near; but a man of understanding knoweth when he slippeth.*] If by

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δυνατὸς ἐν γλώσσῃ we understand, with our translators, the eloquent man, who harangues plausibly on any subject, and recommends himself to the notice and admiration of others, by his ready and artful manner of talking, the sense then is, That though one of such talents does not often offend by a mistake, nor is easily detected in a fault, if he occasionally slips, through the art he has to conceal it, or an evasive way of excusing it; yet the man of understanding, who coolly attends to and weighs the strength of his arguments, and is not easily carried away or imposed upon by flourish and artifice, soon finds out the fallacy or misrepresentation, and detects the weakness or inconclusion of his reasoning; or if with the Vulgate we apply this to the bold, rash, and talkative man, *Potens lingua audaci;* the meaning then may be, That a man of a great flow of words, who attempts to speak on all occasions, is subject to a number of mistakes, and to give offence by the liberties which he takes; but a man of sound sense and understanding is more cautious and reserved, and less liable to displease or make a false step; he sees the faults of the talkative and bold person, and prudently avoids them, and forms his conduct with judgment and discretion from the observation of the other's rashness and miscarriage.

Ver. 8. *He that buildeth his house with other men's money, is like one that gathereth stones for the tomb of his burial.*] *i. e.* Is heaping up ruin to himself. Calmet thinks this relates to the ancient custom of heaping up stones over the graves, or dead bodies of persons remarkable for some crime. (See Josh. vii. 26. 2 Sam. xviii. 17, 18.) This they did to perpetuate the infamy of the person, and to shew the public abhorrence of such crimes. In like manner, he that builds his house at the cost and expense of another, by making use of his money, and defrauding him, or by running in debt to raise the fabric, labours to his own hurt and shame, and erects a monument of his folly and injustice, as long as it is in being, and, instead of being a house to shelter him in, will bury him under its ruins. Jeremiah boldly rebukes Jehoiakim, king of Judah, for building his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; and acquaints him, that by his oppression he was hastening his own ruin, and instead of long enjoying his stately palace, built with the wages of the poor and hireling, he should be *buried with the burial of an ass, and be cast forth in the most indecent and contemptible manner,* xxii. 13. (See Lev. xix. 13. Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. Isa. v. 8. Hab. ii. 9—11.) Some copies have, ὡς συνάγων ἑαυτῷ τοὺς λίθους εἰς χειμῶνα, is as him that gathereth stones against winter, which is the Vulgate and Coverdale's rendering. This seems to be a proverbial saying, for doing something useless, "Lapides pro inutilibus." (See Erasm. Adag.) And in this sense we may understand that of our Saviour, *If thy son ask thee a fish, will you give him a stone?* (Matt. vii. 9.) *i. e.* what will do him no good. And so, to lay up stones against winter, instead of food and provision, is to be a fool to one's own destruction; it is, in effect, building one's own sepulchre. Or perhaps the meaning may be, That he that runs in debt by building, or defrauds the workmen of their just pay, is like him that lays in stones and materials to build in winter. The creditors will seize upon his house, and not permit him long to enjoy the fruits of his extravagance and injustice: no more than a builder, at so improper a season as winter is, can expect a long continuance or firm foundation of his house, which the winds and the rain, as well as the imperfection of the work, conspire to overthrow.

Ver. 9. *The congregation of the wicked is like tow wrapped together, and the end of them is a flame of fire to destroy them.*] All their eclat and splendour, their state and magnificence, their prosperity and overgrown fortunes, their tyranny and haughtiness, and the terror which they scatter round them, shall be as nothing, or rather shall prove so many combustibles to consume them. Thus the Psalmist speaks of God's dealings with the wicked, *All thine enemies shall feel thy hand, thy right hand shall find out them that hate thee: thou shalt make them like a fiery oven in the time of thy wrath; the Lord shall destroy them in his displeasure, and the fire shall consume them.* (Psal. xxi. 8, 9.) And the prophet Malachi, *Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch;* (iv. 1.) and in the gospel, they are compared to a bundle of tares intended to be burnt. (Matt. xiii. 30.)

Ver. 10. *The way of sinners is made plain with stones, but at the end thereof is the pit of hell.*] See note on iv. 17. The author probably alludes to Prov. xiv. 12. *There is a way which seemeth right or straight to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* Our Saviour teaches us the same truth in the gospel, when he says, *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: but strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* (Matt. vii. 13, 14.) Virgil describes the entrance to Tartarus almost after the same manner,

> "Mœnia lata videt triplici circumdata muro,
> Quæ rapidus flammis ambit torrentibus amnis
> Tartareus Phlegethon." (Æn. vi.)

Where Servius remarks, that *lata* means the broad way of the wicked, frequented by the many, leading to destruction. But this is not the only particular in which that poet's description of the other world agrees with Scripture; his placing the wicked on the left hand, and the godly on the right, is too observable to be passed over,

> "Hic locus est, partes ubi se via findit in ambas,
> Dextera, quæ Ditis magni sub mœnia tendit:
> Hâc iter Elysium nobis; at læva malorum
> Exercet pœnas, et ad impia Tartara mittit." (Ibid.)

The Pythagoreans, whose manner of teaching was symbolical, marked out these two ways by the Greek letter Υ. One of the branches denotes the way to perfection, narrow at the entrance, but afterward more open and large; the other the way of perdition, large and spacious at the first, but in the end, leading those that follow it into an abyss of misery. (See Epigr. in Υ inter Op. Virgil.) Βόθρος ᾅδου is well rendered *the pit of hell,* the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain for their bad lives on earth. The writer of the book of Wisdom calls these subterraneous caverns, μυχοὶ ᾅδου, and such they seem to be according to the parable of the rich man, who being ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ is said to lift up his eyes from thence, and behold Lazarus afar off in Abraham's bosom. The learned Barrow ob-

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serves, that the Hebrew word שאול (upon the true notion of which the sense of the word ᾅδης must depend) does originally, most properly, and most frequently, design the whole region protended downwards, from the surface of the earth to a depth indefinite and unconceivable, vastly capacious in extension, very darksome, and dungeon-like in quality; whence it is called the pit, the lowest pit, the abyss, the depths of the earth, the darkness, the depths of hell, &c. (Vol. ii. p. 399.) The Vulgate renders it by *inferi, tenebræ, pœnæ.* Grotius thinks this too full and explicit for the times of this writer, and hints as if it was an interpolation by some Christian hand. By Βόθρος ᾅδου he only understands, that the sinner shall come to a bad end, by punishment inflicted on him either by the magistrate, or the parties whom he has injured, or the vengeance of God.

Ver. 11. *He that keepeth the law, getteth the understanding thereof.*] Κατακρατεῖ τοῦ ἐννοήματος αὐτοῦ. Some expound this, That he that keepeth the law, subdues and governs his appetites, and passions, and thoughts. Thus the Tigurine version, *Qui servat legem Domini, cogitationibus suis imperat;* and the Syriac, *Qui custodit legem, subigit appetitum suum.* But the sense given by our translators seems preferable; *viz.* that the understanding and knowledge of God's laws is better learnt by obedience, than by inquiry; *Obey, and ye shall understand,* says the prophet. And our Saviour assures us, that if we continue in his word, then we shall know the truth; and *if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.* (John vii. 17.) For the love of God, as this wise man observes, *passeth all things for illumination,* (xxv. 11. See Dan. ix. 13.) There are some sciences purely speculative, which require only study; these one learns by consulting proper masters, and by making reflections within one's self, on what has been communicated and taught; but justice, temperance, and other virtues of practice, are not to be got or attained by speculation, but by exercise and use. "Non enim has (says St. Bernard) lectio docet, sed unctio; non litera, sed spiritus; non eruditio, sed exercitatio in mandatis Domini." (Epist. 108.) Calmet illustrates this by the instance of painting; Let a man have the finest notions and speculations, let him be acquainted with the most material and important rules of art, let him have the most just taste, and nice discernment of beauty and proportion, yet if he has not practice and experience added to this, he will after all not be able to give any finished piece; whereas one with much less of the theory part, and more practice and application, shall succeed to admiration. And the like may be observed of all other arts and graces, a perfection in any one of which depends principally upon use and habit. The latter part of the verse is exegetical of the former; *viz.* that the greater any man's obedience is, and the more progress he makes in virtue and piety, so much greater is his wisdom, and the more is his understanding in the way of godliness enlarged. (Psal. xxv. 11. 13.)

Ver. 12. *He that is not wise will not be taught; but there is a wisdom which multiplieth bitterness.*] In the former verse the wise man observes, that true wisdom consists in obedience, or the observance of the laws of God; here he adds, that he that is not wise, *i. e.* towards God, *sapiens in bono,* as the Vulgate has it, is not capable of true wisdom. As piety then is the perfection of wisdom, so there is a counterfeit or false wisdom, called here πανουργία, which consists in knavery and wickedness; for so πικρία, which is here rendered *bitterness,* often means. See Acts viii. 23. where *the gall of bitterness* and *the bond of iniquity* are synonymous; and Jer. iv. 18. Heb. xii. 15. where falling from the grace of God and the root of bitterness by which many are defiled are joined together. See also Deut. xxix. 18. where *turning away from the Lord* is expressed by a *root that beareth gall and wormwood.* The rendering of the Vulgate confirms likewise this sense, *Est autem sapientia quæ abundat in malo.* Such a sort of wisdom which is displayed only in schemes of wickedness, or in the mischief which it does to others, is sensual, earthly, devilish. The prophet describes such as delight in it, when he says, *They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.* (Jer. iv. 22.) Such shall multiply *bitterness,* properly so called, and shall inherit misery and sorrow.

Ver. 16. *The talking of a fool is like a burden in the way; but grace shall be found in the lips of the wise.* Ver. 18. *As is a house that is destroyed, so is wisdom to a fool, and the knowledge of the unwise is as talk without sense.*] There is such an engaging sweetness in the discourse and conversation of a truly good and wise man, and so much useful knowledge is to be learned from him, that such as are desirous of improvement listen to him with eagerness and pleasure, and treasure up his observations for their own use and conduct. Job beautifully describes this, speaking of himself, *When the ear heard me, then it blessed me. Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them. They waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth as for the latter rain,* (xxix. 11. 21—23.) This happy talent of pleasing and profiting others by discourse, the wise man expresses by *grace* or *sweetness.* Thus it is said of our Saviour, ἐθαύμαζον ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος; *i. e.* by an hypallage, or a rhetorical change of words, *they wondered, ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν λόγων χάριτι, at the sweetness of his speech and words.* (Luke iv. 22.) This by Plutarch is styled ἡ τῶν λόγων σειρήν, and by this writer is said to be more agreeable than music, (xl. 21.) Hence the ancients feigned Mercury, their god of eloquence, to be attended by the Graces. But the person who is devoid of wisdom, or who has a smattering in knowledge, and a small tincture of learning, is here aptly compared to a heap of rubbish, a chaos of ruins. In his ideas, discourse, and the whole conduct of his understanding, there is nothing but confusion; neither order, grace, regularity, nor connexion.

Ver. 19. *Doctrine unto fools is as fetters on the feet, and like manacles on the right hand.*] The fool hates discipline and instruction, he considers them as fetters and shackles. He looks upon learning and study as a weariness of the flesh, as an intricate, troublesome thing, a hinderance to the pursuit of his inclinations, and an obstacle to his pleasures. Whereas learning adds a grace to the wise man, and is as an ornament of gold about his neck: he looks upon wisdom, prudence, regularity, moderation of lusts and passions, and the observance of strict rules of morality, as the glory and improvement of his nature; he takes pleasure in acting up to the dignity of it, and thinks himself not abridged of true liberty, by being forbid licentiousness, or denying himself sinful enjoyments. This and the twenty-first verse should be joined and connected together, they set off one another; placed thus by way of contrast, the intermediate

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verse spoils the connexion and beauty, and agrees in sense with xix. 30. (See note on that place.)

Ver. 22. *A foolish man's foot is soon in his neighbour's house; but a man of experience is ashamed of him.*] Of whom? of the fool, or his neighbour? Gr. αἰσχυνθήσεται ἀπὸ προσώπου, *i. e.* will reverence his neighbour's presence, will pay a regard to him when he is before him. מִפְּנֵי in Hebrew, from which ἀπὸ προσώπου, is no more than *coram*. I presume the meaning is, That as a fool rusheth without regard into other men's presence, and even into their houses, to see what is doing there, so a discreet man will not be guilty of such rudeness; he will not intermeddle nor concern himself with the affairs of others, he will observe a more wary and reserved conduct, and will pay to others a ceremonious respect, both without and within doors. Junius renders, *Peritus multarum rerum pudore a domo se continebit;* with which agrees the Geneva version, *A man of experience will be ashamed to look in.* The Vulgate understands this of a proper carriage towards a great and powerful man, *Homo peritus confundetur a persona potentis; i. e.* He will be backward and reserved in coming before or visiting a person of such distinction. *Est forte reservé à visiter une personne puissante,* says Calmet; and according to him the sense is, That as a wise man will be ashamed to go to or enter in a disrespectful manner another's house, especially one that is a stranger, without a real necessity or occasion, without an invitation, and the observance of a proper distance; so a fool rusheth in at all times, at the hazard of being ill received, of being impertinent and troublesome to others, of being evil treated, and perhaps turned out of doors. Solomon gives the like advice, *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house;* or, as the margin more properly has it, *Let thy foot be seldom in thy neighbour's house, lest he be weary of thee, and hate thee.* (Prov. xxv. 17.)

Ver. 27. *When the ungodly curseth Satan, he curseth his own soul.*] *i. e.* Whenever an ungodly man condemneth ungodliness, he condemneth himself: or, whenever the wicked blame Satan, as the author of their failings, when they accuse him as their tempter and betrayer, when they complain of his snares and wiles, they ought rather to blame themselves. The devil indeed invites and solicits, but he compels none to sin, he hurts none but those who come too near him, and voluntarily engage in his service. The Jews always looked upon wicked men as related to the devil; and the Scripture says expressly of them, that *they are of their father the devil,* i. e. *sons of Belial.* And therefore they act inconsistently, they do a wrong or injury to accuse or curse the master they have chosen, and whom their conduct so much resembles. If they curse their father, they in effect curse also themselves, as the blessings and cursings, according to the Jewish notions, affected also the children, and descended to posterity. In this light the proverb might be used, That whoever, being a child of Satan, cursed his father, in effect cursed also himself. Or if we understand Satan in the sense of διάβολος, to mean an adversary, an accuser, a calumniator; and the context is not averse to this sense; the meaning then may be, That when a wicked man, or slanderer, blames or curses another for censoriousness, he condemns himself, for his listening to and acting like the devil, in being an accuser of the brethren, and by the imputation cast upon others, he reflects guilt upon his own soul. Coverdale's version favours this sense, and so does the Port-Royal comment, *Lorsque le méchant maudit le calomniateur, il se deshonore lui même.* Cotelerius also so expounds it; and says, πᾶς ὁ μάτην λοιδορῶν, ἑαυτὸν ἀρᾶται, in the Apostolical Constitutions is equivalent to it. (See note on lib. iii. cap. 15.) St. Cyprian seems to have had this passage in view, when he says, "Turpes turpis infamat, alios, qui talis est, increpat, et evasisse se conscium credit, quasi conscientia satis non sit. Iidem in publico accusatores, in occulto rei. In semetipsos censores pariter et nocentes: Damnant foris, quod intus operantur, et quod libenter admiserunt, criminantur." (Ad Donat.)

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *A SLOTHFUL man is compared to a filthy stone, and every one will hiss him out to his disgrace.*] According to the Vulgate, the sense is—That a slothful person is so despicable, that men pursue him with stones and dirt, as a shame to the species, or with reproachful language and speeches, according to Bossuet, as so many filthy stones, *Omnium scommatis, velut, injectis lapidibus lutosis, conspurcabitur.* But that followed by our translators seems better: by a slothful man we are here to understand, one who will apply himself to nothing, who has neither industry, application, capacity, nor understanding, who will not vouchsafe to stir, or exert himself, either for his friends, or even himself. He is like to a stone which falls into the dirt, nobody will foul his hands to draw it from thence: and if this slothful person comes to disgrace or misfortune, as is natural to expect, nobody will interpose to help or vindicate him, but rather laugh at and expose him, ἐκσυριεῖ ἐπὶ τῇ ἀτιμίᾳ αὐτοῦ, will hiss at his disgrace. Whoever comes near him will hasten from him, as from some disagreeable filth or infection; he that has served him once, will wash his hands of him, and have nothing more to do with him. Such a sluggard is so offensive, that, according to Solomon, *He is as vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes.* (Prov. x. 26.)

Ver. 3. *And a foolish daughter is born to his loss.*] The Greek has only θυγάτηρ δὲ ἐπ' ἐλαττώσει γίνεται, *i. e.* a daughter is to loss. Some copies have γεννᾶται, is born to loss, or to the damage and detriment of the father. But this seems to bear hard upon the sex without reason; and therefore the Geneva version of the place is much less to be admitted, *And the daughter is least to be esteemed.* Our translators have added *foolish,* to make the sense more complete. Ἀπαίδευτος, or some such epithet, seems to be understood, for a wise daughter follows, by way of antithesis, in the next verse. We have an instance of the like omission, xxxvi. 24. *He that getteth a wife, beginneth a possession,* &c. where the sense is—He that findeth a good wife. This author often observes, that as good and hopeful children are the glory and happiness of their parents, so those that are vicious and ill-disposed are a plague and shame to them. It is recorded of Augustus, who was unhappy in his daughters, that he would often cry out,

Αἴθ' ὄφελον γ' ἄγαμός τ' ἔμεναι, ἀγονός τ' ἀπολέσθαι.

And so may every parent with reason, who has the great misfortune of undutiful or wicked children, whether they be sons or daughters.

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Ver. 4. *A wise daughter shall bring an inheritance to her husband.*] Κληρονομήσει ἄνδρα αὐτῆς· *i. e.* She shall enrich him by her good economy and prudent conduct. *Locupletabit,* says Grotius. What the Hebrews express by the conjugation *hiphil,* the Hellenists and others express actively; and so κληρονομεῖν is used Prov. xiii. 22. Solomon, in the picture which he has drawn of a good wife, one who openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in whose tongue is the law of kindness, represents her as wholly employed in household cares and business, as looking well to the ways of her household, and eating not the bread of idleness. She not only divides a portion to her maidens, but worketh willingly with her own hands: *She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.* (Prov. xxxi.) Among the Hebrews, daughters did not inherit, when they had brothers; the wise man therefore observes here, that a prudent daughter brings a rich portion to her spouse, by her economy and wisdom, and the good qualities she is possessed of; that she is a fortune of herself, and will improve that of her husband. The Tigurine version accordingly has, *Filia prudens viro est vice hæreditatis.* There is also another sense given of this place, That a discreet and virtuous woman shall have for her lot and inheritance a good husband, and shall so recommend herself to his affections, as to be the heir of his fortunes.

Ver. 6. *A tale out of season is as music in mourning.*] As the use of instruments of music in a time of lamentation, is mentioned here among the ἄκαιρα, or unseasonable things, one may conclude that they were not anciently used by the Jews at funerals. This was of heathen extraction, and came in but late among the Jews. Music at such a time is as unseasonable, as that request, or rather insult of the Babylonians over the captive Jews, *to sing one of the songs of Zion in their heaviness:* as improper as "in epulo cum toga pulla accumbere," to appear at a feast in weeds; which Tully mentions as a thing unusual, "Quis unquam cœnavit atratus?" (Epist. ad Attic.) Equally absurd, says the wise man, is conversation, or even instruction, when misapplied, or unseasonable with respect to time, place, or persons. Thus διήγησις is used, xxxviii. 25. And so Calmet, *Un discours à contre tems est comme une musique pendant le deuil.* It is not sufficient only to tell men the truth, but there is also a time to be observed in speaking. He that would succeed most effectually, must do it *à propos,* at such a time, and in such a manner, as wisdom shall direct. The like may be observed of reproof, which is then chiefly to be applied, when souls are so worked upon and disposed by the Spirit of God, as to be made sensible of their bad estate, and of the want of such remedies, as at first may be disagreeable to sense, but are necessary to be used to bring men out of that profound lethargy, under which they have languished in a forgetfulness of God, and a disregard of their own happiness.

But stripes and correction of wisdom are never out of time.] Μάστιγες καὶ παιδεία ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ σοφίας. Here our version seems not accurate. Besides the sense given by our translators, which is a good, though perhaps not the true one, there is another favoured by some interpreters, *viz.* Music is an entertainment unseemly and improper in the time of mourning; but correction and discipline are always proper to teach children wisdom, in the time or season of learning, ἐν καιρῷ σοφίας. The Arabic may seem to favour this, *Correctio et disciplina sapientiam conciliant.* But others understand the place very differently,—that stripes and correction are ἄκαιρα, improper to be used to persons generally reputed wise, who, if they accidentally offend, are reformed sooner by discourse with them, than by any correction that can be used. According to that of Ben Sira in his alphabet, "Sapientem nutu, et stultum fuste." But both these expositions seem forced; nor are our translators to be justified for joining σοφίας with a word so distant from it. There may be, I think, another sense given of this passage, which none of the commentators have touched upon, which to me seems preferable, *viz.* Music is unseasonable in the time of mourning, and an instance of impertinence and indiscretion; but correction and stripes, properly and seasonably applied, are the effect of wisdom, and instances of it, and bring forth its fruits; and none but a wise and discreet man knows how to apply these in season, and to advantage. Accordingly the Geneva version has, *Wisdom knoweth the seasons of correction and doctrine.* And the Syriac, *Eruditio ac disciplina quovis tempore sunt sapientia.* And the Vulgate, *Flagella et doctrina in omni tempore sapientia.* I would point the place thus, μάστιγες καὶ παιδεία ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, σοφίας; i. e. *sunt sapientiæ. Sapientiæ congruunt,* according to Bossuet. Some few copies omit παντὶ, and it may perhaps seem too harsh; but there is greater authority for retaining than omitting παντὶ; and it agrees with our author's doctrine, (xxx. 1.) but is not to be understood with the utmost strictness. And therefore though ἐνδελεχὴς, there used, means *continual,* yet the translation in this last place (often) is right. At least, if *continual* be put, a due abatement must be made or understood.

Ver. 7. *He that teacheth a fool, is as one that glueth a potsherd together.*] After these words, Dr. Grabe inserts the two following sentences, εἰς αἴσθησιν ἄγων τὴν γῆν, καὶ τὸν ἀπηλπισμένον εἰς σύνεσιν ὀξύνων, which is exactly the reading of Clemens Alex. Pædag. lib. i. cap. 8. By a fool we may understand one that wants both understanding and parts, and hath also a corrupt heart; (see ver. 12, 13.) for there are hopes of reclaiming or instructing such as have sense and capacity, though they be ignorant, or even vicious and irregular. In these, passion is not always uppermost, nor equally strong and domineering, and the profligate may have sometimes seasons of recollection, or may happily be reclaimed by some seasonable and well-timed admonition of others; but it is lost labour to hope for or attempt the reclaiming a vicious fool, in whom obstinacy and ignorance meet, and passions prevail without any control. To attempt to teach a fool, is supposed by this writer to be a natural impossibility; and the comparison here used, is an excellent emblem, according to Messieurs of Port-Royal, of the fall of the soul: God at baptism made it a precious vessel, and filled it with his grace and Holy Spirit, but when his vessel is broken and ruined, by falling into mortal sins, it will be difficult, if not impossible, by mere discourse or instruction, to restore such a lapse, and to set all right again. The glory of that work belongs to God only; it is he that must make anew the soul, and restore it to its first perfection, by the same power which at first created it.

Ver. 8. *He that telleth a tale to a fool, speaketh to one in a slumber; when he hath told his tale, he will say, What is*

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the matter?] Τί ἐστιν, *i. e.* He knows not what he hath been talking of, and is never the wiser. The Vulgate renders, *Cum dormiente loquitur, qui enarrat stulto sapientiam, et in fine narrationis dicet, Quis est hic?* applying it to the person of the speaker, as if the reading was τίς ἐστιν οὗτος; we have an instance of the like rudeness, Acts xvii. 18. when St. Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection, the Epicurean and stoic philosophers (foolish and blind guides) encountered him, and said, τί ἂν θέλοι ὁ σπερμολόγος οὗτος λέγειν; all that one gets by addressing a discourse to such as either do not understand it, or through prepossession do not relish it, is to be reckoned disordered perhaps, or one that is out of the way. Thus when the same St. Paul before Festus spoke the words of soberness and truth, Festus's reply only was, Μαίνῃ, Παῦλε· τὰ πολλά σε γράμματα εἰς μανίαν περιτρέπει. (Acts xxvi. 24.) A proper disposition in the hearer is necessary to make what is delivered to have its due effect; hence such as are led away by their lusts, and have an affection for sin, are represented in Scripture as in a fast sleep, as blind, as deaf, and even as dead in trespasses and sins; and the advice given to such is, to awake to righteousness, and be alive again unto God. Nor does our Saviour mean any thing more than a suitable disposition in the hearers, when he says, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

Ver. 9. *If children live honestly, and have wherewithal, they shall cover the baseness of their parents.* Ver. 10. *But children being haughty through disdain and want of nurture, do stain the nobility of their kindred.*] These verses are not in the Vatican, nor Vulgate, nor Syriac. The Greek copies, which our translators follow, read, τέκνα ἐν ἀγαθῇ ζωῇ τὴν τροφὴν ἔχοντα, κ.τ.λ. but they are generally inserted immediately after the sixth verse. Others have τέκνα ἐν ἀγαθῇ ζωῇ τὴν τέχνην ἔχοντα, which is the marginal reading; but if τέχνην be read, the sense of the ninth verse, and its contrast with the next, will be much the same with x. 27. Nor will the difference be great if τροφὴν be read; for such a man's τέχνη is his τροφή. The sense of the two verses taken together, is briefly, Virtue with a sufficient competency makes amends for a descent from a mean and low parentage; whereas pride, ignorance, or wickedness, disgraces a noble birth. Or thus, That the good life of one in ordinary circumstances, is more honourable than a high extraction or great fortune with a bad and scandalous life.

Ver. 11. *Weep for the dead, for he hath lost the light; and weep for the fool, for he wanteth understanding: make little weeping for the dead, for he is at rest; but the life of a fool is worse than death.* Ver. 12. *Seven days do men mourn for him that is dead; but for a fool and an ungodly man, all the days of his life.*] Abraham lamented his dead, and mourned for his beloved Sarah, and so did Christ sorrow for his friend Lazarus. We too are permitted, and laudable custom hath ever allowed it, to pay a decent tribute of tears, observing always a proper moderation. As for the precise time, it is no where peremptorily fixed: the Scriptures sometimes say that such a one was mourned for many days, without particularizing always the number; but that this of seven days was the most usual time of mourning among the Jews, appears from many instances. The solemn public mourning for Jacob was seven days. (Gen. l. 10.) The seventy days, mentioned ver. 3. were preparatory to the funeral, and while the body was embalming; (see also 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. 1 Kings xxxi. Judith xvi. 24.) and just so long their joy lasted at solemn weddings. This was so settled and fixed among them, that it was a common proverb, *Septem dies ad convivium, et septem ad luctum.* It is an observation of St. Austin, that though the ancients had their *novendialia*, or solemn sacrifices in honour of the dead, nine days; yet there is no instance of above seven days' mourning for any of the holy men in Scripture: as the novendial was of heathen extraction, so the number seven probably, he thinks, might be pitched upon in allusion to the sabbath, which was a time of rest, and therefore was applied to the dead, as being at rest from all their labours. (Quæst. in Gen.) Josephus, speaking of Archelaus appointing seven days' mourning in honour of his father, adds, τόσας γὰρ διαγορεύει τὸ νόμιμον τοῦ πατρίου, κ. τ. λ. (De Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 1. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 8.) But though the usual time for mourning was seven days, yet they seem sometimes to have shortened it, see Ecclus. xxxviii. 17. where a day or two only is mentioned; and sometimes occasionally they enlarged the time for great persons, as for Aaron (Numb. xx. 29.) and Moses, (Deut. xxxiv. 8.) both of whom the children of Israel mourned for thirty days, though a week sufficed for private ones. The wise man (ver. 8.) compares a fool to one in a slumber: here he compares him to a dead man, and shews that his condition is indeed worse than one that is no more; that a week is the usual time of mourning for the dead, but that for the foolish and ungodly man, the whole term of life is little enough. Thus Samuel lamented Saul all the days of his life, because he saw in him no sign of repentance, though often reproved: (1 Sam. xv. 35.) and the reason of this difference is, because death finishes and puts an end to all the evils and miseries of life, and is the entrance upon a better state; but the life of a sinner is worse than death, because he goes on continually ruining himself, and hugs his enemy and destroyer; and unless God touches his heart, his life will be an endless death, if I may use the expression, a source of eternal and infinite misery to him. We are sensibly affected at the death of friends and relations, and pay a decent respect to their memory; but are not sorry as men without hope; but comfort ourselves, that, if they depart hence in the Lord, they are in joy and felicity. But the death of the soul is without hope or remedy: it is only spiritually discerned, and we want tears to lament sufficiently the loss and misery. By *fools* the author understands such as are absolutely so, who give no prospect or hope of ever arriving at sense and understanding: of these, and the incorrigible sinner, there is little or no hope; but such whom some violent temptation has hurried into sin, one should indeed lament their fall, but not despair of their recovery and reformation. The pious Monicha for many years lamented the failings of her son, St. Austin, and at length prevailed for his conversion by the power of her many tears. "Fieri non potest ut filius tantarum lachrymarum pereat," sounded to her like a voice from heaven; and she never ceased her importunity till she had gained her son. (Confess. lib. iii. cap. ult.)

Ver. 13. *Talk not much with a fool, and thou shalt never be defiled with his fooleries, and never be disquieted with madness.*] Ἵνα μὴ μολυνθῇς ἐν τῷ ἐκτιναγμῷ αὐτοῦ. "Sputo ejus," *with his spittle*, or *opprobrious language*, as Grotius

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understands it. Καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀκηδιάσῃς ἐν τῇ ἀπονίᾳ αὐτοῦ, *with instances of his folly and madness. Stultitia illius.* The Vulgate understands it of the contagion of sin through his evil communication or example, *Coinquinaberis peccato illius.* Castellio renders, "Cave ne eo excusso contamineris," *Beware lest he defile thee by shaking himself, like a sow after wallowing in the mire;* and thus the Syriac, *Cum sue ne abeas in via, ne te conspurcet, cum sese excusserit,* which is likewise the marginal reading.

Ver. 15—18.] The first of these verses seems an imitation of Prov. xxvii. 3. *A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty, but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.* (See Ecclus. xxi. 16.) The several comparisons here made use of, are intended to shew the difference between the actions of a wise man and a fool, and the issue and event which attend them. The Scripture in like manner compares the wise man, whose thoughts, and the actions proceeding from them, are well-grounded, to a house founded on a rock, against which neither wind nor rain had any power. A fool, on the contrary, is like a house built on high without a good foundation, exposed to every assault of weather. The Vulgate compares him to a wall built without mortar, which wants cement to keep it together, or to one daubed with untempered mortar. (Ezek. xiii. 10.) As he acts without any fixed principle, nothing but uncertainty and irresolution can proceed from him: for want of a right heart, a heart well-established on a proper basis, he yields to the first impressions of fear, and is overthrown for want of a support and foundation. But the Psalmist describes the good man, who acts upon a religious principle, and is influenced by the fear of God, and a firm trust in his word, as one who shall never be moved, whose heart is established and shall not shrink, as one who shall not be afraid of any evil tidings, *for his heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord.* (Psal. cxii. 6, 7.)

Ver. 19. *He that pricketh the eye, will make tears to fall; and he that pricketh the heart, maketh it to shew her knowledge.*] Ἐκφαίνει αἴσθησιν, *displays its sense and feeling; i. e.* when one provokes another, especially his friend, by injuries, abuse, or ill language, he raises his indignation, and awakens his resentment. Or the meaning may be, When a person reproves another in a home manner, and touches him to the quick, he gives him the knowledge of himself, or a lively sense of his faults; and by his affectionate admonition teaches him wisdom, or a better conduct for the future, as Bossuet explains it. This simile is brought to illustrate the damage done to friendship through misconduct, some instances of which are mentioned in the following verses; and from the known tenderness of the eye, which cannot bear the least stroke, the wise man instils the like caution to be observed with respect to friendship, which too may be wounded in a sensible part. The Syriac so applies it; and this sense is more agreeable to the context.

Ver. 21. *Though thou drawest a sword at thy friend, yet despair not, for there may be a returning* [*to favour*]. Ver. 22. *If thou hast opened thy mouth against thy friend, fear not, for there may be a reconciliation, except for upbraiding, or pride, or disclosing of secrets, or a treacherous wound: for these things every friend will depart.*] Injuries done to a friend by word or deed may be passed over which are occasioned by passion, or some sudden or violent emotion, as a hasty word or rash expression, which comes from a man in a heat, vented perhaps in the warmth of a debate, and arising from a contrariety of sentiments on the subject, nay, threats, and even an assault upon a friend in a fit of anger, may be forgiven; for these, though they indeed provoke, and may occasion a shyness, or even a rupture between friends for a time, yet are not always attended with that bad consequence as wholly to dissolve friendship. For if the injured friend be a wise man, he will consider that he himself is subject likewise to frailties; that the fit of passion might be sudden and transient, and proceeded not from any settled rancour in the heart; and therefore, upon a submissive acknowledgment of the offence, he will be disposed to pass it over, and receive his penitent friend into his bosom and confidence again. But such injuries as are done on purpose, premeditatedly, and upon deliberation, and offered as it were in cold blood, these proceeding rather from malice and an ill-disposed heart, than from surprise or passion, are not so easily forgot or forgiven by a friend or brother. (See Prov. xviii. 19.) Of these the wise man reckons four sorts; ὀνειδισμὸς, malicious slander, the speaking things to the detriment or disparagement of a friend's credit and character—as, reflecting upon his birth, his parts, or capacity; or, which is more inflaming, upon his honesty; or upbraiding a friend with favours received, accusing him of baseness and ingratitude on that account, or for not making any or unsuitable returns. 2. Ὑπερηφανία, *pride* or *insolence*, which is so much the more improper and disagreeable, as friendship is a union founded upon equality, likeness of sentiments, inclinations, interests, and even of state and condition. And though friendship may sometimes be between persons of different rank and condition; yet, in that case, he that is superior in point of state and fortune, must condescend and abate something to proportion himself to the level and standard of his friend, without which there can be no sweet union, agreeable familiarity, sincere confidence, true friendship, nor even a show of liberty itself, kept up and preserved. St. Ambrose therefore well advises, "Defer amico ut æquali, amicitia enim nescit superiorem." (De Offic. lib. iii. cap. 16.) 3. Μυστηρίου ἀποκάλυψις, the *revealing of secrets*, which is an instance of perfidiousness. He that is capable of such baseness, especially if he does it coolly and with deliberation, is unfit for friendship, and unworthy of any confidence. It is possible indeed a man, through inadvertence, heedlessness, levity, or weakness, may by accident drop a secret, without any thought or intention to injure his friend; but in general it may be affirmed, that nothing should be kept more inviolable, as it is as dear to a man as his honour, and cannot be disclosed for the most part without a sensible injury done to it. (See xxvii. 17. 21. Prov. xi. 13.) 4. Πληγὴ δόλια, a *treacherous wound* or *stroke*, which is the last and worst species of unfaithfulness that can happen in friendship; the rights of which it not only infringes, but even those of humanity and charity; such a one is not only unworthy of our confidence, but unfit for human society. He is a public enemy, will attempt the like against any other, and all the world should be aware of such an assassin. When these instances happen, they shew the affections to be alienated, and that the injuries are wilful and premeditated. Mr. Norris has a fine reflection upon this passage: "It is with the union of

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two friends, as with the union of soul and body: there are some degrees of distemperature, that, although they weaken and disturb the union, yet however are consistent with it; but then there are others again that quite destroy the vital congruity, and then follows a separation. As to the cause that may justify a dissolution of friendship, it can be no other than something that is directly contrary to the very design and essence of friendship, such as notorious perfidiousness, deliberate malice, and a desperate and resolved continuance in them. For as long as there is any hopes of amendment, the man is rather to be advised than deserted; but if hopeless and irreclaimable, we may and must desert him; but let it be with all the tenderness imaginable, with as much unwillingness and reluctancy as the soul leaves her over-distempered body. In such a situation our greatest care must be that our former dearness turn not to inveterate hatred: for though the friend be gone, yet still the man remains; and though he has forfeited my friendship, yet still I owe him common charity." (Theory of Love, p. 132, &c.)

Ver. 24. *As the vapour and smoke of a furnace goeth before the fire, so reviling before blood.*] The observation of Messieurs of Port-Royal upon this place is well worth inserting; To keep out of danger and mischief, it is necessary to shun the least approach to it, for there are some small and inconsiderable things in appearance, which nevertheless are as so many sparks, to occasion in the end a great fire and combustion. As man is naturally proud, so he is of course fond of his own opinion, even in things the most indifferent: not because his is the best or truest, but *because it is his own.* Another equally loves his own sentiments too for the same reason, and is as much attached to them. From this contrariety arise jealousy and disputes, which are inflamed by the heat of words, and the warmth of jarring expressions: from words they proceed to affronts, from affronts to injuries, from injuries to threats, which often terminate in bloodshed and murder. The tongue executes what pride of heart dictates, and the hand at length finishes what the tongue first began. (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 25. *I will not be ashamed to defend a friend, neither will I hide myself from him.* Ver. 26. *And if any evil happen unto me by him, every one that heareth it will beware of him.*] Ver. 23. the wise man advises to abide steadfastly by a friend in the time of his troubles, διαμένειν αὐτῷ, which is a very significant word; (see Luke xx. 28. 2 Tim. ii. 12.) that upon any change of condition we may share in his good fortune, or the inheritance that falls to him. This he resolves to do when such an opportunity to serve a friend shall offer; nothing shall hinder me from succouring my friend, I will not fly from his presence, though for his sake I may suffer inconveniences or evils. I will not be influenced by the example of others who may keep from him, nor so far consult my own repose as not to assist him with my presence, my advice, my interest, and even my goods; nay, for his sake, will expose myself, if necessary, to hardships, ill-will, detraction, and the opposition of such as would oppress his innocence. And thus the Vulgate takes it, *Amicum salutare non confundar, a facie illius non me abscondam, et si mala mihi per illum evenerint, sustinebo:* καὶ εἰ here is the same as κἂν: and so the Geneva version understands it. Horace well observes,—

"Absentem qui rodit amicum,
Qui non defendit alio culpante, hic niger est." (Sat. lib. i.)

And accordingly he defends the character of Virgil, to whom some trifling objections had been made in point of dress and carriage, in the kindest manner,

"At est bonus, ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam. . . . at ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore."

Ver. 27. *Who shall set a watch before my mouth, and a seal of wisdom upon my lips, that I fall not suddenly by them?*] Calmet refers this to the last sentence of the foregoing verse, and makes the sense to be, He that hears another speaking, may guard against any thing evil or disagreeable in his discourse, by stopping his ears, or flying from him, φεύξεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, for so some copies read. But who will give me a proper guard for my own mouth, a seal of prudence and discretion as a security to my lips, that I offend not with my tongue? Or perhaps it may be an introduction to the prayer immediately following, like that of Psal. cxli. 3. *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.*

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *O LORD, Father and Governor of all my whole life, leave me not to their counsels, and let me not fall by them.*] If this is connected with the last verse of the former chapter, which seems proper and necessary, and indeed some copies begin this chapter with it, the sense will be,—O thou Father of my life, and Ruler of it; or, as some copies have it, which is still more lofty, O thou Father of all that have life, of all living, ἁπάσης ζωῆς, give me not up to the indiscretion of my own lips, permit me not to be carried away by their rashness and volubility of talking, so that they shall prove the occasion of my falling; and so Bossuet, "Ne me derelinquas in consilio linguæ et labiorum." The generality of interpreters suppose sinners, or fools, or adversaries, or some worthless and dangerous persons, to be understood, to the mischief of whose counsels the wise man here prays not to be abandoned; but the former sense seems preferable. If we consider well that Solomon says, *Life and death are in the power of the tongue;* that St. James calls it a fire, a world of iniquity; (iii. 6.) we shall not wonder that the wise man here asks of God the guidance of his Spirit, to keep him from this evil, that he would watch over him to prevent any intemperate sallies of his tongue, or the multiplying transgressions by a habit of evil speaking, or speaking too much.

Ver. 2. *Who will set scourges over my thoughts, and the discipline of wisdom over mine heart? that they spare me not for mine ignorances, and it pass not by my sins.*] The variety of readings of this place shew it to be corrupt; our version of it is obscure, to say no worse of it. As the wise man before begs of God a bridle for his tongue, he here asks the like for his thoughts and heart, that they may not wander nor betray him into wickedness, that God would enlighten his mind and purify his heart by his preventing grace; that he would keep him in his duty by proper correction, and that his conscience may be such a faithful monitor, as truly to represent to him his state and

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condition, and set before him his sins in so full a light and proportion, as to fill him with sincere compunction of spirit, and engage him to condemn himself without partiality or unwillingness; lest God should enter into judgment with him, and spare him not for his sins. By *ignorances* we are here to understand sins, and so the oriental versions take it here, and in the following verse; and thus ἀγνόημα is used often by the Hellenists. (See Numb. xii. 11. Judith v. 20. 1 Esd. viii. 77.)

Ver. 3. *Lest mine ignorances increase, and my sins abound to my destruction, and I fall before mine adversaries, and mine enemies rejoice over me, whose hope is far from thy mercy.*] *i. e.* Lest the abuse of speech should make me fall into sin frequently, and my sins should draw upon me the wrath of God, and he should deliver me over into the will of mine enemies. There is a tincture of Judaism, says Calmet, in this reason; for we ought to avoid sin, not because it is attended with punishment, but because it is displeasing to God. But though conscience, and the sincere love of God are, it must be confessed, more noble and disinterested motives, yet the wise man may be thought to speak here ἀνθρωποπαθῶς, as the reasons which act upon our hopes and fears make the liveliest impressions, and affect the mind most powerfully. The latter part, *whose hope is far from thy mercy,* is not in the Vatican nor Vulgate, and has indeed a strong tincture of Jewish prejudice in it, for they were a nation full of spiritual presumption, and looked upon all others with the utmost contempt, imagining themselves to be the only righteous and accepted, and that salvation belonged to them only; that, as God had shewed a particular kindness to them, in choosing them for his people, he would never reject them: all other nations they supposed were disregarded by him and had no ground to hope for his favour and mercy. (See Wisd. x. 15. xix. 22.)

Ver. 4. *Give me not a proud look, but turn away from thy servant always a haughty mind.*] Μετεωρισμὸν ὀφθαλμῶν μὴ δῷς μοι, καὶ γιγαντώδη ψυχὴν ἀπόστησον. The first seems to be a metaphor taken from navigation; ships are said μετεωρίζεσθαι, or in μετεώρῳ εἶναι, when they are lifted up, or carried on high, by wind and waves. Here it means pride, or the resembling those that are so lifted up. It is so used Luke xii. 29. μὴ μετεωρίζεσθε, which the Vulgate well renders, *Nolite in sublime tolli.* Γιγαντώδης ψυχὴ means a conceited boldness, an affected self-sufficiency, whereby men dare to brave and defy even heaven itself, such as was that of the old giants, who were swept away for their insolence and presumption. It is quite necessary to translate here with the margin, *giant-like mind,* instead of *haughty,* for the better understanding what follows; for what the wise man prays against in these verses, was the very temper of the Cyclops, Polyphemus. See Hom. Odyss. lib. ix.

Οὐ γὰρ Κύκλωπες Διὸς αἰγιόχου ἀλέγουσιν,
Οὐδὲ θεῶν μακάρων· ἐπεὶ πολὺ φέρτεροι εἰμεν.

But his picture, as Euripides has drawn it, is much closer to the passage before us; for he paints him priding in his brutal appetites, proclaiming his belly to be the only or the greatest god, to whom, by way of sacrifice, the fruits and increase of the earth were due by a title so sovereign, that neither heaven nor earth could withdraw or dare detain them: an overgrown monster, compounded of lust and gluttony, those sister sins, and twins of hell. (In Cyclop.)

Ver. 8. *The sinner shall be left in his foolishness, both the evil speaker and the proud shall fall thereby.*] *i. e.* The sinner, whether he indulges himself in a criminal liberty of speaking proud and profane things against God, or evil and malicious ones against his neighbour, shall be taken by the foolishness of his lips, and punished for transgressing by them. Καταλειφθήσεται is not rightly rendered in our version; the Vulgate is preferable, *In vanitate sua apprehendetur peccator.* And thus Calmet, *Le pecheur sera pris;* and so the Syriac. Some copies prefix παιδεία σώματος to the seventh verse, as a title to what follows.

Ver. 9. *Accustom not thy mouth to swearing, neither use thyself to the naming of the Holy One.*] God is called the Holy One, κατ' ἐξοχήν, in several places of Scripture. (See Isa. xxx. 12. 15. Ezek. xxxix. 7.) The prohibition here is not to swear lightly upon frivolous or no occasions, without any necessity, reason, or authority, requiring it. We cannot have the name of God too often in our mouths, provided it be with respect and reverence; but such as accustom themselves to swearing must have a little regard to, or fall off from, that reverence which is due to that adorable name, which makes angels and devils tremble. The rendering of the Vulgate here is very particular, *Nominatio Dei non sit assidua in ore tuo, et nominibus sanctorum non admiscearis;* referring, probably, to the superstition of swearing by angels. The joining them in the same verse with God without any authority, and the tenderness therein directed to be shewn to their names, seems artful, and was probably inserted to procure reverence to the saints or angels, and to favour some latent design. The wise man well illustrates the mischiefs arising from this vice, and the stains it leaves upon the soul from the frequent commission of it, by the instance of the marks upon a slave's body, who is often beaten, ἐξεταζόμενος, or examined by torture, and scourging for some crime which he obstinately persists in. And we may from the comparison, without violence, infer, that he that thus acts against his Master's will, and makes light of his sacred name, shall be beaten with many stripes. St. Austin's observation, if rightly taken, is very just, "Falsa juratio exitiosa est, vera juratio periculosa est, nulla juratio secura est;" *i. e.* no swearing is secure and safe; a false oath is mischievous and destructive, and even a true one is attended with danger, *i. e.* when it is used frequently and inconsiderately, without being called or compelled to it. Such a rash forwardness many of the wiser heathens thought was not unpunished by the gods. It has been observed by the learned, that swearing is by the Hebrews expressed passively, *to be sworn,* as if no swearing was allowable but what is in a judicial way, and when authority requires it.

Ver. 11. *A man that useth much swearing shall be filled with iniquity, and the plague shall never depart from his house: if he shall offend, his sin shall be upon him, and if he acknowledge not his sin, he maketh a double offence, and if he swear in vain he shall not be innocent, but his house shall be full of calamities.*] This is direct tautology, if nothing more is meant than what the words seem to carry in them in our version, but by considering and examining well the Greek, we shall be furnished with a proper distinction. For what our translators render in general and indeterminately

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offend, is ἐὰν πλημμελήσῃ; if he swear any rash oath, and sin inadvertently, not rightly understanding or considering the thing about which he swears, whether it was in his power, for instance, to do it, or whether he could lawfully do it, he shall then be guilty; and thus the Syriac, *Si per errorem dejerat, peccatum ejus in ipsum recidet,—His sin shall be upon him.* This phrase often occurs in the book of Leviticus, (see v. 1. x. 17. xvii. 16. xix. 8. xx. 17, &c.) and means, that he shall be punished either by the judges, if he is convicted, or by God, if he escapes the hands of justice. It follows, ἐὰν ὑπερίδῃ, *if he acknowledge not his sin*, which would be better rendered, If, through forgetfulness, he omits to do what he might have done, and swore he would actually do, he is guilty of a double fault. Εἰ διακενῆς ὤμοσεν, means, *if he swears* ἐπὶ ματαίῳ, ἐπὶ φαύλῳ, *to vanity, a lie, or falsehood*, and be guilty of the heinous sin of perjury. And thus the oriental version, *Qui mentiens jurat, culpis non vacabit.* This explication is confirmed in part by the reading of St. Cyprian, *Vir multum jurans replebitur iniquitate; et si vane juraverit, non justificabitur; et si frustra juraverit, dupliciter punietur.* (Test. lib. iii. cont. Jud.) Bossuet makes the three species to be, 1. Swearing to a thing, and not doing it afterward. 2. Swearing originally with an evil intention of not fulfilling it. 3. Light and common swearing. Grotius makes them to be, 1. Swearing, and not remembering it; the Hebrew word being capable of being rendered by both ἀγνοεῖν and πλημμελεῖν. 2. Remembering the oath, and yet being careless and unconcerned about fulfilling it. 3. Swearing in jest, without any serious intention of making it good, or thinking to escape by some mental equivocation, like "Juravi lingua, mentem injuratam teneo." That God is the avenger of all such as have no regard to the solemnity and sacredness of an oath, see Deut. xxviii. 59. Zech. v. 4. Herod. lib. iii.

Ver. 12. *There is a word that is clothed about with death: God grant that it be not found in the heritage of Jacob, for all such things shall be far from the godly, and they shall not wallow in their sins.*] The crime, which the wise man does not mention here, and which he wishes may not be found in the heritage of Jacob, I presume, is blasphemy, which was so odious, that it shocked him even to mention it, but he has distinguished it sufficiently by saying, that it was clothed about with death, *i. e.* that this sin was punished with death among the Jews; for, according to the law of Moses, the blasphemer was ordered to be stoned (Lev. xxiv. 16. John x. 31.) instantly by those that heard the blasphemy, without any formal process of law. Others understand here by the words, *clothed with death*, such discourses as tended to seduce the people to apostacy and idolatry; for this crime was likewise punished with death. The Vulgate renders, *Est et alia loquela contraria morti*, from a copy probably which had ἀντιπαραβεβλημένη, and not ἀντιπεριβεβλημένη, which is the better reading, and followed in our version. There is this material difference between blasphemy and common swearing, and the one is so far contrary to the other, that, in swearing, the name of God, as being the most holy name, is made use of to give some weight to the words, by the authority which it carries with it; but blasphemy attacks the dreadful majesty of God, and the impious wretch only makes use of his adorable name to revile and abuse it. This crime was anciently had in such detestation, that, as Messieurs of Port-Royal observe, even Job's wife said to him, according to the original, ברך אלהים, *bless God;* though she meant to persuade him to curse him, she durst not mention the thing, even though it was what she intended.

Ver. 13. *Use not thy mouth to intemperate swearing, for therein is the word of sin.*] Our version seems to have followed a copy which had ἀκολασίᾳ ὅρκου, but the reading in all others is ἀπαιδευσίαν ἀσυρῆ. As the one or other reading is followed, this verse will either end or begin a subject. Bossuet understands this place as distinct from what went before, *viz.* swearing and blasphemy, and explains it of calumny and opprobrious words, which seems confirmed by the Vulgate, and from Lev. xix. where, after the prohibition against swearing, (ver. 12.) it follows, *Thou shalt not go about as a talebearer among thy people;* and some other instances of calumny are mentioned, so that the rendering here probably should be, *Use not thy mouth to intemperate reproach or rudeness,* ἀπαιδευσίᾳ ἀσυρεῖ, for so it should be read. See ver. 15. where the same verb is with a dative case, *Indisciplinatæ loquelæ*, Vulgate, and so the Port-Royal comment takes it. Grotius understands the passage of obscene talk; that as ἀπαιδευσία is a general term for every thing that offends against decorum, so the addition of ἀσυρῆς, which is equivalent to βδελυρὸς, or ἀκάθαρτος, confines it to indecency in talk. However this be understood, whether of lying, swearing, filthy communication, or slander, in all which is λόγος ἁμαρτίας, which is a Hebraism, and signifies the sin itself, it is certain that a person so accustomed is with great difficulty reformed, according to the observation ver. 15. for by custom men become so wedded to their favourite vices, that they will not be persuaded that they tend to their destruction.

Ver. 14. *Remember thy father and thy mother, when thou sittest among great men.*] Ἀνάμεσον γὰρ μεγιστάνων συνεδρεύεις; for thou sittest amongst great people. And thus the Vulgate, *In medio enim magnatorum consistis;* intimating, perhaps, that father and mother are to be reverenced as such, whose instructions are to be remembered, (Prov. i. 8. vi. 20.) of which the government of the tongue may well be supposed one. כי signifies either *for* or *when;* our version follows the latter, and so does Castalio. According to Bossuet the sense is, *Remember thy father and mother, and speak no evil of them, for thou wilt be in danger of the judgment;* following the Vulgate Latin too closely and securely, he seems to have understood *consistis* of a consistory court, which is not at all necessary. Some suppose the persons here counselled to be of low degree, and that the advice is, Remember thine own original when thou art with great men, affect not to be their equal, nor put thyself upon the level with them. Or if, with some copies, we read συνεδρεύσεις, the sense may then be, Remember who thou art, and whence thou sprangest, and know what belongeth to thee, and how to behave thyself always, for thou *wilt* or mayest at one time or other have occasion to be among great persons. According to Grotius the sense of the whole verse is, Remember thy father and mother with respect and reverence: though thou be admitted to and intimate with great persons, and be thyself also in a high station, do not thou, in thy dignity and elevation, forget them, or speak of them as though thou wert ashamed of them, and wish that thou wert born of other parents, and curse the place of thy nativity, and

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by such a behaviour or usage, τῳ ἐθισμῳ σου, be reckoned a fool or a madman. Καὶ θελήσεις εἰ μὴ ἐγενήθης· εἰ is often used for ὅτι, and so it is to be taken here: it is the same as θελήσεις με γενηθῆναι, which way of expressing it by the infinitive is more usual and clear. The Vulgate so renders, *Maluisses non nasci:* the Syriac understands εἰ in the sense of *utinam, Et dicas, utinam creatus non fuissem.* And so indeed it is sometimes taken, as in Homer:

Εἰ γὰρ ἐμοὶ τόσσην δὲ θεοὶ δύναμιν παραθεῖεν. (Odyss. γ.)

And that of Virgil,

"Si nunc se nobis ille aureus arbore ramus
Ostendat nemore in tanto." (Æn. vi.)

Ver. 16. *Two sorts of men multiply sin, and a third will bring wrath.*] Many instances of the like manner of expression are to be found in this book. (See xxv. 1, 2. 7.) It is a way of speaking, common even to Scripture, to use a definite common number for an indefinite one. (See Prov. xxx. 15. 18. 21. 24. 29. Isa. xix. 15.) The Hebrews use it in comparing different things together. But it may be more material to inquire, what particular persons are here referred to, and which are the three? Bossuet makes them to be the swearer, calumniator, and lustful person. Calmet and Messieurs of Port-Royal, to be the hot or passionate person, the fornicator, and the adulterer. But some by ψυχὴ θερμὴ understand the ambitious or covetous, as Vatablus in particular; but the context seems rather to determine it to the lustful person. As what went before regarded the vices of the tongue, so what follows respects those of the flesh.

A fornicator in the body of his flesh will never cease till he hath kindled a fire.] The Vulgate renders, *Homo nequam in ore carnis suæ;* following a corrupt copy which had πονηρὸς instead of πόρνος, and σότματι instead of σώματι. I am inclined to suspect the words ἐν σώματι σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ, to be transposed; and if I might attempt an alteration without the authority of MSS. would place the words thus, ἄνθρωπος πόρνος οὐ μὴ παύσεται, ἕως ἂν ἐν σώματι σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ ἐκκαύσῃ πῦρ· *i. e.* a fornicator will not cease from sinning, till he has kindled a fire in the body of his flesh; which seems confirmed from Prov. v. 11. *Remove thy way far from her* [the strange woman], *and come not nigh the door of her house, lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body,* σάρκες σώματός σου, the flesh of thy body, *is consumed.* Calmet too countenances this conjecture, *Celui qui se livre à cette passion brutale, ne s'en tirera pas, qu'il n'ait allumé dans son corps un feu qui le consumera.* (In loc.) And by this bodily punishment they receive in themselves, ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, that recompense of their error which was meet; (see Job xxxi. 12.) as St. Paul speaks of another species of defilers of the flesh. And indeed some of the fathers understand here, by *the fornicator in the body of his flesh,* an abuser of himself with mankind, ἀρσενοκοίτης, who dishonours his body by unnatural lusts.

Ver. 17. *All bread is sweet to a whoremaster, he will not leave off till he die.*] *i. e.* He will not only go on sinning in the like libidinous manner till he die, for enjoyment rather provokes than extinguishes his fire, adding fresh combustible matter, as it were, to his passions; but lust shall be the occasion of his death, and hasten it. Solomon has the same comparison upon the occasion, *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant, but he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell.* The Greek is much stronger, and concludes with a fine piece of instruction, Ὁ δὲ οὐκ οἶδεν ὅτι γηγενεῖς παρ' αὐτῇ ὀλλυνται, καὶ ἐπὶ πέταυρον ᾅδου συναντᾷ· ἀλλὰ ἀποπήδησον, μὴ χρονίσῃς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ, μηδὲ ἐπιστήσῃς τὸ σὸν ὄμμα πρὸς αὐτήν, οὕτως γὰρ διαβήσῃ ὕδωρ ἀλλότριον· ἀπὸ δὲ ὕδατος ἀλλοτρίου ἀπόσχου, καὶ ἀπὸ πηγῆς ἀλλοτρίας μὴ πίῃς, ἵνα πολὺν ζήσῃς χρόνον, προστεθῇ δέ σοι ἔτη ζωῆς. (Prov. ix. 18.)

Ver. 18. *A man that breaketh wedlock, saying, Who seeth me? I am compassed about with darkness, the walls cover me, what need I to fear? the Most High will not remember my sins.*] Ἄνθρωπος παραβαίνων ἀπὸ τῆς κλίνης αὐτοῦ· *i. e.* literally, *the man that violates the faith of the marriage-bed, and passes from his own to that of another's.* The Vulgate adds, *Contemnens animam suam;* which may mean, that by such a loose behaviour he exposes himself to all the consequences of adultery, to disgrace, and the loss of his own honour, to the resentment of the injured party, and to death itself, which among the Hebrews was the punishment of this crime. (Lev. xx. 10.) What the wise man here observes of the adulterer, that he comforts, or rather deceives himself with groundless reasons and fruitless pretences, to lull his conscience, is very just and true of sinners in general. (See xvi. 17.) After a course of wickedness they take up and entertain a set of new principles, apply their minds and often force them to believe a lie, and begin to argue with themselves in the following, or some such-like manner,—Opportunity invites, the object is alluring, no eye seeth me, I shall go undiscovered, or however unpunished; the men of taste, and my betters, scruple not to commit it, what need I be so severe and mortified in my life, as to deny myself the gratification of my passions? this sin is necessary and constitutional to me, and I cannot avoid it; it is questionable whether it be a sin, or one of so deep a die as is pretended, and flesh and blood are always present with me, and I cannot shake it off. There have been good men, as they have been reckoned, who have justified the practice by their example; the bulk of mankind allow such actions, and declare them easily pardonable, and reconcileable with the hopes of heaven; the Scriptures are not rightly understood in their pretended condemnations. When I am old, this sin will leave me, it is my infirmity, and God is very pitiful to the infirmities of mankind.—Thus sinners please themselves with such false reasoning; they resolve to act the crime, and seek excuses for it afterward, and if happily they can find out a fig-leaf, or some cover for their eyes that they may not see their own nakedness and deformity, they fortify themselves in their error, and hug the pleasing delusion.

Ver. 19. *Such a man only feareth the eyes of men, and knoweth not that the eyes of the Lord are ten thousand times brighter than the sun, beholding all the ways of men.*] It is an instance of great blindness and folly to be afraid of the eyes of men, to dread their sentence, to avoid their presence and sight, and to flee to obscurity and darkness, and at the same time not to fear or regard the eyes of God, before whom all things are naked and open, and darkness is of no significancy; according to that fine sentiment of the Psalmist, *If I say, Peradventure the darkness shall cover*

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me, then shall my night be turned into day: for the darkness is no darkness with thee, but the night is as clear as the day; the darkness and light to thee are both alike. (Psal. cxxxix. 10, 11.) Solomon argues in the like manner upon a parallel occasion: *And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? for the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* (Prov. v. 20, 21.) Some of the ancient poets have complimented the sun so far as to say, ἡέλιος ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ, καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούει, but how far is this exceeded by the grandeur and majesty of our author's expression; and how is the idea of the omniscience of God enlarged, when he says of him, that his eye is ten thousand times brighter than the sun, which is only a faint resemblance of his perfections! St. Austin exceeds himself in description of this attribute, or rather, God's immensity, "Qui ubique præsens es, et inveniri vix potes; qui tenes omnia, imples omnia, circumplecteris omnia, superexcellis omnia, sustines omnia. (In Spec. cap. 9.)

Ver. 20. *He knew all things ere ever they were created, so also after they were perfected, he looked upon them all.*] *i. e.* Before they were made, or existed, all things were known to him; and so are they in like manner known and remembered by him now they are finished, and are in their perfection and glory, μετὰ τὸ συντελεσθῆναι. This seems an answer to the false reasoning of the adulterer, ver. 18. Dr. Grabe, with great judgment, puts this verse in a parenthesis, which makes the connexion clearer.

Ver. 21. *This man shall be punished in the streets of the city.*] The adulterer thinks to escape God's all-seeing eye; he skulks in and loves the darkness, because his deeds are evil; but God's justice will drag him forth into open daylight, and not suffer his crime to go undiscovered, or unpunished. And because he thought so meanly of his infinite knowledge, as to entertain hopes to deceive him, and of the perfection of his nature, that he could wink at such a crime, his punishment shall be in the most exemplary manner; he shall be stoned in the public streets, as the nature of his offence required. (Lev. xx. 10.) And thus the Arabic, *In iisdem rebus propter quas homo non putet se puniendum neque condemnandum, pro his in quibus deprehensus fuerit, diffamabitur in plateis urbis.* In like manner the adulteress, which departs from her conjugal faith, shall be either stoned, (John viii. 5.) or burnt, as Judah determined in the case of Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. 24. In the following verses the wise man enlarges upon the crime of the woman, and shews how the guilt of it is inflamed by the consequence attending it, especially the bringing in a spurious issue to inherit, which, however, shall not prosper, nor continue long; *for the children of adulterers shall not come to their perfection, and the seed of an unrighteous bed shall be rooted out,* (Wisd. iii. 16.) instead of *being brought out into the congregation,* (ver. 24.) The oriental versions have, *hujusmodi ejiciatur ab ecclesia.* And the law determines in like manner with respect to bastard children. (Deut. xxiii. 2.)

Ver. 27. *And they that remain shall know that there is nothing better than the fear of the Lord.*] Her posterity, or those that come after, seeing God's judgments, or the exemplary punishments exercised upon sinners, shall confess the evil and mischief of sin, and shall take warning by their fate and example; they shall confess, that the fear of the Lord is the most honourable service, and the keeping of his commandments the source of true happiness. And thus the Psalmist, *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him up because he hath known my name; with long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.* (Psal. xci. 14. 16.) Or if, with the oriental versions, we take it in a more general sense, that all mankind, and especially such as have happily escaped from some common and wasting calamity, must confess, that the fear of the Lord is the best safeguard and security, the reflection is equally beautiful: what follows in the next verse is omitted in some Greek copies, and in the Arabic and Syriac.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. MOST of the commentators agree in interpreting this chapter of the Logos personally, though it will be difficult, if we pursue this application quite through; to make all the particulars in the description suit with the Logos, in all its characters and relations, though here and there a verse may seem to favour and countenance it. Some few understand it of wisdom derivatively, as displayed in God's works at the creation. Calmet says, that the wise man here opposes the wisdom of the Hebrews, or the study, knowledge, and practice of the Jewish law, to the pagan learning, and gives the preference to the former, as more ancient, exalted, and noble, than the Greek philosophy, or any branch of profane science: that God communicated wisdom, or the knowledge of his law, more particularly to Moses, their great lawgiver, and afterward to David, Solomon, the prophets, &c. that this favour was not vouchsafed to all people indifferently, but he chose Jacob for his heritage, and Jerusalem for her habitation; that its temple was her palace, its ark her throne, from whence were issued out her laws, ordinances, and statutes. And no wonder that this writer, who has on many occasions shewn a tincture of Jewish prejudice, should be strongly attached to the law of Moses, and say very excellent things in commendation of it, by representing the law like a true schoolmaster (as St. Paul calls it on another occasion), preferring his own learning and wisdom to that of all others. However Christians may now look upon the law as beggarly elements, in comparison of the light of the gospel, yet every zealous disciple of Moses was big with the praises of it, and gloried in the Pentateuch, as the chief book of Wisdom in the world. If this chapter is an imitation of Prov. viii. or Wisd. vii. or of both, as some would have it, and its intent to shew the eternity, excellence, power, use, and desirableness of wisdom, it is so far in a new dress, as to differ in circumstances, and is not applicable altogether in the same way that those other descriptions are. Upon the whole, though I do not exclude any application that can be fairly made of this chapter to the Logos under any characters and relations, in which he stood to the Jews in the time of this writer, and which the Jews at that time may be supposed to have understood, or to have had any probable notions of, yet I must own, though it be a quite novel exposition, that there is a strong appearance that the principal thing represented in this chapter, under the personage and character of wisdom, is God's covenant with the Israelites, or the law of Moses. And though some things in the pro-

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gress of the description are justly enough applicable to the Son, as angel of the covenant, and to the Spirit, as dictator of it, yet the fixed object of the author seems to be the law, or covenant itself.

The reasons inducing me to think so are these:

1. The wisdom here extolled is confined to the Jewish nation as its proper inheritance; as taking up its rest with them, and with them alone, as distinguished from the rest of mankind, ver. 1, 2. 8. 10—12.

2. The author seems to say as much himself, at the end of wisdom's encomium, at ver. 23. which is a key to the whole, in my judgment: *All these things* (says he) *are the book of the covenant, even the law which Moses commanded,* &c. And when he adds immediately, *Faint not to be strong in the Lord,* &c. (ver. 24.) he seems only to paraphrase on the words חזק, or sometimes חזק ונתחזק which were commonly put at the end or foot of the copies of the law by the Jewish transcribers of it, and likewise are in all the printed editions.

3. All the other versions concur to this interpretation, *Hæc omnia liber vitæ,* &c. Vulgate. *Res istæ omnes scriptæ sunt in libro Testamenti Dei, Lege scilicet, quam præcepit nobis Moses hæreditariam,* &c. Arabic. *Hæc omnia in libro Fœderis Domini scripta sunt. Lex quam præcepit Moses— plena quasi flumen Phison sapientiâ,* &c. Syriac. Now how are these passages to be understood otherwise than that the books of Moses, the ספר תורה, or the Pentateuch, is, or contains the whole of the wisdom extolled in the foregoing description? This twenty-third verse, therefore, seems to me just such another explication of the foregoing prosopopœia, as that of St. Paul, in Gal. iv. 24. who, after representing the different states of Hagar and Sarah, resolves the allegory thus, Αὗται γάρ εἰσιν αἱ δύο διαθῆκαι; or that, Rom. vii. 9. which is a key likewise to the difficulties of that chapter.

So that as vii. Sap. Sol. wisdom is described as essential in God, and derivative in mankind in general, she is here described as essential indeed in him; but derivative in a peculiar manner by the law of Moses to the Israelites, as their proper inheritance or possession.

Thus much being premised, it will be easier to point out how the whole description lies in this view of its principal drift. But I would first observe, that I prefer the title Σοφίας Αἴνεσις, to the other, Αἴνεσις Σοφίας, because he introduces her as her own encomiast.

Ver. 1. *Wisdom shall praise herself.*] This she properly doth in a written law, by which the Spirit of God reveals his will or his knowledge to man.

Herself, ψυχὴν αὐτῆς. May not this be understood of the spirit of the law, as distinguished from the letter or body of it? Much hath been said of its spiritual sense, in which indeed its true wisdom lay.

And shall glory in the midst of her people.] What people could a Jewish writer suppose the peculium of wisdom, but those of his own nation? The law indeed could glory no where else but among them: but wisdom, in any other construction of it, might glory elsewhere, as well as among them.

Ver. 2. *In the congregation of the Most High shall she open her mouth.*] By Moses being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day; or, if we understand *Ecclesia,* or *Concilium,* of larger and more solemn assemblies at Jerusalem, the place may still be well interpreted of the law read and expounded in them. (See Deut. xxxi. 10, 11.) *And triumph before his power,* ἐναντι δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ. Syriac, *In medio exercituum ejus,* his hosts, *i. e.* congregation of Israelites; *Ab omnibus amicis ejus,* Arabic.

The Vulgate indeed hath it, *In conspectu virtutis ejus.* But then this is immediately explained into the same sense the other versions give; *viz.* In medio *populi exaltabitur.* In *plenitudine sanctâ admirabitur, et in multitudine electorum habebit laudem,* &c.

It is worth noting, however, that עז *robur,* δύναμις, doth also signify (taken without points) *congregari, coire;* and, after all, why may not עז signify the ark of the covenant, called otherwise *the ark of his strength?* Psal. cxxxii. 8. 2 Chron. vi. 41. Without doubt the law never triumphed so conspicuously, as in the presence of the ark at the passage over Jordan, the siege of Jericho, and on other occasions, whence it might be called ארגז עזו *the ark of his strength;* or, on more ordinary occasions, at the great assemblies of the tabernacle and temple, when all the congregations appeared before the Lord.

Ver. 3. *I came out of the mouth of the Most High.*] This, though generally understood of the almighty fiat, (see Bishop Bull's Defens. Fid. Nic. cap. 9.) yet is also true of the Logos, or angel of the covenant, who, as the Vulgate adds, was *primogenitus ante omnem creaturam.* True of the Holy Spirit, and with great propriety, from his being Πνεῦμα; but most literally true of the law given at Mount Sinai, *God spake these words and said.* And indeed all the law was delivered to Moses orally, *God spake to him face to face as a man speaketh to his friend,* Exod. xxxiii. 9—11. and elsewhere.

And covered the earth with a cloud.] *viz.* When God uttered the law, either at Mount Sinai, which was covered with thick clouds and darkness for forty days together, while the law was delivering to Moses, or afterward to Moses from the pillar of the cloud, from whence God always spake to him.

Ver. 4. *I dwelt in high places, and my throne (was* may as well be supplied as) *is in the cloudy pillar.*] True of the angel of the covenant, but true of the covenant itself too. The law was οὐρανόθεν, ministered by angels in the hands of a mediator. Not only the morality of it is eternal and immutable, but even the external apparatus of it had its *pattern in the mount;* which being the example and shadow, as St. Paul says, of heavenly things, the whole law of the tabernacle was exhibited in the mount.

And possibly ἐν ὑψηλοῖς κατεσκήνωσε, may relate principally to the Divine model, and be taken in this sense, *I pitched my tabernacle in the mount.*

My throne is in the cloudy pillar; or, with the cloudy pillar, *viz.* the ark of the testimony, wherein first *the two tables of stone, then the whole written law,* were deposited, over which, so deposited, the cloud rested or sat. It is expressly called Θρόνος by Josephus, agreeably to the Scripture expression of God's *sitting between the cherubims.* He also calls it ἅρμα, the *chariot,* from his *riding upon the cherubims:* and it is called in Scripture כבוד the *glory,* from the Schechinah residing over it.

It is true, it hath been much doubted whether the whole law, as well as the tables of the covenant, were included in the ark. But it is enough for the interpretation of this writer

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that the Jews held it was, *viz.* an entire copy of the Pentateuch, and an autograph of their lawgiver Moses himself.

Ver. 5. *I alone compassed the circuit of heaven.*] Γυρὸν οὐρανοῦ ἐκύκλωσα μόνη. It is said of Solomon, (Wisd. vii.) that God granted him *the certain knowledge of the alterations of the turning* [*of the sun*], *the change of seasons, the circuit of the years, and the positions of the stars:* so here it is said of the writings of Moses, with greater truth, that the true knowledge of the creation, course, or revolution of the heavenly bodies, for days and for nights, for months, and seasons, and years, was first delivered and explained in them; and in them only, with any authority and certainty.

The *circuit* here, Γῦρον, and *the turning* in Wisd. vii. 18. was most probably in the original of both places עש an Arabic root for *circuivit, gyravit,* which, though rendered in Job ix. 9. and xxxviii. 32. *arcturus,* probably means no more than the revolutions of the heavens for the distinctions of times and seasons, according to Moses's account.

And walked in the bottom of the deep.] I alone discovered the nature and uses of the great abyss; *viz.* when it was covered with darkness, (Gen. i. 2.) when its waters were separated, (ver. 6.) when the fountains of it were broken up. (Gen. vii. 11.)

Ver. 6. *In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth, and in every people and nation, I got a possession.*] I gained the first knowledge, and gave the only authentic account by revelation, of the formation of seas and dry land, of the prolific qualities of both; of the overwhelming the earth by the waters at the general deluge; of all the nations and generations of men in succession, from the creation to the dispersion of them throughout the earth. Whatever knowledge is extant of these things is collected together, and is only to be found originally in the ספר תורה, the only true source and foundation both of natural philosophy and history of the knowledge of things and men.

This perhaps may look forced: but what interpretation can be given that will not equally look so? To say, for instance, of the Logos, the Creator himself, that *he got a possession in his works* (κτάσθαι is the word), that he did *acquirere,* vel *comparare,* in all these things, which were originally and naturally *his own,* seems as harsh. The author of the book of Wisdom allows to Solomon's borrowed character all which is here contended for, the law in the borrowed character of *wisdom.* Nor is it improper to interpret all that the writer ascribes there to the personage of Solomon, of sacred history, or the law, or Pentateuch in particular. (See Com. on Wisd. vii.) It may therefore be as justly applied to and predicated of the one as the other.

Ver. 7. *With all these things I sought rest.*] Rich with all this treasure of recondite knowledge, I saw where to deposit, preserve, and improve my gains, *and in whose inheritance I should abide;* viz. *I sought in whose,* &c. without an interrogation point. Κληρονομία τινὸς is a Hebraism, where the *cujus* expressed by מי is the *suffix;* as ובגר למי *et in sorte cujus,* viz. *in cujus sorte.*

Ver. 8. *So the Creator of all things* (Κτίστης in the proper sense of *creation,* or *Dominus,* as the Syr. and Arab. have it) *gave me commandment, and he that made me* (or *who instituted me,* κτίσας με; so κτίζειν τέχνην, *artem instituere,* so *jura condere*) *caused my tabernacle to rest, and said, Let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thine inheritance in Israel.*] Can this be said properly of wisdom in any other sense than in that above given?

Ver. 9. *He created me from the beginning before the world.*] The decalogue, and all the purely moral precepts of the law, are everlasting commandments. God ordained them from the beginning, and established them as the immutable eternal rules of righteousness. And this seems to me to be that branch of true wisdom, of which *the root hath never been revealed;* (i. 6.) not farther at least than that it *is in* and *from God:* and that this is so, appears from men's disputing about the true foundation of morality, even to this very day.

Ἔκτισε is not well rendered here by *created,* which can in no proper sense be applied either to wisdom, the Logos, or Holy Spirit, or any thing uncreate. The same Greek word is found in Prov. viii. 22. to be the rendering of קנני *he possessed me.* By which discovery St. Jerome rescued the strongest weapon the Arians fought with out of their hands. And therefore, if we interpret this present text of the Logos, we must either presume that the same word was the original here that is in the Hebrew, *Proverbs,* or at least some other word not properly signifying, or not only signifying *creation.*

In the first chapter of this book κτίζω is twice used in speaking of wisdom, yet in neither place, to my apprehension, in the sense of *creating,* as our translators have rendered it.

The first place is this, Προτέρα πάντων ἔκτισται Σοφία, which probably means no more than Πρωτεύει ἐν πᾶσι, she is preferable to all things in point of excellence.—Primacy is *ordained* to her, she is *appointed* or *constituted* first of things. It is true the Arabic gives it, *Plus omnibus rebus multiplicata est sapientia.* The Syriac, *Omnibus his abundantior est sapientia.* Hence I conjecture the original word might be יתר which signifies both *excellentem effecit* (as in Gen. xlix. 4.) and *abundantem effecit,* (as in Exod. xxxvi. 7.) by which means all the versions may be accounted for.

Again, i. 9. *He created her,* Αὐτὸς ἔκτισεν αὐτὴν· Syriac, *patefecit.* Arabic, *retexit eam.* Probably the Hebrew gave it ערה, which signifies both *nudari,* to answer the two last-named versions, and *effundi* for the Greek ἔκτισεν; *viz.* he *produced, brought forth, exhibited* her, as a law to his creatures. And in this sense I take ἔκτισε in the text in hand; *viz.* he exhibited the laws of morality, which were eternally in his own mind, as the public rule of his own, and all his creatures' actions.

And I shall never fail.] Though this was not true of the ceremonial law, as it was of the moral precepts, yet the Jews thought both eternal, and to abide for ever.

Ver. 10. *In his holy tabernacle I served before him.*] As having appointed all the service to be performed in it, and being fulfilled in the punctual observance of the same. Λατρεία, or *the acceptable service,* (Rom. ix. 4.) as well as νομοθεσία, was only among the Jews. And the public service in the place where God should choose, containing the laws of sacrifice, expiation, &c. was the principal branch of the ritual law (and in reality fuller of wisdom than the Jews imagined); and in this text, by a common mode of speech, the law is said *to do,* what he who duly executes it *doth.*

And so was I established in Sion.] Fixed there at last, as being the appointed seat of worship. If the interpreta-

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tion of λειτουργεῖν here appears something strained, what construction is there that will suit this place that is not so?

The reference in the margin to Exod. xxxi. 3. sends us to the divinely gifted operators that made the tabernacle. And the same gift may be said or supposed to be restored and exercised more conspicuously at the building of the temple of Solomon, and *so to be established in Sion.* But though I readily admit this kind of wisdom to be a part of the description vii. Sap. Sol. yet how such a talent in workmanship can be said to serve λειτουργεῖν, *before him,* I cannot readily see. As I take it, the spirit of wisdom given to the workers of the tabernacle served only the tabernacle itself, to make it the perfect copy of the pattern in the mount, and therefore was necessarily inspired for that end, and has no just relation to the subject that we are now upon.

Neither do I see how we can suppose the Logos λειτουργεῖν; for he is rather the person to whom the service was made, as being supposed the object of worship in the Schechinah. I greatly mistake, if the tabernacle and first temple-service was not all supposed addressed to the Divine Glory resident there; and therefore the service itself could not be performed, but only in that place where the *visible Presence* dwelt, which likewise made the Jews pray towards the temple from all quarters of the world. I say, if the Logos was in the pillar of cloud and glory, the service of the tabernacle cannot be ascribed to him as agent, but as recipient.

Ver. 11. *Likewise in the beloved city he gave me rest.*] When Solomon dedicated his temple, he said, *Arise, O God, into thy resting-place, thou and the ark of thy strength.* The written law, after many peregrinations and removes, rested at Jerusalem; there also the service was established without removal to any other place, *And in Jerusalem was my power; imperium meum,* Syriac and Arabic. There the law reigned, and there only, as in its proper capital; with regard to God it served, it ministered; with regard to men, it reigned.

Ver. 12. *And I took root in an honourable people.*] Δεδοξασμένῳ, a people honoured with God's visible residence among them, by the Schechinah, ὧν ἡ δόξα. (Rom. ix.)

Even in the portion of the Lord's inheritance.] True of the people, and true of their land, Canaan, in that and in them the law took root, and no where else; being the national religion of no country or people but their own. I shall only add, that from this figure of *taking root* in the above verse, the author proceeds poetically in wisdom's personage, to compare her to the most stately trees, bearing choicest fruits; which still bears a better construction from the law and books of Moses, than from any thing else that occurs to me at present. Ver. 20. doth particularly accord with what the Psalmist writes of the תורה. (Psal. xix. 7—11.)

Ver. 15. *Like aspalathus.*] The Vulgate translates it, *balsamum aromatizans,* i. e. *balm;* but it is not in the Greek text, which reads in many copies, ὡς πάλαθος ἀρωμάτων, i. e. *as a collection of spices;* one cannot well determine what ἀσπάλαθος is, or what spicy shrub it means. The author seems to allude to the different sorts of perfumes mentioned Exod. xxx. 34. when he says, *I gave a sweet smell like cinnamon and aspalathus, and I yielded a pleasant odour like the best myrrh.* This probably respects the composition of the first perfume mentioned there, which was made of myrrh, cinnamon, the aromatic cane, and cassia, mixed with oil. The Vulgate speaks here of balm and of storax only; but the Greek has neither of these, but mentions in general a collection of spices. The words which follow, *I have perfumed my house like galbanum, onyx, and stacte, and as the drop of frankincense which fell of itself,* according to the Vulgate rendering, respects the composition of the second perfume. The Greek has it, *As the fume of the frankincense which is burnt in the tabernacle.* It is certain, the incense, or second sort, was compounded of all these spices, and this perfume was to be used by burning it upon the altar, which the Greek version and Vulgate often call the altar of perfumes, or of *thumiama.* The Vulgate here calls that *ungula,* which is called *onyx* in Exodus, and what is there called *stacte* is here called *gutta.* For *stacte* are those drops of myrrh which come naturally from the tree without cutting it; so that both these words signify the same thing. (See Lamy's Appar. Bibl. vol. ii. p. 283.)

Ver. 18. *I am the mother of fair love, and fear, and knowledge, and holy hope: I therefore being eternal am given to all my children which are named of him.*] This is not in the Alex. MS. or Vatican, nor in the oriental versions. Such copies as have it vary greatly, and in the most correct it is much perplexed. From whence the latter part, as it stands in the Vulgate, came, does not appear, as it is uncertain what copy they followed, and of what authority that copy was; but it is remarkable that St. Cyprian is said by Fl. Nob. to have one half of it. The sense of the former part of the verse seems to be, Those that possess me are loved of God, they shall be filled with his love and fear, and with the knowledge of his truths and mysteries, and have the pleasing hope of being happy with him, and enjoying him perfectly. As to the latter part, which indeed seems corrupt, Hœschelius and Grabe agree with our translators. Grotius conjectures the true reading to be, δίδωμι δὲ σύμπασι τοῖς τέκνοις μου ἀεὶ γενέσθαι, ἐκλεγομένοις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, *I give to all my children, who are his elect, immortality.* Calmet reads, with a slight alteration, δίδωμι δὲ σύμπασι τοῖς τέκνοις μου ἀεὶ γενέσθαι, τοῖς λεγομένοις ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, sc. καρποῦ, (ver. 17.) connecting it with the foregoing verse to the following sense:—I am as the vine, whose flowers produce rich and precious fruit, and give immortality to all my children, who gather of this fruit; alluding to the tree of life planted in Paradise. And then it follows very naturally, ver. 19. *Come unto me all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my fruit.*

Ver. 20. *For my memorial is sweeter than honey, and mine inheritance than the honeycomb.*] Ὑπὲρ μέλιτος κηροῦ. Other copies have κύρου, κλήρου, κηρίου, and some κυρίου. Bochart conjectures the true reading to be in one word, μελικήρου, and in this sense μελίκηρον, *favus,* occurs in Theocritus,

Ἐκ στομάτων δὲ
Ἐρρέεί μοι φωνὰ γλυκερωτέρα ἢ μελικήρω. (Idyll. 20.)

And possibly the son of Sirach might borrow the word from him, for he lived not many years after him, and both wrote in Egypt. (Hieroz. lib. iv. cap. 12.) The Syriac and Arabic, which have *favum* only, favour this conjecture. The rendering would be better and clearer, *The remembrance of me is sweeter than honey, and the possession of me*

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than the honeycomb. And thus Calmet, *Il est plus doux de se souvenir de moi, et de me posseder, que de goûter le miel le plus delicieux.* The pleasures of wisdom are chaste and innocent, far above the surfeiting and guilty ones which the world offers, which have a sting accompanying their sweetness. The Scriptures, to recommend the study of the law, and the practice of the commandments of God, use the same comparison, Psal. xix. 11. cxix. 103.

Ver. 21. *They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty.*] The entertainment arising from wisdom is often set forth under the notion of a feast; whereby is expressed the high satisfaction, joy, and pleasure, which the principles of wisdom and virtue fill the heart with. Its entertainment is such, that a most plentiful provision is made for all hungry and thirsty souls, who shall find life, vigour, strength, and joy, communicated to them from her sacred instructions, as from a perpetual spring; and the appetite for her delicacies shall be continually renewing, growing, and increasing upon them. The following is a beautiful contrast, and truly states the difference: "Hoc distare inter delicias corporis et cordis solet, quod corporales deliciæ, cum non habentur, grave in se desiderium accendunt; cum vero avide eduntur, comedentem protinus in fastidium per satietatem vertunt. At contra spirituales deliciæ cum non habentur, in fastidio sunt; cum vero habentur, in desiderio: tantoque amplius a comedente esuriuntur, quanto et ab esuriente amplius comeduntur. In illis appetitus placet, experientia displicet; in istis appetitus vilis, et experientia magis placet: in illis appetitus saturitatem, saturitas fastidium generat; in istis autem appetitus saturitatem, saturitas appetitum parit. Augent enim spirituales deliciæ desiderium in mente, dum satiant." (Greg. Hom. 36. in Evang.) The metaphor of eating and drinking, applied to the pursuit of wisdom, is very familiar to the eastern nations, and frequent in the Jewish writings. Hence Philo represents wisdom, prudence, virtue, &c. as the food of the soul, or that spiritual meat and drink which nourish to life eternal. In Scripture too it often occurs. (See Psal. xlii. 3. Prov. ix. 5. Isa. lv. 1, 2. Matt. v. 6. John vi. 27. 35.)

Ver. 22. *He that obeyeth me shall never be confounded; and they that work by me shall not do amiss.*] The Vulgate renders, *Qui audit me, non confundetur,* following a faulty copy which had ὁ ἐπακούων μου. Οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι ἐν ἐμοὶ would be better rendered, *They that labour for me,* or *to obtain me, shall not miscarry and lose their labour,* οὐχ ἁμαρτήσουσι, or *shall not sin; i. e.* fall into any wilful and deliberate sins, or shall not err from God's commandments through the light which wisdom holds forth. The verses which follow from hence are not part of wisdom's speech or eulogy, but spoken by the author as from himself.

Ver. 25. *He filleth all things with his wisdom, as Phison.*] Phison, according to the mystical theology of the Jews, is constantly interpreted *wisdom.* It is derived from a radix, which signifies *to fill, to increase, to spread, and diffuse itself as from a centre;* for most of the Hebrew lexicographers agree in deriving it, either from the verb פּוּשׁ, which signifies *to run out, to be full,* or *increase;* or from פִּשַּׁח, which signifies *to spread itself;* because tides are so violent and so high at the end of the Persian Gulf, that trenches were not a sufficient defence against their irruptions into the neighbouring grounds, so that all that coast is full of lakes, marshy places, and sands, as Strabo observes, (lib. xvi.) Nothing, therefore, could be more proper than an allusion to this river Pison, Gen. ii. 11. which implies overflowing in its very name. (See xxi. 13.)

Ver. 26. *As Jordan in the time of harvest.*] The river Jordan was remarkable for overflowing all its banks annually about the time of the barley-harvest. (See Josh. iii. 15.) It was occasioned probably by the melting of the snow of Lebanon, and the neighbouring mountains. This happened about March, or in the first month, as it is expressed, 1 Chron. xii. 15. At present it has lost its ancient greatness, whether it be because the rapidity of its current hath worked its channel deeper than it was formerly, or because its waters are diverted some other way. Mr. Maundrell says, he could discern no sign or probability of such overflowing when he was at it, which was the 30th of March, and the proper time for it; and that the river was so far from overflowing, that it ran at least two yards below the brink of its channel. (Journey from Aleppo, p. 82.) By Geon in the next verse, we are to understand the Nile, the overflowing of which rendered Egypt exceedingly fruitful; and by the time of vintage, the gathering in of the summer fruits, as those of the vine and olive; and the word harvest, mentioned just before, is sometimes taken in the same extensive sense, to include these as well as corn.

Ver. 30. *I also came out as a brook from a river, and as a conduit into a garden.* Ver. 31. *I said, I will water my best garden—And, lo, my brook became a river, and my river became a sea.*] If this be a continuation of wisdom's speech, as Calmet supposes, it will rather confirm the sense given in the former part of the chapter, for thus she proceeds:—I am a never-failing source, a fountain of living waters: I am an emanation from, or as one of the four rivers which watered Paradise; as their streams enriched the ground, and made it fruitful, the same I do likewise in the hearts of men. I distribute my influence universally, and am assisting to all by the light of nature; but my favour is bestowed most liberally to my chosen in Judea, to whom I vouchsafed a more particular knowledge of my laws. Jerusalem is my garden and my fruitful field, *my vineyard is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah my pleasant plant;* (Isa. v. 7.) from thence my waters flowed to the rest of the world, (Isa. ii. 3.) which, increasing continually in their course, at length became a great sea, spreading itself far and wide.

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *IN three things I was beautified, and stood up beautiful both before God and men.*] Rather, *I was delighted and pleased with them;* for so the Greek will admit, and the other versions render. What follows next, *and stood up beautiful both before God and man,* is countenanced by none of the versions, is very obscure, and scarce intelligible. The present Greek text seems to be faulty here; probably the true reading is, καὶ ἔστιν ὡραία, which the Vulgate seems to have followed, *In tribus placitum est spiritui meo, quæ sunt probata coram Deo et hominibus;* i. e. *Three things I delighted in and found worthy of my esteem, and they are agreeable to and approved of both by God and men;* or, as Coverdale has it, *which be also allowed before God and men.* And thus the Syriac and Arabic take it.

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A man and a wife that agree together.] Συμπεριφερόμενοι, i. e. *equally yoked.* Hence marriage is called *conjugium* (see Prov. xi. 29.) in the LXX. where συμπεριφερόμενοι is so used. The metaphor is taken from drawing; for when two persons meet together alike in their tempers and behaviour, they are then rightly paired, ἰσοφόροι, *i. e.* ἴσως φέροντες, according to the scholiast on Homer. Such as disagree, and through a contrariety of inclinations draw different ways, are, in the language of the apostle, ἑτεροζυγοῦντες, (2 Cor. vi. 14.) and an evil wife is by our author, pursuing the same comparison, called, *a yoke shaken to and fro*, xxvi. 7. The Syriac and Arabic rendering of ver. 8. of this chapter, describes a happy couple, by not drawing *aratrum cum bove et asino simul.* A very strong and particular expression, referring to Deut. xx. 10. which forbids the ploughing with an ox and an ass, or the joining together two creatures so different in their tempers, motions, and strength, to draw in the same yoke. Homer agrees exactly with this writer when he says,

—— Οὐ μὲν γὰρ τοῦγε κρεῖσσον καὶ ἄρειον,
Ἢ ὅθ' ὁμοφρονέοντε νοήμασι οἶκον ἔχητον
Ἀνὴρ ἠδὲ γυνή. (Odyss. vi.)

Ver. 2. *A rich man that is a liar.*] Poverty often puts men upon lying, and some of the ancients say it is a vice peculiar to slaves; what should then entice a rich man to be guilty of it, but a base soul, or a long-contracted habit? Rich men are often lavish of their large promises, and think no more of them afterward, which is particularly true of one that is avaricious and covetous, and values his money more than his credit or honour.

An old adulterer that doteth.] Adultery in extreme old age is the more scandalous, as it disgraces what is so venerable in itself, and is a bad example to the younger sort. Cicero has the like sentiment: "Cum omni ætati fœda sit libido, tum senectuti multo fœdissima. Sin autem libidini intemperantia accesserit, duplex malum est; quod et ipsa senectus concipit dedecus, et facit adolescentium impudentiorem intemperantiam." (Lib. i. de Offic.) A fond old man is a bad character, but a vicious one is much worse. Age generally brings prudence and a maturity of judgment, and either lessens or extinguishes the fire of impure lust. An old man therefore that is given to uncleanness and criminal passions, shews, that his past life has been irregular and mispent, and that he has made an ill use of his reason. The attempt therefore upon Susannah by the two ancients of the people, was the more scandalous and flagrant, from their station and character. But may not this be a false reading; for there is no mention of an *old adulterer* in any of the versions; and why an old adulterer particularly? Is not an adulterer at all times to be abhorred and hated; and a young man that is so inclined to be more dreaded, as being more dangerous, though the other be more ridiculous? I think the true reading is, γέροντα μῶρον; i. e. *a silly old man,* who acts imprudently or lightly, who might have been expected through a long term of life to have gained much prudence and experience. This conjecture is confirmed by the Vulgate, and Syriac, and Arabic versions, which have, *senex fatuus et insensatus;* and by the context very strongly.

Ver. 3. *If thou hast gathered nothing in thy youth, how canst thou find any thing in thine age?*] Some understand this as an advice to lay up riches in the time of youth, which is the most proper season, as the body is then in the greatest vigour; but it seems better to understand it of seeking after wisdom, and laying up a stock of useful knowledge early in life, that a man may not be greatly deficient, or want it in his old age, when he will have great occasion for it, and it will be too late to obtain it. And thus the oriental version, *Si in juventute tua sapientiam non congessisti, quomodo reperies eam in senectute tua?* The like advice Bias the philosopher gives, ἐφόδιον ἀπὸ νεότητος εἰς γῆρας ἀναλάμβανε σοφίαν . . . βεβαιότερον γὰρ τοῦτο τῶν ἄλλων κτημάτων. (Ap. Laert.) Γέροντες in the following verses does not signify old men strictly so called, but is to be taken as *senatus* among the Latins, and πρεσβύτεροι sometimes by the Greeks, which are rather terms of dignity, than real marks of age. This seems necessary to avoid tautology, and is confirmed by the ancient versions. The Syriac has, *Quam decens est magnatibus sapientia, est honestis sensus atque consilium.* And the Arabic, *Quàm pulchra est sapientia nobilibus, et honoratis ratio ac judicium?* Junius likewise understands it of dignified persons, or such as are in authority.

Ver. 7. *There be nine things which I have judged in mine heart to be happy, and the tenth I will utter with my tongue.*] The very learned Bishop Chandler says, (Vindication of Christianity, p. 80.) that there is a verse, or a sentence at least, wanting in all the Greek copies, as the context manifestly shews; for whereas ten particulars are referred to by the wise man, neither the Greek, Latin, nor English, seems to contain more than nine: but as the Latin and Greek mention different particulars, there is a greater probability by that means of making out the number. For if we add with the Vulgate, *Beatus ille, qui invenit amicum verum,* the whole will be complete; nor can we pitch upon any particular as a more necessary ingredient to happiness, nor is any one more commended by our author in various parts of this book; or we may add from the Syriac, *Beatus vir, quem non fregit paupertas,* to supply the defect. Badwell calls the fear of the Lord, the tenth; and Grotius says, the love of the Lord must be the particular wanting, unless prudence and a friend (ver. 9.) be both taken in. But, not to insist that the fear and love of God were not so nicely distinguished in the Old Testament times, as by St. John in his First Epistle; since Syriac and Arabic, as well as Complut. have this distinction here: it may however be observed, that after saying, ver. 10. there is none above him that feareth the Lord, it seems strange (ver. 11.) to make the love of the Lord above all things, meaning somewhat different from his fear. And it seems yet stranger to do this without some particle of connexion. Our translation indeed adds *but,* which should be put in italics; the doing this is much neglected in the apocryphal books.

And he that liveth to see the fall of his enemy.] This is according to the narrowness of the Jewish notions. The Jews thought hatred and revenge were permitted, or however tolerated, under that dispensation; (see Macc. v. 43.) but this was an abuse and corruption of the law. When we read of saints under it wishing for or rejoicing over the fall of their enemies, or the death of the wicked, or uttering imprecations against them, this is not to be resolved into any principle of revenge or rancour against them, but proceeds rather from a commendable zeal, and a thirst for

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God's glory, which is displayed by such instances of his justice.

Ver. 11. *The love of the Lord passeth all things for illumination.*] *i. e.* He that desires to enter farthest into the secrets of wisdom, and to make greater progress in the school of knowledge and virtue, will sooner learn and improve by the love of God, than by his own study or inquiry; God's blessing will best forward his endeavours, and his obedience is the most promising means of illumination. To the same purpose is that passage, xxi. 11. *He that keepeth the law of the Lord, getteth the understanding thereof:* and that of Solomon, *They that seek the Lord understand all things.* (Prov. xxviii. 5. see Psal. cxix. 100. Wisd. i. 4.) And our Saviour assures us, that if *any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.* (John vii. 17. viii. 31, 32.) Some make the sense to be, that the love of God excels all the former instances of happiness, and is more glorious than any of them; and thus the Tigurine version, *Religio Domini claritate superat omnia.* Without it, the rest lose their perfection; neither dutiful children, a prudent wife, a sincere friend, nor even wisdom itself, can make a man happy, but he that hath it is rather an angel than a man. St. Paul has the like eulogium upon charity, or the love of God, 1 Cor. xiii. Drusius and some others think the words εἰς φωτισμὸν to be an interpolation; and indeed they are not in some Greek copies, nor in the Vulgate. The following verse too is wanting in many editions; the sense of which seems to be, The fear of the Lord is ἀρχὴ, the cause or principle of the love of him, and faith is the cause of a holy trust and confidence in him.

Ver. 13. *Give me any plague but the plague of the heart; and any wickedness but the wickedness of a woman.*] The Greek is elliptical here, which our translators have supplied. We may insert εὐδοκῶ from ver. 16. or some such verb; as Calmet, Grotius, and Junius, help this defect. The sense of the first part is like that of Solomon, *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?* (Prov. xviii. 14.) This author hath been condemned for his moroseness to children, and his reflections upon the female sex; as to the former, I have shewn that his precepts of correction are to be taken in a restrained sense; and with respect to the latter, Jansenius and other writers observe, that he is no professed enemy to the sex, nor intends any reflection upon them in general, as being the most beautiful part of the species, and designed, in their formation, as helpmeets and comforts to man. He fails not to give merit its due praise, and where an opportunity offers, as in the beginning of the next chapter, of extolling a virtuous and deserving woman, he does it in terms of the highest respect. What is said to the disadvantage of them in this and the next chapter, is only to expose the failings of some few degenerate and perverse ones, but with a design to recommend, by the contrast, the worthier part of the sex the more. And though he may not seem quite complaisant, his intention is honest and commendable; *viz.* to instruct youth what circumspection and prudence are necessary in the choice of a wife, and the conduct to be observed to prevent feuds and differences in the married state. Phocylides, among the fragments which are preserved, has some very remarkable verses upon the sex. What is particular and worth observing is, that he derives their good and ill qualities from some animals which partake of them, and whom in that respect they resemble. I shall mention only the two following:

Ἡ δὲ κυνὸς χαλεπή τε καὶ ἄγριος· ἡ δὲ μελίσσης,
Οἰκονόμος τ' ἀγαθὴ, καὶ ἐπίσταται ἐργάζεσθαι.

i. e. She that is cross and snarling hath something of the nature and temper of the dog; but the good housewife, the prudent economist, the careful manager, resembles the laborious bee, with her collection of sweets.

Ver. 14. *And any affliction but the affliction from them that hate me, and any revenge but the revenge of enemies.*] The sense of the whole seems to be,—I would have any affliction or misfortune rather than that which my enemy wishes me. Or, I will compound for any suffering so my enemy knows nothing of it, and has not the ill-natured pleasure of triumphing over me in it, and rejoicing at what has happened to me: for this reason it is said of Saul's death, *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.* (2 Sam. i. 20.) A piece of ill news an enemy hugs inwardly, and would purchase at any rate, "Hoc Ithacus velit, et magno mercentur Atridæ." Or the sense may be that of holy David, *Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies,* which often made a part of his prayer. In the next verse it is said, *There is no wrath above the wrath of an enemy,* ὑπὲρ θυμοῦ ἐχθροῦ, which differs from the former; for it seems more agreeable to the context to read, There is no wrath above the wrath of a woman, or at least above the wrath of a she-enemy. Accordingly the Syriac renders, *Non est inimicitia amarior ea quæ mulieris est.* And St. Chrysostom reads in like manner. And so the Vulgate has it, and the margin of the Geneva Bible. Juvenal confirms the observation, "Vindicta Nemo magis gaudet, quam fœmina." (Sat. xiii.)

Ver. 15. *There is no head above the head of a serpent.*] The Hebrew word ראש principally signifies the head, and is as properly used for poison, because the venom of those pernicious creatures, asps, vipers, and serpents, lies chiefly in their head and teeth. Thus Hosea x. 4. what our version renders *hemlock,* is ראש in the Hebrew. The Interlinear version has here indeed *caput;* but Pagnin has explained it well, by inserting *venenum* in the margin. For what shall we understand by *caput,* or a head simply, except something be understood or supplied, as in the Chaldee paraphrase it is, in which, both in this place and some others, the reading is—As the head of hurtful serpents, denoting thereby either poison, or some noxious poisonous thing. As ראש doth primarily signify a head, so it is no less manifest that it is often used, written in the same manner, for poison itself, probably deduced from the first signification, as the serpent's poison is in its head. There are many instances in which it is used in such a sense, as Deut. xxix. 18. *A root that beareth gall and wormwood,* ראש ולענה, *i. e.* according to the margin, *a poisonous herb.* The like occurs Deut. xxxii. 32. and ראש פתנים ver. 33. is expressly translated, *venom of serpents;* and so Jer. viii. 14. מי ראש *water of gall,* is, in the margin, poison, and Amos vi. 12. *Ye have turned judgment,* לראש *in venenum,* according to the Interlinear version: see Jer. ix. 15. xxxiii. 15. Lam. iii. 5. 19. in all which places, it is manifest, that ראש signifies something distinct from head, though Ar. Montanus, in some of them, gives no plain sense or mean-

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ing. But though, according to the scope of the place where it occurs, and as the words with which it is joined suggest, it has different significations, yet for the most part they tend to, or are derived from, one notion; *viz.* poison, and the qualities of noxiousness and bitterness usually ascribed to it. And thus Calmet understands this place, and Bochart, Hieroz. lib. i. cap. 28. and Pocock, in Hos. tom. ii. Θυμὸς too is often taken in the sense of poison. (See not. on Wisd. xvi. 5.)

Ver. 16. *I had rather dwell with a lion and a dragon, than to keep house with a wicked woman.*] After what the Scripture has informed us of Eve, the first woman, by whom sin entered into the world; of Potiphar's wife, who tempted the chastity of Joseph, and because she could not seduce him, was the occasion of his being cast into prison; of Delilah, who was the cause of Samson's death; of Solomon's fall, through the power of beauty; of Jezebel, who took off righteous Naboth; of Athaliah, who put to death the whole royal race of Judah, to place herself upon the throne; of Job's wife, who was such a scourge to him, and herself the greatest of his plagues and misfortunes; and many others known and infamous in sacred and profane history, for their resentment and cruelty, which Calmet furnishes us with,—one wonders the less at what the author here says against the sex, I should rather say, the bad and abandoned part of it, for it is of these only he is to be understood. Though he seems concerned at the fall and misconduct of part of a species, lovely in itself, and expresses himself in terms of sharpness and reproach, where a serpent lies concealed under an angel's face, yet let it be remembered for his vindication, that some of the ancient poets far exceed him in their invectives, and have as odious comparisons, but I shall not retail their venom, as Grotius does.

Ver. 17. *The wickedness of a woman changeth her face.*] As a good conscience gives life and vigour to the body, and has that pleasing satisfaction going along with it, as to display itself even in the face of a good man, as was particularly verified in the glory of Moses's countenance, and the angelic face of St. Stephen, so inward guilt is gloomy and melancholy, and gives a sort of horror and deadness to the countenance; and so strong is the impression, that one may sometimes read guilt in a person's face. Calmet understands this of a churlish, passionate woman in particular, whose anger appears in her face, and spoils and disfigures her countenance, and when it comes to any outrageous excess gives her a resemblance to one of the furies. And indeed our translators do render πονηρία, the word here used, *churlishness*, xlii. 14.

And darkeneth her countenance like sackcloth.] Ὡς σάκκος. The Syriac and Arabic versions apply this, and indeed the whole verse, to the unhappy husband of such a woman, and make the change and gloominess to appear in his countenance, who from the relation that is betwixt them cannot help being greatly concerned for her misconduct, and betraying uneasiness in his looks at her behaviour: *Malæ mulieris improbitas pallidam reddit faciem mariti, eamque nigram efficit, quasi nigredinem Cilicii.* Besides this, which seems to suit best with the husband's mournful countenance, there is another simile in the margin, as a *bear*, ὡς ἄρκτος, which Bochart prefers, (Hieroz. lib. iii. cap. 9.) and thinks the other to be formed from; and that the sullenness and sternness of look in one out of temper, is well expressed by the παναμείδητον πρόσωπον of a bear. Both these readings have their advocates, and are supported by the authority of good copies; and it is very observable and particular, that the Vulgate and Jerome's Bible have both these comparisons together, *Obcæcabit vultum tanquam ursus, et tanquam saccum ostendet.*

Ver. 18. *Her husband shall sit among his neighbours.*] Ἀναπεσεῖται. If we understand this in the sense of *discumbere*, or sitting at table, the sense then is, That her husband shall be continually uneasy, even in places and among company where he might expect to have been agreeably entertained and merry; or perhaps a better sense may be, Her husband, ἀναπεσεῖται, *animo concidet*, shall appear dejected among his neighbours and acquaintance: and thus the Vulgate, *In medio proximorum ejus ingemuit vir ejus.*

And when he heareth it, shall sigh bitterly.] I suppose the sense of our translators is, When her husband heareth what is said of his wife, and the complaints made against her, *entendant ce qu'on dit de sa femme*, says Calmet, it will be a great grief and concern to him, and he will sigh bitterly; which seems much more proper than *suspirabit modicum* in the Vulgate, which arose from a corrupt copy, which had μικρὰ, and probably was inserted from the beginning of the next verse. The Syriac and Arabic render, *invitus longa trahit suspiria*, from a copy which had ἀκούσιος, instead of ἀκούσας, which Camerarius also follows. This reading too is capable of a good sense; *viz.* though her husband in company would gladly conceal his grief, for fear of being taken notice of, or perhaps laughed at, which is the way of the world, yet his sighs break from him unwillingly, when he perceives them not, and steal from him unawares. And thus the Geneva version, *Because of her he sigheth sore, or he beware.*

Ver. 19. *All wickedness is but little to the wickedness of a woman; let the portion of a sinner fall upon her.*] See xlii. 13, 14. and particularly Eccles. vii. 2. 8. where Solomon, speaking on this subject, says, *One (good) man among a thousand, but a woman among all these have I not found.* Which a learned writer well observes, is not to be looked upon as the just character of women in general in all ages and countries, but of such loose ones as Solomon was once acquainted with, or some of that stamp in that and the neighbouring nations. (Bishop Patrick, in loc.) The sense of the latter part is, Let a woman of such bad qualities fall to the share of a sinner; for one cannot wish a greater plague to any man, even an enemy, than a worthless and profligate woman. And thus Calmet, *Qu'elle tombe en partage au pecheur*, and Junius, *Sorte peccator accidat illi;* which seems also the sense of the Vulgate. Such wishes were not unusual; there is an instance of the like in Virgil:—

> " Dii meliora piis, erroremque hostibus illum!"
> (Georg. lib. iii.)

This sense seems confirmed from xxvi. 23. *A wicked woman is given as a portion to a wicked man: but a godly woman is given to him that feareth the Lord.* To which that of Solomon is parallel: *The woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands, I find more bitter than death: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.* (Eccles. vii. 26.) The sense, according to some is: May God deal with her as the greatest of

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sinners! and, according to others, May God give her such a husband, as may either tame or reform her!

Ver. 20. *As the climbing of a sandy way is to the feet of the aged, so is a wife full of words to a quiet man.*] *i. e.* She is a constant clog and plague to him. Matrimony hath formerly been the common-place for raillery, as well as now. Ovid and Juvenal make very free with it; the latter takes a more than poetical licence, when he makes all matches unhappy, and wrangling to be the entertainment of even the marriage bed:

> "Semper habet lites, alternaque jurgia lectus
> In quo nupta jacet." (Sat. vi.)

This probably is true, where a person has the misfortune of a scold, as the margin here has it, for his partner; one who will fill his house with rage and clamour, and his bed with cares and restlessness; and especially if she has a submissive and tame husband, she will be the more insolent and imperious, she will take advantage of his meekness to make herself absolute, and her husband ridiculous. But a loving and silent woman, (xxvi. 14.) *i. e.* one who knows how to guide her words with discretion, is a gift that cometh of the Lord; her character is amiable, and her person desirable. She will not cross her husband's inclinations through perverseness, nor set up her own through haughtiness. The more easy and obliging he is, the greater reason does she give him to continue so. Between such a pair all things go on smoothly, without any rubs or reproaches, and the happiness in Paradise seems again revived.

Ver. 21. *Stumble not at the beauty of a woman.*] Some understand it thus: Cast not thyself down at the feet of a beautiful woman, being captivated with her charms; and then the advice will be like that ix. 8. *Turn away thine eye from a beautiful woman, for many have been deceived by the beauty of a woman, for herewith love is kindled as a fire.* Or the meaning may be like that in ver. 5. *Gaze not on a maid, that thou fall not by those things that are precious in her.* If, with the Syriac and Arabic versions, we understand it of an evil and loose woman, it will then be the same with ver. 6. *Give not thy soul unto harlots, that thou lose not thine inheritance.*

And desire her not for pleasure.] Εἰς τρυφήν. The Geneva version has, *for thy pleasure:* but many copies omit this. The sense of the whole either is, Admire not the beauty of a woman, lest it kindle a criminal passion in thee, and thou be tempted to lust after her; or it may be considered as matter of advice to a lover, not to choose a wife merely for her beauty, or for any sensual satisfaction proposed, but rather for her good qualities and accomplishments. As a wise man principally aims at society in a wife, he ought to choose one with such good sense as to form the agreeable companion, and with such a temper as not only to share his good or evil fortune with equanimity, but with sufficiency and credit; one, not merely likely to increase, but capable and willing to govern, his family, bring up his children, and to manage in all things for him to the best advantage. Euripides has exactly the same sentiment with our author:—(Priestley's edition, vol. vii. p. 637.)

> Νοῦν χρὴ ξεῖσθ'· οὐδέν τι τῆς εὐμορφίας
> Ὄφελος, ὅταν τις μὴ φρένας καλὰς ἔχῃ.

Ver. 22. *A woman, if she maintain her husband, is full of anger, impudence, and much reproach.*] The wise man having given his sentiments about beauty, proceeds next to shew, that a fortune, as such, should not be chosen, because such a one is apt to be assuming, and to reproach her husband with what she brought him, and that his subsistence and the figure which he makes are through her. Imperiousness is misbecoming and insupportable, even in a person of worth and merit, and much more so where only a family or riches is the pretence. What Juvenal has observed, is, I believe, the sentiment of most people:—

> "Malo Venusinam, quam te, Cornelia, mater
> Gracchorum, si cum magnis virtutibus adfers
> Grande supercilium." (Sat. vi.)

There may also another sense be given of this place; if a woman rule her husband, *Mulier si primatum habeat, contraria est viro suo,* Vulgate; which Calmet expounds, *Si la femme a la principale autorité, elle s'eleve contre son mari.* The rendering of the oriental versions is remarkable, *Servitus dura, et ignominia pessima est, mulier ferociens in maritum suum.* The poor man in Plautus made but an indifferent bargain, who says, "Uxorem accepi, dote imperium vendidi." Phocylides strongly dissuades from such a match, wherein money is the only ingredient:—

> Μηδὲ γυναῖκα κακὴν πολυχρήματον οἴκαδ' ἀγεσθαι,
> Λατρεύειν δ' ἀλόχῳ λυγρῆς χάριν εἵνεκα φερνῆς.

Ver. 23. *A woman that will not comfort her husband in distress, maketh weak hands and feeble knees.*] Χεῖρες παρειμέναι, καὶ γόνατα παραλελυμένα, ἥτις οὐ, κ. τ. λ. Besides the sense of our version, there is another favoured by Grotius: That the woman who contributes not all in her power to make her husband happy, who will not be assisting in his distress, and is indifferent about his welfare, as that of a stranger; who will neither take pains herself, nor strive to gain others to promote his interest, is lazy, brutish, and good for nothing. Or rather, says Calmet, the meaning is, That an idle indolent woman, who, through sloth or delicacy, will not stir herself to look into her family affairs, nor contribute to the management of the common interest, can never make a husband truly happy, or be a proper mistress of a family.

Ver. 24. *Give the water no passage, neither a wicked woman liberty to gad abroad.*] Some Greek copies have only ἐξουσίαν, power simply, which a wicked woman is sure to abuse every where, both at home and abroad. It is as necessary to curb and restrain a designing, heady, aspiring woman, as to confine a swelling water within its banks. Power in bad hands is dangerous, and, if not watched and prevented, will overturn every thing like an inundation; and the more strength it gains, the wider will be the desolation and ruin. Other copies have ἐξουσίαν ἐξόδου, which our translation follows. (See xxvi. 10.) This seems to refer to a custom among the eastern nations, of confining their women, and keeping them closely shut up. The apostle, among other directions given to young women, particularly advises them to *be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, and obedient to their own husbands.* (Tit. ii. 5.) Calmet says, the sense of this place is the same with that of Solomon: *Drink water out of thine own cistern, and running water out of thine own well;* (Prov. v. 15.) and that

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the advice is directed to married men not to follow after strange women, nor to covet the sweets of stolen waters: see xxvi. 12. where the like simile is applied to a loose and wicked woman.

Ver. 26. *If she go not as thou wouldest have her, cut her off from thy flesh, and give her a bill of divorce, and let her go.*] Εἰ μὴ πορεύεται κατὰ χεῖρά σου· *i. e.* If she does not behave according to thy liking, or rather, if she refuses to obey thy authority, and to be subject to thy power; for power is frequently meant and expressed by the hand. Xenophon calls a good wife, one who is ready and willing to oblige her husband, χειροήφης. By some a wife has been considered as a man's right hand; and then the sense will be, *If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off;* though our Saviour by that expression intended not to authorize any such liberty of divorce. A wife, however, has always been esteemed as part of a man's own flesh; for by matrimony they become εἰς σάρκα μίαν, and to this the wise man seems here to allude. No sooner was man created, but God divided him into two; and no sooner were there two, but he united them into one: so that marriage is almost as old as nature, and its union the most close and intimate. Grotius thinks the last clause, δίδου καὶ ἀπόλυσον, to be only a marginal explanation of the former sentence, and at length crept into the text; and indeed it is omitted in many copies. By δίδου some understand, besides the sense of giving a bill of divorce, the restoring of her fortune, or the giving her back what she brought. Drusius infers from this place, that Ben Sira and Sirachides were not the same person, as has been the general notion. For the former's axiom, *Os, quod cecidit in sorte tua, rode; i.e.* according to the scholiast, that a man must sit down contented with his wife, whether she prove good or bad, seems inconsistent with the advice here given, of parting from her if her behaviour is not according to a man's liking. Either, says he, they are different persons, or our author changed his sentiments. (Com. in loc. see Bartolocci Biblioth. Rabbin. vol. i. p. 349.)

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 3. *A GOOD wife is a good portion, which shall be given in the portion of them that fear the Lord.*] By γύνη ἀγαθὴ or ἀνδρεία here, and Prov. xii. 4. xxxi. 10. is meant, one that is notable, managing, and diligent, whose character Solomon describes, Prov. xxxi. 10, &c. In the former chapter, ver. 19. a wicked woman is mentioned as the portion of a sinner; here it is said, that a good and virtuous woman shall fall to the lot of the righteous, as a reward of his goodness; and thus the Syriac, *Mulier bona dabitur viro timenti Dominum, propter bona ipsius opera.* (See ver. 23. Prov. xix. 14. Tob. vii. 12.) As a prudent wife is from the Lord, holy men in Scripture accordingly begged the direction of God and his blessing in the choice of a wife: for as God first instituted marriage, so he still presides over it, and all marriages ought to be concluded in his fear, and entered upon with a petition for his blessing. Abraham comforts himself that the Lord God of heaven would send his angel to choose a wife for his son Isaac: (Gen. xxiv. 7.) and his servant prays unto the Lord God of his master Abraham to send him good success in the undertaking he went about, and to shew kindness unto his master Abraham in a particular which so nearly concerned the welfare of his family. (Ver. 12.) Drusius and some other expositors, differing herein from our translators, make the next verse a continuation of the same subject; *viz.* That he that is so highly favoured as to have the blessing of a good wife, whether he be poor or rich, is completely happy, and his satisfaction will appear in his very countenance: for where the married parties are happy in and pleased with each other, and love and harmony are triumphant, as is the case of every well-chosen match, joy will of course succeed, and a never-failing spring of delights. The Syriac and Arabic connect the verses in the same manner.

Ver. 5. *There be three things that mine heart feareth, and for the fourth I was sore afraid: the slander of a city, the gathering together of an unruly multitude, and a false accusation: all these are worse than death.*] Διαβολὴ πόλεως is badly rendered here, *the slander of a city;* διαβολὴ means rather *enmity,* as Grotius observes it signifies xxviii. 9. and so it occurs often in the LXX. And hence διάβολος answers to *Satan,* an *adversary* in the Hebrew. Διαβολὴ πόλεως would be better rendered, *the ill-will of one's country, the incurring the displeasure of the public, or of an extensive neighbourhood.* History furnishes us with many examples of persons who have been fined, exiled, and put to death, through popular discontent, and fell a sacrifice to the hatred and caprice of an inconstant people. Grotius seems to take it in the sense of *treason,* and the Geneva version expressly renders so. Ἐκκλησία sometimes signifies a promiscuous assembly of the people; here it is taken in a bad sense, and properly rendered the gathering together of an unruly multitude. Such was that which was raised by Demetrius against St. Paul. (Acts xix. 32.) Καταψευσμὸς not only means a false accusation, but probably refers to the false accusation which this author was in danger of his life from, mentioned at large, li. 6. and on account of which he says, ver. 9. ὑπὲρ θανάτου ῥύσεως ἐδεήθην; which suggests to me, that ἐδεήθεν is the true reading here, and not ἐφοβήθην, as most copies have; and that καταψευσμὸς is the fourth particular in order, for the event of which he was so sore afraid, that he even prayed to the Lord for deliverance from it: and what may seem to confirm this is, that some few editions read καταψευσμὸν ὑπὲρ θάνατον. We shall the less wonder at the vehemence of this expression, if we consider what this author says, chap. xxviii. of the deadly venom of the tongue, and of the false tongue in particular, *That the death thereof is an evil death, and the grave better than it,* (ver. 21.) nor disapprove the joining these together without the intervening comma. Thus there are three particulars very distinct, but how shall we make out all the four? our translators seem to have marked out the jealous woman for the fourth, by inserting the particle *but* in the beginning of the next verse, though the Greek, Latin, Arabic, Syriac, all omit this particle: and this indeed is the general way of solving this difficulty. But is there any more reason to fix upon this for the fourth evil, than either of the two plagues which are mentioned immediately after? which will as much then exceed the number, as it now falls short. I suspect the place to be mutilated, and that some sentences, or at least words, are wanting; and the reasons for my conjecture are these:—1. There is a chasm, or hiatus, here

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of three whole verses in the oriental versions. 2. The construction of the Greek seems to require some addition. 3. Πάντα, or ταῦτα πάντα, as the copy, which our translators follow, read, must refer to more or larger particulars than are at present mentioned. 4. Ὑπὲρ θάνατον πάντα μοχθηρὰ contains the author's reflection upon all the particulars. And, indeed, after mentioning that all the foregoing instances were worse than death, what could be found of weight enough after to insert or carry with it so much dread? Jealousy, the instance most insisted on, may make life indeed very uneasy, and occasion great grief and sorrow of heart; but the most affecting description of that passion will be but faint, after the enumeration of evils said to be worse than death; and we cannot but observe the climax to sink considerably, instead of rising more vigorously, as it ought.

Ver. 6. *A scourge of the tongue which communicateth with all.*] Πᾶσιν ἐπικοινωνοῦσα, *i. e.* which by its clamour and evil effects makes itself known to all; or rather, according to Grotius, which is common to and generally goes along with the four evils beforementioned. If we understand this of the jealous woman in particular, and μάστιξ γλώσσης is so used, Job v. 21. upon the like occasion, the sense then is, That she is a shrew, or a scold, vexing herself and others, through distrust and impatience of temper. Jealousy was more frequent among the Hebrews; as polygamy was tolerated among them, the peace of families was often disturbed by the resentment and suspicions of one rival wife against another, as was the case of Hannah and Peninnah, the two wives of Elkanah, Sarah and Hagar, Rachel and Leah, &c. And as jealousy is a most raging passion, it was often cruel and bloody, and would be satisfied with nothing less than poison or the dagger.

Ver. 7. *An evil wife is a yoke shaken to and fro.*] Βοοζύγιον σαλευόμενον. According to Bochart, the sense is, That an evil wife is as troublesome and wearisome to a man as a yoke that is put upon the neck of oxen. (Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 41.) But the generality of interpreters lay more stress upon σαλευόμενον, and think it implies, that an unhappy marriage, or the uneasy state of a man with a wife, is like the disagreement of oxen under the same yoke, who draw different ways, and, without doing any good, are a clog, hinderance, and vexation to each other, instead of being assisting like true yokefellows, by concurrent endeavours and joint labour. The comparing such a wife to a scorpion, in the sentence following, is parallel to xxv. 15. and strongly expresses the danger of such a union; and that the very touch of her is deadly, and her embraces fatal: "Man and wife (says a very pious writer) should resemble the two kine that carried the ark of the Lord; they should lovingly keep one path, and turn neither to the right hand nor the left. (1 Sam. vi.) Or they may be considered like the two eyes of the same body: if both go together, and look one way, be it upwards or downwards, to the right or to the left, all is well and comely in the face; but if they be cross-eyed, and one eye looks one way, and the other another, there is then a manifest blemish and a disagreeable distortion." (Bishop Babington's Works, p. 316.)

Ver. 8. *A drunken woman and a gaddler abroad causeth great anger, and she will not cover her own shame.*] A woman that is addicted to drinking inflames her passions thereby, and has little or no regard to modesty and decorum. Ἀσχημοσύνην αὐτῆς οὐ συγκαλύψει. Ἀσχημοσύνη is a modest way among the Hebrews of expressing nakedness, and what nature and decency command to be concealed. As her reason is impaired, and for a time lost, she is frequently off of her guard, and forgets what is due to her sex and character. "Omnis mulier quæ vinolenta et comessatrix est, eadem quoque meretrix est." (Auth. Oper. imperf. in Matth.) Though this may seem too positive and general, yet thus much may be said, that she that is often so disguised has great luck if she escape being debauched. Her talk, looks, and motions, encourage an attempt, and there are libertines always ready to improve the opportunity. Curtius's description of the Babylonish women will suit all such (and such, I hope, are but few) who drown their reason, and endanger their virtue, by intemperance and debauch: "Fœminarum convivia ineuntium principio modestus est habitus, deinde summa quæque amicula exuunt, paulatimque pudorem profanant: ad ultimum (honos auribus habitus sit) ima corporum velamenta projiciunt." Romulus enacted, that the woman who was overtaken with wine should be punished as an adulteress; and he acquitted a person who put his wife to death upon such an occasion. (Plin. lib. xiv. Val. Max. lib. vi.) Faunus, king of Latium, caused his wife to be whipped to death, according to Arnobius, for her intemperance. Many copies have not the words, *gadder abroad;* nor do the oriental versions or Vulgate take any notice of them. But it may justly be observed, of such as are fond of company, and go in quest of revels and entertainments, that they are liable to be overtaken both the ways here mentioned. They run themselves into temptation and danger through an eager pursuit of pleasures, and lay themselves open to the opportunities of sin and folly. Dinah's curiosity and gadding temper are mentioned as the cause of the loss of her virtue. (Gen. xxxiv. 1.) The description of the harlot, Prov. vii. 11, 12. is, *Her feet abide not in her house, now she is without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait in every corner.*

Ver. 9. *The whoredom of a woman may be known in her haughty looks and eyelids.*] These may be thought rather signs of pride than of unchastity, and to be more likely to keep all impure advances at a distance than any way encourage them; and yet this circumstance seems to be made a part of the description of an immodest woman. For thus I understand the words of Isaiah: *Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes,* ἐν νεύμασιν ὀφθαλμῶν, with winking eyes, *mincing as they go, i. e.* walking with a lascivious air, *therefore the Lord will smite them,* (iii. 16.) Μετεωρίζεσθαι signifies, primarily, to be carried up high in the air, as birds or clouds flying there, which, because they are light and have no foundation, are tossed and driven about with great uncertainty: hence μετεωρισμὸς ὀφθαλμῶν, by a metaphor, signifies a wanton rolling of the eye, a swimming motion of it, and an amorous cast or leer. (See Hammond on Luke xii. 29.) The meaning, probably, is the same with that of Jer. iii. 3. that *a whore may be known by her forehead; i. e.* by a bold and confident look. The ὄψις πόρνης will sufficiently betray her, and shew her evil inclination as much as wandering in suspicious places, or sitting in the public ways for lovers. Modesty, on the con-

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trary, is discernible by a downcast look, a modest air, rising blushes, reserved carriage, and prudent retirement. Aristotle's description seems to agree with that of our author: "Inverecundi signa sunt, oculus apertus et splendidus, palpebræ sanguineæ et crassæ, humeri sursum elevati," &c. (Physiog. cap. 5.) St. Basil's observation upon this passage is too pertinent to be omitted: "Quæ in animo constituit captare multos, ac venari laqueo suæ elegantis formæ, collo incedit in sublime porrecto: in nutibus item oculorum probatio redditur mulieris fornicariæ et procacis, ad opera ipsa anhelantis, fascino ac noxio aspectu: ipso enim intuitu obscœnam demonstrat animæ impuritatem. Dum enim suaviter et blandis arridet ocellis, prolicit ad explendam libidinem. Jactu enim oculorum sagittam plane exitialem emittit."

Ver. 10. *If thy daughter be shameless, keep her in straitly, lest she abuse herself through overmuch liberty.*] Ἐπὶ θυγατρὶ ἀδιατρέπτῳ. Syr. *Super inverecunda, multiplica custodes.* Vulg. *In filia non avertente firma custodiam. i. e.* Mistrust and watch over a bold daughter, who gives encouragement to men's rude advances by her forward looks and carriage; there is great reason to fear such a one has a corrupt heart, and waits only an opportunity to do evil. Other Latin copies have, *In filia non advertente firma custodiam: i. e.* Watch over a careless daughter, one that does not think of the sad consequences which attend the breach of chastity, and a life led without sober reflection and a modest restraint. But there is another reading which I prefer, ἐπὶ θυγατρὶ ἀδιατρέπτως στερέωσον φυλακήν. For if a daughter be so bad as to be shameless, the caution here given comes almost too late; the restraint of liberty would have been more necessary and advisable before she became notorious: the advice, therefore, is more seasonable, to keep an early and constant guard over a daughter, lest too much liberty and indulgence prove her ruin. Or, as the Vulgate has it, *Ne, inventa occasione, utatur se; i. e.* Lest she abuse herself the first opportunity that offers. Grotius points the place thus: ἵνα μὴ εὑροῦσα ἄνεσιν ἑαυτῇ, χρήσηται, *i. e.* lest finding for herself, by some artifice and cunning, an opportunity of escaping and sinning, she should make use of it. See xlii. 11. where there is the same advice, and in the same words.

Ver. 11. *Watch over an impudent eye, and marvel not if she trespass against thee.*] Ὀπίσω ἀναιδοῦς ὀφθαλμοῦ φύλαξαι, καὶ μὴ θαυμάσῃς; *i. e.* Watch close, or at the heels of such a one as has a wanton eye or an immodest look. The Syriac expresses this very strongly: *Post eam quæ impudentibus est oculis curre, nec moram interponas, ne te decipiat.* Which seems to intimate that such a one is of a subtle intriguing temper, and that the danger is imminent of her doing amiss if not narrowly watched. Grotius says καὶ here is to be taken in the sense of *aut;* Watch over such a one, or *else* be not surprised if she be too cunning for you and deceive thee, and by transgressing lose her honour and stain the credit of your family. And thus the Tigurine version: *Oculum impudicum asserva, aut ne mireris, si in te deliquerit.* As this organ is the greatest inlet to love, and by its motions betrays the inward disposition, the eyes being as it were the windows of the soul, the wise man properly directs the sentinel to be placed there.

Ver. 13. *The grace of a wife delighteth her husband, and her discretion will fat his bones.*] By χάρις I would understand sweetness of temper, and by ἐπιστήμη, discretion and skill, chiefly in household affairs, in doing and ordering the necessary works for her family, (see ver. 16.) and prudent management and economy in providing for it; both which qualities must be agreeable to the person who has the happiness of such a partner. Thus Solomon describes a good wife, Prov. xxxi. *She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness; she looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, and she will do him good, and not evil, all the days of his life.* (Ver. 11, &c.) Not that I would hereby so far confine discretion, as to exclude prudence in other affairs, which is necessary towards a regular and just conduct, much less good sense and an improved understanding, (see ver. 14.) to form the agreeable companion for life, and to divert the cares incident to the married state. He that hath a wife so well accomplished and amiable, will be easy both in his condition and circumstances; and the satisfaction arising from his inward content, will shew itself upon his very countenance. The LXX. rendering of Prov. xviii. 22. somewhat resembles this place, Ὃς εὗρε γυναῖκα ἀγαθὴν, εὗρε χάριτας, ἔλαβε δὲ παρὰ θεοῦ ἱλαρότητα, where the Hebrew expresses only a wife indefinitely, and our translation follows it here. See instances of such omissions in Glass. Philol. Sac. de nomine. can. 11. et Mercer, in loc.

Ver. 15. *A shamefaced and faithful woman is a double grace; and her continent mind cannot be valued.*] Shamefacedness may either mean bashfulness or modesty, and so may regard both virgins and married women; both of which should avoid a forwardness of shewing themselves, and not take a pride in being followed and admired, and appearing in places of the most public resort; for, according to Tertullian, "ejusdem libidinis est videri et videre;" and in the same work he says, "Tam sancti viri est suffundi, si virginem viderit, quam sanctæ virginis, si a viro visa sit." (De Vel. Virgin. cap. 2.) By faithfulness we are not only to understand that fidelity which she owes to her husband, but that religious service and constancy which she owes to her God. Goodness in both these respects is χάρις ἐπὶ χάριτι, the sum of perfection. It is in the union of these excellent qualities, that true beauty and agreeableness consist; for, as the wise man observes, *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.* (Prov. xxxi. 30.) The like may be observed of continence in the latter part of the verse, which not only respects conjugal chastity, but also temperance, regularity, moderation of passions, and a strict virtue in the whole conduct of life.

Ver. 18. *As the golden pillars are upon the sockets of silver; so are the fair feet with a constant heart.*] As the wise man has before given us a frightful picture of a scandalous and debauched woman; so he draws as lovely a one in this and the foregoing verses of a discreet and virtuous woman, whom he crowns with the highest praises and the greatest blessings; that the sex, from a sight of and reflection on pieces so different from each other, may conceive as much horror from the one as love and pleasure from the other. He describes the good and accomplished woman in terms and figures of the greatest magnificence and beauty: she is as great an ornament to her family as the sun is to the universe: her beauty, in her middle-age,

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has as chaste and comely an appearance as the lamps upon the holy altar; nor do her feet nor her heart go astray, but both of them are fixed upon a right and solid basis. Or the sense may be, according to some expositors, That a well-made, straight, tall woman, is like a well-proportioned pillar fixed upon its basis; such as those in the temple were, which exceeded all others for beauty and proportion. Our translators follow a copy which had ἐπὶ στέρνοις εὐσταθοῦς, but Grotius says the true reading is, ἐπὶ στερεοῖς εὐσταθοῦς. By στέρεα he understands the soles of the feet. Dr. Grabe rejects this, as not having the sense which he gives to it, and prefers πτέρναις, which is countenanced by the Vulgate. (See Proleg. tom. iii. cap. 4.)

Ver. 20. *When thou hast gotten a fruitful possession through all the fields, sow it with thine own seed, trusting in the goodness of thy stock.*] Κλῆρον παντὸς πεδίου· *i. e.* The possession of any field; πᾶς is frequently so used by this writer: (see ver. 15.) πεδίον is a metaphor often used for a wife, especially by the poets. Euripides has the like; μὴ σπεῖρε τέκνων ἄλοκα, (Phœn. ver. 18.) and he calls a father, καταπείραντα, φυτουργὸν φυτεύσαντα. Theognis has the same comparison, Γνωμ. ver. 582. Virgil, with his usual modesty, expresses it by *arvum genitale.* This advice follows very properly after that in the former verse, of not giving one's strength to strange women: it is like that of St. Paul, *To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife.* (1 Cor. vii. 2.) For marriage is the proper as well as settled remedy of incontinence. And as an encouragement to it, the wise man mentions one particular advantage arising from it; *viz.* a certain and legitimate issue, which shall not after be reflected on for baseness of birth, but, triumphing in an honest and lawful descent, shall prosper and grow great. Or, as Drusius takes it, Men, μεγαλυνοῦσι, shall speak honourably of and extol thy family and posterity for the goodness of their stock, and the unblemished honour of their descent.

Ver. 22. *A harlot shall be accounted as spittle: but a married woman is a tower against death to her husband.*] The marginal reading, *as a swine,* I think preferable, as coming nearer Solomon's description, *A handsome woman without understanding is like an ornament of gold in a swine's snout;* Prov. xi. 22. where γυνὴ κακόφρων in the LXX. may be rendered a woman of an evil turn of mind, as well as of a weak one; and in the sapiential books they both signify a loose and disorderly person. There is much greater difficulty in the latter part of the verse; the Greek of which is, ὕπανδρος δὲ, πύργος θανάτου τοῖς χρωμένοις λογισθήσεται. Badwell, Grotius, and our translators, observing an opposition in the parts of some verses following, have fancied that there must be one here; as to χρωμένοις, which all the copies have, at the first hearing, one would think that the woman here meant communicated herself to more than one, and that it should be χρωμένῳ, if the husband only be meant, as our translators confine it; but upon farther examen this will be found allowable: for Prov. xxv. 13. where the Hebrew has אדניו, *domini sui,* the LXX. have τῶν αὐτῷ χρωμένων; and Prov. xvii. 8. בעליו, *patroni sui,* in the LXX. is rendered τοῖς χρωμένοις. As both these, therefore, though in the plural number, signify only one person, and may properly signify a husband, so it may do here, and one of these Hebrew words might possibly be in the original. But πύργος θανάτου is far more uncertain and ambiguous; if a good wife be meant, the translation must be, as ours has it, *a tower against death, propugnaculum mortis,* Syriac; which yet seems a very harsh one, and I am not aware of any authority for it. If a concubine, τηρουμένη, as Clemens Alexandrinus here expounds it, (Pædag. lib. ii. 10.) or an adulteress wife be meant, which Drusius shews from Prov. vi. 24. 26. 29. γυνὴ ὕπανδρος may well signify, πύργος θανάτου then must either be a downfal tower, in the sense of the Arabic, *Maritata cum adulterium committit, similis est turri corruenti super eum qui propius accedit ad ipsam,* or a prison, in which persons were kept for execution, and suffered often to die there. And as prisons had pits or dungeons in them, (Jer. xxxviii. 6.) so a whore is called a deep pit, Prov. xxii. 14. xxiii. 27. and an adulteress is the most dangerous sort. That towers are often prisons is well known. (Neh. iii. 25.) There was a place near Jerusalem called Azmaveth, Neh. xii. 29. which may be translated the *fort of death;* but to what use it was put does not appear. Now as the punishment of the adulterer was death, (Lev. xx. 10.) the adulteress who captivated, and kept him in her chains, might well be called the tower or prison of death, as she is in Scripture represented, under other figures, as the cause of death; see Prov. vii. 21. 23. but above all, Prov. vi. 26. where in the LXX. just the same sort of distinction is made between a common whore and an adulteress, as, according to this interpretation, is made here, and γυνὴ ἀνδρῶν there comes very near γυνὴ ὕπανδρος in this place. And thus there is still some opposition between the two parts of the verse, though not so great a one as in the sense which our translators have chosen. I shall only add, that if persons are disposed to change the word πύργος, ὑπουργὸς would be no improper reading, if they understand it of a bad woman: nor would ἀπεργὸς, or ἀπειργὸς, ἀποεργὸς, or ἀπουργὸς, be either of them amiss, if applied to a good one.

Ver. 26. *A woman that honoureth her husband shall be judged wise of all; but she that dishonoureth him in her pride, shall be counted ungodly of all.*] This seems not rightly translated; the Greek of the latter part is, ἀτιμάζουσα δὲ ἀσεβὴς ἐν ὑπερηφανίᾳ πᾶσι γνωσθήσεται, *i. e.* she that despiseth or dishonoureth her husband, shall be accounted wicked and ungodly for her pride by all. Thus the Geneva version, *She that despiseth him shall be blazed for her pride.* And Calmet renders in like manner, *Celle qui le deshonore, sera reconnue comme impie dans son orgueil.* To attempt to make a husband any ways ridiculous, to expose his person or understanding, to assume the management of affairs, which are peculiarly the man's province, these are no arguments of a wife's discretion, they are rather symptoms of a high spirit than of deep wisdom. Such a one generally fails in her design of being admired, and is sure to be, if not despised, yet rallied and jested upon by both sexes. A prudent woman gains the ascendant by her condescension and engaging sweetness; she obtains easily what the other commands by violence. She neither contends for nor takes upon her the direction of affairs foreign to her sex, but confines herself within that province wherein she is allowed to preside, and endeavours to please and shine in it: and, in fine, never seems to rule, however she may do it in reality.

Ver. 27. *A loud-crying woman and a scold shall be*

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sought out to drive away the enemies.] Εἰς πολεμίων τροπὴν θεωρηθήσεται· *i. e.* Shall be seen at or amidst the rout of the enemy, in places where the greatest noise and confusion are. Or may be considered, says Calmet, as one flying before the enemy by her shrieks and clamour. Grotius conjectures the true reading to be, εἰς πολεμίων τρυφὴν θεωρηθήσεται, *shall be seen with pleasure by her enemies,* "spectabitur cum hostium gaudio." Hœschelius has, γυνὴ μεγαλόφωνος καὶ γλωσσώδης. ὡς σάλπιγξ πολεμίων, κ. τ. λ. i. e. *a scold is always sounding to battle, delights to begin herself a fray, or to set other people together;* and thus the oriental versions render, *Rixosa mulier et linguax, ut tuba ad bellum excitans reputatur.* This strong hyperbole of our version to express the roaring and excessive vociferation of a scold, puts one in mind of what Homer says of the god of war on another occasion,

"Mars bellows with the pain;
Loud as the roar encount'ring armies yield,
When shouting nations shake the thund'ring field:
Both armies start, and trembling gaze around,
And earth and heav'n rebellow to the sound." (Il. v.)

After this some Greek copies have an entire verse omitted in our version, the sense of which, according to the Syriac, is, "Animus cujusvis hominis existentis his omnibus dejicitur, in tumultu enim bellico vita misere ducitur;" *i. e. Every person who has the misfortune to have a wife of such an outrageous temper will be dejected and unhappy, as living in a state of continual confusion, tumult, and war.*

Ver. 28. *There be two things that grieve my heart, and the third maketh me angry: a man of war that suffereth poverty, a man of understanding that is not set by, and one that returneth from righteousness to sin: the Lord prepareth such a one for the sword.*] The three particulars mentioned here are well worth notice. As to the first, nothing is more grievous than to see a man of courage and bravery, who has spent his time and strength in the service of his country, and whom years and hard service have disabled, wanting in his old age a decent and necessary subsistence. The Romans had a particular regard to their *milites emeriti*, such especially as were invalids, and had suffered in their limbs in the public service; to reward their past labours, and to comfort them under their accidents or misfortunes, they provided for them, at the public expense, lodgings and other conveniences for the remainder of their lives: which instance of goodness the charity of modern times has imitated in many nations, and raised magnificent structures for such who have been rendered incapable of service by the toils of war or the dangers of the deep. As to the second, Solomon observes how often kingdoms have been preserved by men of great parts and understanding, and as often overthrown when ambition, favour, or corruption, bears sway, and merit was no longer regarded. It is a melancholy consideration, and Solomon mentions it as such, that a poor wise man should deliver a city by his wisdom, and yet no man should remember or reward such a deserving man afterward. (Eccles. ix. 14, 15.) But the third instance, instead of exciting compassion, as the two former do, raises horror and astonishment; *viz.* when such as have known the way of righteousness, and travelled far in it, have not only tasted but confessed the sweets of the good gift of God, at length fall away, and abandon the right path to walk in the ways of sin. Jeremiah hath finely described this, ii. 10—13. and then he sets down the punishment which such apostates might expect: *Thine own wickedness and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: thou shalt know and see that it is an evil and bitter thing to forsake the Lord thy God.* (Ver. 19.) Calmet says a new chapter might properly begin here.

Ver. 29. *A merchant shall hardly keep himself from doing wrong, and a huckster shall not be freed from sin.*] The Vulgate has, *Duæ species difficiles et periculosæ mihi apparuerunt;* but there are no words in any of the Greek copies to answer them. One particular is wanting here, except the merchant and the huckster shall be thought two distinct instances. According to Calmet, the same person is meant under different names, or, as concerned in two different branches of the same business. The wise man's observation will hold as to merchants, whose trade being large and extensive, they have the more temptations and opportunities to sin, if they content not themselves with a moderate profit; but such are most liable to exact, who aim at engrossing any branch of business, and, by establishing a monopoly, set an unreasonable price upon their goods. Tully has made the like observation upon hucksters, or retailers (for κάπηλος does not signify merely a publican, as Grotius understands it), as exposed by their sort of business particularly to lying, "Sordidi etiam putandi qui mercantur a mercatoribus quod statim vendant, nihil enim proficiunt, nisi mentiantur." (De Offic. lib. i.) The Vulgate too confines this more particularly to the sins of the tongue, *Non justificabitur caupo a peccatis labiorum.* Through a desire of gain they have not always a strict regard to truth and fair dealing; but are tempted to use cunning and artifice, and sometimes falsehood itself, to dispose of their commodities, not as justice directs, but as avarice prompts them.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *MANY have sinned for a small matter.*] Ἕνεκεν ἀδιαφόρου, for the sake of something indifferent, as the margin has it; for money was one of those things which the stoics put into the number of things indifferent, of which a man might make a good or an evil use. Aristides preferred a good conscience to riches, and was more happy and innocent than the ambitious or covetous, amidst their great wealth and honour. Ahab, notwithstanding his royalty and grandeur, was miserable for the want of Naboth's vineyard, and to obtain so small a matter was guilty of murder. According to the learned Casaubon, the true reading is, χάριν διαφόρου, for the sake of gain. (Not. in Theoph. Charact. Ecclus. vii. 18. xlii. 5.) And indeed this seems most agreeable to the context, and to that of St. Paul, *They that will be rich fall into a snare and temptation, and many hurtful lusts.* (1 Tim. vi. 9.) The Vulgate renders, *Propter impiam multi deliquerunt,* χάριν ἐνδείας, as some copies have it; and so the Geneva version, *Because of poverty have many sinned.* And indeed poverty has forced men often to steal, to cheat, to lie, to forswear, &c. (See Prov. xxx. 9.) Tully takes in both these motives, and makes avarice and poverty the two grand occasions of committing wickedness, of men's turning away their eyes from God, and neglecting their duty.

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Ver. 2. *As a nail sticketh fast between the joinings of the stones, so doth sin stick close between buying and selling.*] Πάσσαλος signifies here a wooden pin, or a piece of wood. As this when firmly wedged in a wall cannot easily be taken out, or separated, so it is equally difficult to prevent fraud and iniquity between the buyer and the seller: each endeavours to impose upon the other; the one would sell too dear, the other would buy too cheap; the seller is apt to exact, and to ask too much, and to cry up his goods extravagantly; according to that of Horace, "Laudat venales qui vult extrudere merces;" and the buyer is inclined to decry the commodity, to find fault with its price or goodness, that he may have it the cheaper. According to that of Solomon, *It is naught, it is naught, says the buyer; but when he is gone his way, he boasteth.* (Prov. xx. 14.) Anacharsis therefore called the market, where most trade is carried on, the mint of lies. (Apud Laert. lib. i.)

Ver. 3. *Unless a man hold himself diligently in the fear of the Lord, his house shall soon be overthrown.*] This advice is addressed principally to traders and persons of traffic and commerce, who being usually tempted more than others to overreach and defraud, are here cautioned against acts of injustice and oppression, lest they draw upon themselves God's indignation, and forfeit his blessing, which alone gives riches and prosperity. Jeremiah expresses the disappointment of such by a beautiful simile, *As the partridge sitteth upon eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and be a fool,* (xvii. 11.) It is observable, that in all the printed editions there is an ellipsis of the person here meant; instances of such omissions are to be met with both in the Hebrew and Greek text: (see Glass. Philol. Sac. lib. iii.) which Hœschelius has supplied from an ancient MS. in his notes upon the place; according to which the reading and pointing are, ἐὰν μὴ ἐν φόβῳ Κυρίου κρατήσῃ ὁ τιμιουλκῶν, κατὰ σπουδὴν ἐν τάχει καταστραφήσεται αὐτοῦ ὁ οἶκος· *i. e.* He that is used to enhance and raise the price of his goods beyond what is reasonable, for so the word is taken Prov. xi. 26. unless he confines himself to what is fair and honest, shall very speedily come to ruin. The reduplication intimates the certainty and speediness of the vengeance. Instances of which pleonasm we have, xi. 21. xxix. 25.

Ver. 4. *As when one sifteth with a sieve, the refuse remaineth, so the filth of man in his talk.*] *i. e.* The faults of men appear, and discover themselves in their discourse. It is very difficult, even if a person is cautious, not to let some foible or other intermix and appear in his talk, by which you may discover his temper and inclination, what he is most fond of, or hates; whether he is wise, sober, and regular, or loose, corrupt, and impudent. If, when there are so many noble subjects of conversation to entertain or improve company, a man delights to signalize himself by scandal, swearing, obscenity, blasphemy, profaneness, &c. which are the refuse and filth of discourse; such a one betrays a corrupt heart, and an evil treasure lodged there, and you may pronounce him worthless and abandoned. For a man's talk is a kind of mirror of his soul, and discovers all its secrets. When a youth was presented to Socrates, that he might judge of his genius, the philosopher ordered him to talk and discourse before him, by which he could form a better judgment of him, than by his countenance, or any other symptom. Tully has well observed, "Qualis homo, talis etiam erit ejus oratio, orationi autem facta simillima, factis vita." (Tuscul. Qu. lib. v.) Demonax, who, contrary to most other philosophers, was fond of company, as Val. Maximus relates of him, used to say, "In speculis vultus figuram, in colloquiis autem naturam et mentis imaginem cerni posse: sermonem enim esse quasi figulum hominis, qui animi formam effingat et proferat. Nullo enim in speculo melius expressiusque relucet figura corporis, quam in oratione pectoris imago repræsentatur."

Ver. 6. *The fruit declareth if the tree have been dressed, so is the utterance of a conceit in the heart of man.*] Οὕτως λόγος ἐνθυμήματος καρδίας ἀνθρώπου. The true reading probably is, οὕτως λόγος ἐνθυμήματα καρδίας ἀνθρώπου. And so Grotius conjectures likewise; *i. e.* As the fruit of a tree shews what care and management have been bestowed upon it, so talk discovers the intentions and dispositions of the heart of man. "Mihi quale ingenium haberes, fuit indicio oratio tua." (Ter. Heauton.) It is a natural, as well as a common simile, to compare the mind of man to the earth, an instructor to the husbandman, and precepts or doctrine to the seed. Plutarch uses it often, De Liber. educand. And Tully, "Ut agri non omnes frugiferi sunt qui coluntur, sic animi non omnes culti fructum ferunt." (Tuscul. Qu. lib. ii.) And then it follows, "Cultura animi philosophia est: hæc præparat animos ad satus accipiendos eaque mandat his, et, ut ita dicam, serit, quæ adulta fructus uberrimos ferant:" see Matt. vii. 17. Luke viii. 11, &c. between which and this place there is some resemblance; and Prov. xxiv. 30. where ἀνὴρ ἄφρων is compared to a field untilled, and to a vine unpruned. The etymologists too imitate the like by deriving *sermo*, à *sereudo*. Dr. Grabe prefers and retains the common reading, and to prevent any ambiguity has καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου: (Proleg. tom. iii. cap. 4.) it is probable λόγος ἐξ ἐνθυμήματος was what he intended, as the Vulgate has, *Verbum ex cogitatu*, otherwise it is a harsh expression.

Ver. 8. *If thou followest righteousness . . . thou shalt put her on as a glorious long robe.*] Ὡς ποδὴρη δόξης. Intimating that honour and glory shall attend him that followeth after, or is clothed with righteousness. Ποδήρης is a long tunic which the priests wore, and is said to be, Exod. xxviii. 40. εἰς τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν, for honour and glory; *i. e.* to make them appear great like princes, for their garments were truly royal. Their bonnets also were in the form of *tiaræ*, which kings wore, and are joined in Scripture with crowns, Job xxix. 14. which is a passage parallel to this. Philo confirms this when he says, that the law manifestly dressed up the high-priest, εἰς σεμνότητα καὶ τιμὴν βασιλέως. (De Sacerdot. Honor.) It may without violence be inferred from hence, that as the clothing of righteousness is compared to the priest's garments, the priests themselves should more especially put this on, and esteem it as their chiefest grace and most valuable ornament.

Ver. 10. *As the lion lieth in wait for the prey, so sin for them that work iniquity.*] As truth or righteousness associates those that are alike virtuously disposed, abides with them, encourages and rewards τοὺς ἐργαζομένους αὐτὴν, those that practise her, as it should be rendered in the preceding verse; so there is likewise a combination in wickedness which proves fatal, for the prey of sin is the sin-

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ner. The more wicked any one is, the greater slave he is to sin, the faster does he bind his chains, and lay more and more obstacles in the way of his own conversion. Or rather, the sense is, That as the lion is always ready to devour his prey, so sin is always followed with punishment, which continually hangs over the head of the sinner. This is strongly confirmed by ver. 28. where vengeance is represented as a lion, lying in wait for the proud or the ungodly. And most probably ἁμαρτία should be rather taken here for the punishment of sin, than for sin itself, as it is sometimes used. The comparison of sin to a lion is very common in Scripture, particularly in the book of Psalms; and under this image, the devil, the tempter to and author of all wickedness and mischief, is described in the New Testament.

Ver. 11. *The discourse of a godly man is always with wisdom, but a fool changeth as the moon.*] *i. e.* A good man is always uniform and consistent with himself; he is constant in his resolutions and prudent in his choice; as he chooses well, so he sticks to his opinion, but without conceit or opiniatry, without prejudice or passion. He winnows not with every wind, (v. 9.) like those who seek popular applause, or have no settled principle; but is steadfast in his understanding, and his way of acting always the same. The Vulgate compares the good man's steadiness to the constant light of the sun; whereas that of the moon is always unequal and variable, and when it shines the brightest shines only by reflection, and with a borrowed lustre. As his meditation is in the law of the Most High, so his discourse is upon the excellency of religion, and the beauty of holiness; the rule of his conduct is the revealed will of that Being, *with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning*, and a firm trust in his goodness keeps him always steadfast and unmoveable under all the events and accidents of life. The Psalmist well describes him in terms not unlike those of our author: *The mouth of the righteous is exercised in wisdom, and his tongue will be talking of judgment; the law of his God is in his heart, and his goings shall not slide.* (Psal. xxxvii. 31, 32.) But there is always something absurd or impertinent in the discourse of a fool, and offensive in that of a sinner; the former is disagreeable and tiresome, and the latter shocking and infectious. (Ver. 13.)

Ver. 12. *If thou be among the indiscreet, observe the time.*] If you light into the company of idle and loose persons, enter not into conversation with them, as one of their associates, but defer speaking to some better opportunity. And thus Calmet expounds it, *Reservez-vous à parler dans un autre tems.* If you think to do some good among them by your discourse, in vain will be your endeavours to reform or instruct them. The attempt to teach such true wisdom, or to instil principles of virtue into them, will be giving that which is holy to the dogs, who will probably abuse and injure you. Your presence will be disagreeable to them, and they will answer in the language of the libertines, described Wisd. ii. 12. "Let us get rid of this officious reformer, who takes the liberty to reprove our thoughts; he is not for our turn, he is clean contrary to our doings: he upbraideth us with our offending the law, and objecteth, to our infamy, the transgressings of our education." The word of exhortation, to have its desired effect, must be well-timed, applied to fit objects, and delivered in a proper season: when there is a reasonable prospect of the seed falling into good ground, which has no thorns to choke it, then is the proper opportunity for the sower to go out to sow.

Ver. 18. *For as a man hath destroyed his enemy, so has thou lost the love of thy neighbour.*] *i. e.* By betraying his secrets, for the context manifestly relates to this, and abusing the confidence reposed in thee, thou hast used thy best friend as an enemy, and in some sort taken away his life by thy treachery, and therefore follow no more after him, thou canst not regain his friendship, he is fled like a bird, not to be recovered again. "Semel fugiendi si data est occasio—satis est. Nunquam post illam possis prendere." (Plaut.) The violation of the laws of friendship, by the discovery of secrets, is a crime, according to the Vulgate, not unlike that of murdering a friend. The secret your friend entrusted you with was a sacred depositum; the disclosing it is an injury and a piece of injustice, and if, through your indiscretion, he comes into any disgrace or trouble, it is like giving him a secret stab. The least unkindness from a friend is of greater smart than the hardest usage from an enemy. Ἀδικούμενοι μᾶλλον ὀργίζονται ἢ βιαζόμενοι. (Thucyd. lib. i.) The very sight of Brutus wounded the heart of Cæsar more than all the rest of the assassins did with their daggers. David was somewhat troubled, that they who hated him whispered together against him; (Psal. xli. 7.) but it was his greatest affliction of all, that they who had eaten of his bread should ungratefully lift up their heel against him. For when he says, he could have borne it from an enemy, (Psal. lv. 12, 13.) he significantly implies, he could not bear it from a friend.

Ver. 21. *After reviling, there may be reconcilement; but he that bewrayeth secrets is without hope.*] Ἀπήλπισε, is without hope of a reconciliation with his friend. A learned critic observes, that it is much more agreeable to the dialect of the Greeks to render ἀπελπίζειν by *desperare facere*, to make desperate, according to the Hebrew, *hiphil;* and accordingly he renders this place, *He that hath revealed secrets maketh men to despair of him, to give him up, as one not fit to be trusted, or made a friend of.* (Knatchbull's Annot. on Luke vi. 35.) Some copies have ἀπώλεσε πίστιν, but as this occurs ver. 16. upon the same occasion, ἀπήλπισε, which is the reading of the Roman edition and Alexandrian MS. of Bos, and Drusius, seems preferable. The Romans cut off all hopes of reconcilement, by giving a solemn form of renunciation, when they dissolved friendship with any that had offended them. Germanicus, after receiving many injuries from Piso, took no other revenge than formally renouncing his friendship, "non ultra progressus quam ut amicitiam ei more majorum renunciaret." (Suet. in C. Cæs. Cal. cap. 3. Tacit. Annal. lib. ii. Lys. Orat. 7.)

Ver. 22. *He that winketh with the eyes worketh evil.*] Τεκταίνει κακά, *i. e.* is meditating or contriving some evil and mischief. There is the like thought, Prov. x. 10. *He that winketh with the eyes causeth sorrow.* But the LXX. rendering is more explicit, ὁ ἐννεύων ὀφθαλμοῖς μετὰ δόλου, συνάγει ἀνδράσι λύπας, which points out the true intent of his winking with the eye; that though he would have this familiar motion of the eye to be interpreted as a mark of his approbation and good-will, yet he does it deceitfully, and is the more dangerous enemy, as he has the appearance and tokens of a friend; and in another place it is observed of the same person, that he is fulsomely civil, bows and cringes to effect his purpose, διεστραμμένῃ δὲ καρδίᾳ τεκ-

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τάινεται κακὰ (the very expression of our author), and is always ready to raise some disturbance, vi. 13. Instead of the latter sentence, *he that knoweth him will depart from him*, ὁ εἰδὼς αὐτὸν ἀποστήσει ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, the Vatican and some other copies have, καὶ οὐδεὶς αὐτὸν ἀποστήσει· and Hœschelius, ἀποστήσεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. The Vulgate follows this reading: *nemo eum abjicit;* i. e. He so gains upon people by his insinuating way, his false signs, and deceitful nods, that nobody mistrusts him, or discards him, though such a treacherous friend is worse than a declared enemy.

Ver. 23. *When thou art present he will speak sweetly, and will admire thy words; but at the last he will writhe his mouth, and slander thy sayings.*] Ὕστερον δὲ διαστρέψει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις σου δώσει σκάνδαλον, *i. e.* He will change his note, or, as the margin has it, he will alter his speech, and in thy absence find fault with what was spoken. Or, he will lie in wait for thy words, and by misrepresenting them endeavour to do thee some mischief, or bring thee into disgrace. Such a concealed enemy, according to Homer, is to be dreaded as much as death. The Psalmist resembles our author in the description of him: *He laid his hands upon such as be at peace with him, and he brake his covenant; the words of his mouth were softer than butter, having war in his heart; his words were smoother than oil, and yet be they very swords.* (Psal. lv. 21, 22.)

Ver. 25. *Whoso casteth a stone on high, casteth it on his own head; and a deceitful stroke shall make wounds.*] The wise man having enlarged, in the former verses, upon the baseness of treachery and perfidiousness in friendship, he now sets down the punishment of it; *viz.* that the mischief which a false friend is meditating and designing against others shall fall upon himself, he shall suffer for his treachery; the stroke levelled in the dark shall return upon himself. This seems to be the sense of the Vulgate, though it is obscurely rendered: but the Syriac is explicit and clear, *Obtrectator qui percutit in occulto, perditioni tradetur.* See Psal. vii. 15, 16. Prov. vi. 15. where it is said of the wicked person, who pretendeth friendship, and at the same time is devising mischief continually, *therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.* See also Eccles. x. 8, 9. 12, 13. and particularly Prov. xxvi. 23. &c. where there is a great resemblance betwixt the two writers. This unexpected but just return upon the underminer's head is illustrated here by three significant and apt comparisons; nor is Plutarch's less pertinent and applicable: "Jaculum si in solidum aliquid inciderit, nonnunquam in mittentem retorquetur; ita convitium in fortem et constantem virum tortum recidit in convitium facientem." (In Moral.) And indeed St. Austin expressly understands this place of calumny and detraction. (De Amic. cap. 13.)

Ver. 28. *Mockery and reproach are from the proud; but vengeance, as a lion, shall lie in wait for them.*] There may be two senses given of this place; *viz.* Mockery, reproach, and vengeance, shall fall upon the proud or wicked: thus Calmet, *Les insultes et les outrages sont reservez pour les superbes, et la vengeance fondra sur eux.* Or the meaning may be, that mockery and reproach belong unto the proud; they are vices which they are particularly guilty of, and therefore vengeance shall pursue them. The rejoicing at the fall of the righteous, mentioned in the next verse, is an instance of their mockery, and their insult shall be repaid them by grievous torments inflicted on them in this life. This was verified in Antiochus and other persecutors. (2 Macc. ix.)

Ver. 30. *Malice and wrath, even these are abominations, and the sinful man shall have them both.*] As the wise man had before condemned treachery and perfidiousness, so does he likewise here resentment and wrath, both of which are to be detested: *Utraque execrabilia sunt.* Vulg. The manner of expression in our version seems to soften these vices; καὶ ταῦτα would be better rendered, *These also are abominations.* And thus the Syriac: *Simultas et ira, ipsa quoque sunt execrabilia.* There may be two senses likewise given of this passage; the first is, That the sinner shall possess, or rather, as Grotius and Junius understand it, shall be possessed by these two tyrannical passions, which, as he harbours in his breast, shall prove his tormentors: the other is, That the sinner shall feel the resentment of God, and the terrible effects of his fury; which sense seems confirmed by the context. This verse is a proper introduction to what follows about revenge, and it would not be amiss to begin the next chapter with it.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *HE that revengeth shall find vengeance from the Lord; and he will surely keep his sins in remembrance.* Ver. 2. *Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done unto thee, so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest.*] He that is forward to execute vengeance for every injury done to him, and hath no bowels of tenderness and compassion towards others that offend, deserves and may expect, nay, may be sure to be strictly dealt with himself by God for his own offences. Διατηρῶν διατηρήσει is a strong reduplication, and denotes the greater certainty of punishment. I must also observe the propriety of λύεσθαι, which is a metaphor, and implies, that the debts, for so sins against God are called in Scripture, Matt. vi. 12. of the merciful person, shall be cancelled and discharged. The request of forgiveness from God presupposes and requires that we be ready to forgive others their offences against us. This is a necessary condition on our part; and, if we fail of it, we shall fail also of the pardon we expect and hope for. (See Chrysost. tom. vi. Orat. 67.) And indeed what pretence can a malicious person have to ask the forgiveness of sins against God, who, though a frail sinful mortal himself, will not be prevailed upon to pass over the trifling and less offences of his brethren against him, which are fewer in number, smaller in degree, and committed against a far meaner person, as is most excellently urged in the three verses following. The great, and I might say infinite, disproportion between our offences against God, and those of an injurious neighbour against us, is strongly intimated in the vast sum of ten thousand talents, and the very inconsiderable demand of a hundred pence only; which the parable instances in to illustrate this matter. (Matt. xviii. 24. 28.) One cannot help observing in what strong terms the doctrine of forgiveness is pressed, even under the times of the Old Testament; it may be affirmed of the law, that, though God tolerated a retaliation among the Jews in certain cases, and under certain restrictions, (Exod. xxi. 24. Lev. xxiv. 20.) to hinder greater evils, yet its intention in general was, to encourage

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mutual love and forgiveness, the shewing kindness occasionally even to enemies, the not avenging injuries, but committing to God the repaying of vengeance, and, in a word, the love of a man's neighbour as himself. Lev. xix. 17, 18. Deut. xxxii. 35. Psal. vii. 4. Heb. x. 30. From these passages, which are express for brotherly kindness, one should form a judgment of the spirit of the law, and not from such where vengeance is barely tolerated in certain cases, and even then curbed and limited, to prevent men's passions running to excess, and using too great violence and outrage.

Ver. 6. *Remember thy end, and let enmity cease.*] Remember that thou thyself art mortal, and do not nourish immortal hatred; carry it not into the other world with you, nor entail revenge upon your posterity. Say not, *Exoriare, aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*, &c. The advice here is not unlike that of St. James, (v. 9.) *Grudge not one against another*, or, as the margin has it, *Grieve not one another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold the Judge standeth at the door.* Thus Seneca most appositely, "Ridere solemus inter matutinæ arenæ spectacula tauri et ursi pugnam . . . quos cum alter alterum vexarit, suus confector expectat: idem et nos facimus, aliquem . . . lacessimus, cum victo victorique finis æque maturus immineat." (Lib. iii. de Ira, cap. 43. And in a former chapter, "Quid ruimus in pugnam, quid imbecillitatis obliti ingentia odia suscipimus? et ad frangendum fragiles consurgimus? jam par acerrimum media mors dirimet, stat super caput fatum . . . propiusque ac propius accedit." (cap. 42.) Or the meaning may be, Remember that thou art a man; that man, as such, is sure to offend, and stand in need of pardon; that human life is but of a short continuance, and an account to be given of the conduct of it, and therefore the sense of his own imperfection and frailty should remind every man of the tenderness due to others' failings, and the consideration of mortality should hasten reconciliation, that a man may not die in an unforgiving temper. That celebrated maxim, *μέμνησο ἄνθρωπος ὤν*, is of no less importance in life to subdue resentment, than it was to the Macedonian king to humble his pride. And perhaps that custom among the Egyptians, of placing at their most sumptuous feasts a skull in some conspicuous part of the room, might be as much designed to prevent quarrels and promote brotherly kindness, as to restrain excess and luxury. The following sentence, *viz.* "*Remember corruption and death*, is (says a learned writer) the shortest compendium of holy living that ever was given; it is as if the author had said, Many are the precepts and admonitions left us by wise and good men for the moral conduct of life; but would you have a short and infallible directory of living well, remember corruption and death. Do but remember this, and forget all other rules if you will, and your duty if you can . . . for the consideration of death is the greatest security of a good life . . . of so vast consequence is the constant thinking upon death above all other things that fall within the compass even of useful and practical meditation, that Moses, with great reason, places the wisdom of man in the sole consideration of his latter end." (Norris on the Conduct of Human Life, p. 158—160.)

Ver. 7. *Remember the commandments, and bear no malice to thy neighbour: remember the covenant of the Highest, and wink at ignorance.*] Malice may be considered as a breach of the sixth commandment, which besides actual murder forbids also revenge, and the very intention of doing mischief. Malice also, as it contents not itself with thinking or devising evil, vents itself often in ill-natured speeches and injurious reproaches, and offends against the ninth commandment, which forbids false witness, slandering, and evil speaking. By the *covenant of the Highest* in the latter part of the verse, we may either understand God's law, which forbids all malice and revenge, and enjoins the forgiveness of injuries; or his adopting all men, especially the faithful, into one body and communion, to encourage thereby brotherly love and union, and a reciprocal regard and tenderness for each other. Or by the *covenant of the Highest* may be meant God's promise, or his conditional covenant, that he will forgive men their trespasses, if they also are ready to forgive others their trespasses. By *ignorance* here we may understand not only sins of ignorance, as they are called, but transgressions of other kinds, and so *ἄγνοια* is often used; see Numb. xii. 11. Judith v. 20. Tob. iii. 3. 1 Esdr. viii. 75. Ecclus. xxiii. 3. 30. and *ἀγνοεῖν* and *ἁμαρτάνειν* are synonymous in the Hellenistic writings. (See note on v. 15.) Probably the wise man here may artfully call an offence a slip of ignorance, to extenuate the greatness or odiousness of it, and thereby induce the party injured to pass it over the sooner.

Ver. 10. *As the matter of the fire is, so it burneth; and as a man's strength is, so is his wrath.*] *Κατὰ τὴν ὕλην τοῦ πυρὸς οὕτως ἐκκαυθήσεται.* A learned commentator reads the Greek in the following manner, *κατὰ τὴν ὕλην τὸ πῦρ ἐκκαυθήσεται, οὕτως κατὰ τὴν ἰσχὺν, κ. τ. λ.* (Hammond on New Test.) But there is no necessity of making any alteration, it is a Hebraism, and there are frequent instances of this construction. (See Glass. Philol. Sac. lib. iii. de Pronom.) *Ἰσχὺς*, translated here *strength*, is often used for riches, or ability in point of fortune and circumstances; see iii. 13. xiv. 13. xliv. 6. Prov. xv. 6. *In the house of the righteous is much treasure, ἰσχὺς πολλή.* and Ezek. xxvii. 12. *πλῆθος πάσης ἰσχύος* is properly rendered *multitude of all kinds of riches.* I should prefer this sense here, but for the next sentence, which is to the same purpose, though if *ἰσχὺς* be taken literally for strength, there will be the same tautology with respect to the last sentence of the verse.

According to his riches his anger riseth, and the stronger they are which contend, the more they will be inflamed.] *Κατὰ τὴν στερέωσιν τῆς μάχης οὕτως αὐξηθήσεται.* Literally, According to the force and spirit of the strife, battle, or combat, so it is increased, and becomes more fierce and bloody. The sense is, that a man's pride and haughtiness (for so we are to understand anger and wrath in this place), arising from power or wealth, will increase proportionably to it. See Psal. x. 4, where there is a description of a sinner, priding himself in his riches, whose insolence on that account is so great, that he is represented as not caring for God, neither is God in all his thoughts. Where the LXX. rendering is observable, and resembles that before us: *κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ ἐκζητήσει. Secundum multitudinem iræ suæ*, Vulgate. Both of these are but indifferent versions of the Hebrew here: it would be better expressed by *elatione*, or *altitudine nasi sui*; i. e. *Carrying his head very high.* The Targum is clearer and more explicit, *in arrogantia spiritus sui:* (see De Muis, in

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loc.) or we may understand anger literally here; *viz.* that a person who thinks himself injured or affronted will resent the usage, and his anger will rise in proportion to the opinion which he entertains of his own worth or greatness, either with respect to rank, merit, or outward qualities and accomplishments. It is on this account that the lenity and meekness of David, with regard to Shimei's cursing him, is so justly admired: the forgiveness of so mighty a king, of so mean and abusive a subject, who had daringly insulted his honour, was no less glorious to him than his victory over Goliath.

Ver. 11. *A hasty contention kindleth a fire, and a hasty fighting sheddeth blood.* Ver. 12. *If thou blow the spark, it shall burn; if thou spit upon it, it shall be quenched: and both of these come out of thy mouth.*] After warmth or resentment before spoken to, the wise man properly proceeds to mention quarrels and disputes which generally proceed from it, and often occasion great disturbance and mischief. At first they arise from some inconsiderable cause, or trifling accident, perhaps only from a hasty or wrong word, which a person resenting grows angry, proceeds thence to reproach and calumny, abuse, injuries, and in fine to blows and blood-shedding. This dreadful process is properly compared here to a spark of fire, which is of little consequence or danger in itself, and may be extinguished easily in a moment, by treading or spitting upon it; or by letting it fall to the ground, and taking no notice of it, it will go out of itself. In like manner the heat and fury of an adversary may be assuaged by patience and moderation, by silence or submission. But if you blow the spark and keep it alive; if you add fuel to dying embers, by taking the part of the quarrelsome person or contradicting him; by justifying the former, or adding fresh provocations, you will kindle such a fire as you will not be able to extinguish. Solomon has the same comparison upon the like occasion, *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife.* (Prov. xxvi. 20, 21.) The moral of which observation is, to stop passion and resentment in its first beginning, to hinder its progress, to stem its torrent, and remove whatever may add to the swelling of it; or, in the words of the same wise writer, *to leave off contention before it be meddled with, for the beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water,* one knoweth not where it will stop. (Prov. xvii. 14.)

Ver. 13. *Curse the whisperer and double-tongued, for such have destroyed many that were at peace.*] Ψίθυρος, or the whisperer, is one who speaks ill of his neighbour privately, and does him some mischief by a secret and sly insinuation to his prejudice. (See note on v. 14.) Δίγλωσσος, or the double-tongued, is one who speaks differently of the same thing or person, in public approving and extolling what he secretly decries and vilifies; one who makes a show of harmless intentions, and professes an outward respect for the person whom privately he slanders: and, according to St. Bernard's description, when he intends the most mischief and disgrace to any one, he begins first to commend him, to introduce some ill-natured aspersion the better; which kind of double-dealing and dissembling is, says he, *Tanto plausibilior, quantò creditur ab iis qui audiunt, corde invito, et condolentis affectu proferri.* (In Cant. ii.) St. Cyprian ingeniously compares such who *give good words with their lips, but dissemble with their double heart,* (Psal. xii. 2.) to wrestlers, "Qui antagonistas luctantes altius tollunt, quo vehementius illidant;" (Epist. 2.) i. e. *who lift their antagonist the higher to give him the greater fall.* Solomon calls such mischievous underhand practices stabs, which give the most deadly wounds. (Prov. xxvi. 22.) With great reason, therefore, the wise man here advises to set a mark upon and abhor such a detestable person, which probably is the meaning of *cursing* in this place. The common sense of mankind, even in the times of paganism, has had such an abhorrence of this vice, that great punishment has been inflicted upon such offenders in many civil societies. Lipsius says, that the Athenians imposed a pecuniary mulct upon them, and that the ancient Romans set a literal mark upon the forehead of him who was guilty of this crime, intimating a calumniator, *de calumnia.* This was a public declaration that the whisperer or slanderer deserved to be openly stigmatized and branded for an infamous person.

Ver. 14. *A backbiting tongue hath disquieted many.*] Γλῶσσα τρίτη. *Lingua tertia,* Vulgate; *i. e.* says Mr. Le Clerc, "Media inter auditorem, ac eum de quo sermo habetur." It is a proverbial expression, and often to be met with in the Chaldee paraphrase; it means a busy intermeddling tongue, which sows discord among neighbours, and sets one against another by evil insinuations and groundless reports, perverting and envenoming things the most harmless and innocent, and giving them a wrong turn and an evil meaning. This is also called *lingua trisulca;* as if it spit its venom like a serpent, or had, like it, three stings, or through its swiftness and volubility had the appearance of it. And indeed the backbiter has so much of the serpent in him, that, as if he had really three stings, he does mischief to three persons,—to the hearer, the person slandered, and to his own soul. The Apostolical Constitutions call such backbiters πρόγλωσσοι, τρίτην γλῶσσαν ἔχοντες. (Lib. ii. cap. 21.) Cotelerius observes, that some copies have here γλῶσσα τρητὴ, *i. e.* τετρημένη, perforated, or full of holes, as if the backbiter's tongue was like that of the servant's in the comedy, who says of himself, "Plenus rimarum sum, hac et illac perfluo." And indeed he is one who can keep nothing, he has no secrets properly, he hears only with a malicious intent to retail again, and what he occasionally picks up comes instantly forth with additions.

Strong cities hath it pulled down, and overthrown the houses of great men.] The wise man probably means here speaking evil of dignities, the blackening and aspersing kings and persons in authority, which lessens them in the opinion and esteem of the people, and renders them suspected by them, which often begets tumults, and kindles those heats which put things into a ferment and a flame. Lipsius, after he has shewn how calumny engages one man against another, divides intimate friends, and sets princes and people at variance, adds, "Doletis hærere in reipublicæ visceribus discordiarum tela? Calumnia injecit. Ardere facem bellorum civilium? Calumnia accendit." (Orat. de Calumnia.)

Ver. 15. *A backbiting tongue hath cast out virtuous women, and deprived them of their labours.*] Τῶν πόνων αὐτῶν. An evil tongue hath raised groundless suspicions, and made men jealous even of good and virtuous wives, and sometimes occasioned their divorce, to the mani-

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fest disgrace and injury of virtue and innocence. How far the poison of an evil and false tongue can affect the credit and safety of a good and chaste woman, appears from the history of Susanna, who was condemned through the unjust accusation of the two wanton elders, and would actually have suffered death, had not the Lord raised up the spirit of Daniel to detect the falsehood, and rescue oppressed innocence. The like may be said of the mother of the Maccabees, who was γυνὴ ἀνδρεῖα in all respects, and suffered with her sons through the venomous malice of the tongue: γυνὴ ἀνδρεῖα, in the Sapiential books, (see Prov. xxxi. 16.) means, an industrious, careful, laborious, frugal woman, one who by her economy and management has been the occasion of bringing much wealth into the family, and therefore might promise herself a comfortable share in the enjoyment of it; and yet one so deserving, through a slanderous tongue, shall forfeit her husband's love and opinion, be expelled his house, lose the fruit of her labour, and be deprived of her part of the common stock. See xiv. 15. where both πόνος and κόπος mean wealth got by labour, and so it is to be understood, Eccles. ii. 18, 19.

Ver. 16. *Whoso hearkeneth unto it shall never find rest, and never dwell quietly.*] *i. e.* Will always hear something to disturb and vex him. Such as have an itching ear, and a curiosity to know what is done and said every where, will find officious persons enough to bring or invent stories, and often matter for their own disquiet and uneasiness. The Vulgate renders, *Nec habebit amicum in quo requiescat;* which is true, whether we understand it of the slanderer himself, who can never be a fit person to make a friend of, or of the person who listens to him; for if credit be given to his suggestions to the disadvantage of such as we took to be our friends, one shall not know whom to rely on, but shall be often tempted to break friendship with our best and most valuable acquaintance, through evil and probably false aspersions.

Ver. 17. *The stroke of the whip maketh marks in the flesh, but the stroke of the tongue breaketh the bones.* Ver. 18. *Many have fallen by the edge of the sword; but not so many as have fallen by the tongue.*] It appears from the wise man's comparison, that the stroke of the tongue wounds the deepest. For whereas scourges reach only the skin, the outside of the man, slander affects even the inward parts, and touches his very heart, Prov. xxvi. 22. where the words of a tale-bearer are expressly called wounds. It is observable, that when Nazianzen would persuade some who were addicted to calumny to desist from their reproaches, he advises them to lay down their arms, to throw away their spears and stings, expressing in terms of war and hostility the danger of a censorious tongue, which, as it is more nimble and ready, so is it no less fatal to do mischief. There is so much cruelty and real hurt in calumny and reproach, that our Saviour himself calls reviling and evil speaking by the name of *persecution*, Matt. v. 11. Στόμα μαχαίρας is a Hebraism, and would be quite harsh and unintelligible, if not otherwise expressed, and properly familiarized. Homer has πολέμου στόμα, (Il. K.) which is a parallel expression: and St. Austin, *manus gladii*, which is a bolder metaphor. This weapon, though a known instrument of cruelty and bloodshed, has not made, says our author, so dreadful a havoc, as that little member, the tongue. Amongst the many instances which might be brought to confirm this observation, I shall single out that of Doeg the Edomite, who insidiously betrayed Abimelech to Saul, for succouring David in his distress, and by his officious discovery and malicious intelligence occasioned the destruction of fourscore and five persons that wore the linen ephod. (1 Sam. xxii.) The hundred and twentieth Psalm is thought by many to refer to this calumny; and so it is expressed in the title.

Ver. 20. *For the yoke thereof is a yoke of iron, and the bands thereof are bands of brass.* Ver. 21. *The death thereof is an evil death, the grave were better than it.*] The author compares the suffering, by a slanderous tongue, to the carrying an insupportable yoke, or being fast bound with misery and iron; that it deprives men of their reputation and honour, the most afflicting loss they can suffer, and by infusing suspicions and sowing discord separates the most intimate acquaintance, and robs them of the comforts and advantages of friendship and society, and thereby makes life irksome and tedious, and death desirable. Messieurs of Port-Royal apply the bondage here spoken of to the slanderous tongue itself that is enslaved to this vice, which is so subtle and disguised, that it escapes the notice of such as practise it, and its slavery is not perceived by those that are in bondage to it. Through a blindness and infatuation of heart, the just punishment of their crime, they persuade themselves that what they are acting is allowable, neither contrary to justice, charity, nor religion, and so are under no concern to break the yoke, thinking themselves free and at liberty under the greatest slavery; and while they are scattering firebrands and death, please themselves with the innocency of their sport. The loss of reputation, through the venom of the tongue, is here called a death, and one more grievous than that of nature. The Greeks, in like manner, apply ἀπόλλυμι to chastity or friendship violated, or to a character destroyed and gone. And among the Latins, a woman that has lost her honour is called *Interfectæ pudicitiæ fœmina.*

Ver. 22. *It shall not have rule over them that fear God, neither shall they be burnt with the flame thereof.*] A slanderous tongue, though it will not fail to attack good men, and probably for that reason, because they are such, yet it shall not overwhelm them, nor shall its rage, however it may blacken, quite eclipse them. God will not permit that justice, innocence, and truth, shall be for any long time oppressed; *He will make their righteousness as clear as the light, and their just dealing as the noon-day.* (Psal. xxxvii. 6.) Thus the same pious writer, after having put up his prayer, that the lying lips might be put to silence, *which cruelly, disdainfully, and despitefully speak against the righteous,* gives this instance of God's goodness laid up for them that fear him, and prepared for them that put their trust in him, that *he will hide them privily by his own presence from the provoking of all men, and will keep them secretly in his tabernacle from the strife of tongues.* (Psal. xxxi. 20—22.) Or the sense may be, That good men shall not, like others, indulge themselves in slander and censoriousness; *it shall not prevail in Israel, neither shall it be found in the heritage of Jacob, for all such vices shall be far from the godly, neither shall they accustom themselves to opprobrious words,* (xxiii. 12—15.) The Psalmist's description of the happy person who shall dwell in God's

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tabernacle, is one *that doth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart, that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour, and hath not slandered his neighbour.* (Psal. xv. 2, 3.)

Ver. 23. *Such as forsake the Lord shall fall into it, and it shall burn in them, and not be quenched: it shall be sent upon them as a lion, and devour them like a leopard.*] As the providence of God will preserve the righteous that are calumniated or falsely accused, so their enemies and accusers shall suffer in their stead; as the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, but over their bodies the fire had no power, neither had the smell of it passed upon them; (Dan. iii.) and the lions slew instantly the accusers of Daniel, whilst God sent his angel and shut their mouths that they might not hurt him, *forasmuch as innocence was found in him.* (Chap. vi.) Corn. a Lapide thinks the author expressly refers to these instances. Or the sense may be, That God will suffer the wicked to fall into this vice, to which they are remarkably addicted, and in their turns shall be evil spoken of, and fall into shame and disgrace. Or, may we not understand this place in some such sense as that of the Psalmist, *What reward shall be given or done unto thee, thou false tongue? Even mighty and sharp arrows with hot burning coals.* (Psal. cxx. 3.) St. Cyprian, speaking of the rich man in his torments, says, that his tongue was principally affected with pain and misery, as he had offended chiefly with his mouth: "Inter omnes corporis partes magis os ejus et lingua pœnas dat, quia plus scilicet lingua sua et ore peccaverat." (Epist. 55.)

Ver. 24. *Look that thou hedge thy possession about with thorns, and bind up thy silver and gold.* Ver. 25. *And weigh thy words in a balance, and make a door and bar for thy mouth.*] See xxxvi. 25. As it is a commendable piece of prudence to fence a field or a vineyard with a strong hedge, that the wild boar out of the wood may not root it out, nor the wild beasts of the field devour it; and as it is usual and safe to put money into a purse or bag, or in a place of security to prevent losing of it; so no less care is required to guard the mouth, and keep the door of the lips, that no word may issue from thence without being well weighed and considered. The binding up of silver and gold, here mentioned, is a particular expression, and answers to the bundles of silver, ὁ δεσμὸς τοῦ ἀργυρίου, *Ligata pecunia*, Vulg. (Gen. xlii. 35. Prov. vii. 20. Hos. xiii. 12.) Calmet thinks this phrase, besides the usual way of securing money in a linen cloth, purse, or girdle, may denote small rods, or spits of silver, bound up together, as Plutarch describes the oboli, a handful of which made a drachma. "The ancient Grecian money (says he) was like so many spits or rods of iron or brass; and hence it is that our smallest money is to this day called *obolus* (ὀβελὸς signifying, in Greek, a *spit*), and that the piece worth six oboli is termed a *drachma*, or a handful, so many of these rods being required to fill the hand." (Plut. in Lysand. Calm. Dissert. on the Hebr. Money.) It is certain also, that the Jews carried with them at their girdle a balance to weigh all the money which they either gave or received, as the Chinese and Armenian merchants do to this day; and their carrying different weights with them in a bag, (Deut. xxv. 13.) implies their having the balance too. The Canaanites likewise carried balances with them, but deceitful ones, as they are described, Hos. xii. 7. Instead of hedging the possession, the Vulgate has, *Sepi aures tuas spinis; i. e.* Fence or stop your ears, that, since slander is so dangerous, you may not listen to it, or seem to encourage it, that so the censorious person may see that such injurious discourse is disagreeable to you, and may be hindered from proceeding farther: "Ut discat detractor (says St. Jerome) dum te videt non libenter audire, non ultra detrahere: nemo enim invito auditori libenter refert." (Epist. 2. ad Rustic.)

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *He that is merciful will lend unto his neighbour.*] Ὁ ποιῶν ἔλεος, δανιεῖ τῷ πλησίον. See the like, Psal. xxxvii. 26. cxii. 5. The sense, both there and here, is, that a merciful man will not only lend unto his neighbour, but he will require no usury; he will lend freely to one in necessity, without asking or taking any use of him. *Mutuum* differs from *fœnus;* the former is without usury, the latter attended with it. Plautus very plainly distinguishes them in the following verse: "Si mutuo non potero, certum est sumam fœnore." (Asinar.) The etymologists do not badly explain *fœnus* by *accepti fœtus*, and so properly styled by the Greeks τόκος, as being the issue or produce of a sum lent. They seldom express borrowig upon usury by δανείζειν, but by δανείζειν ἐπὶ τόκῳ, and δάνειον εὔτοκον is usury, and not δάνειον singly; see Exod. xxii. where ἐκδανείζειν is taken for simple lending. (Plato de Leg. lib. v. Arist. Œcon. lib. v.) And therefore the Vulgate here badly renders δανιεῖ by *fœneratur*. But there is another sense of δανείζειν, which is, to give, to distribute to the necessitous. And thus Hesychius, δανείζει, *i. e.* μεταδιδοῖ τοῖς ἐνδεέσι. And in another place he expounds δανιεῖν by ἀγαθουργεῖν, *benefacere*. (See Matt. v. 42.) Calmet says the sense may be, He that does alms, shall be in a condition to lend to his neighbour; God will make him rich and flourishing in his circumstances: or, That he that does alms lendeth (to God) by doing good to his neighbour. (See Prov. xix. 17.)

And he that strengtheneth his hand keepeth the commandments.] The generality of interpreters understand this of a liberal and charitable hand, free and open to give, that such a one, by his acts of kindness and beneficence, keeps and fulfils the principal precept that concerns his neighbour: ἰσχύειν τῇ χειρὶ, to be *strong in hand*, signifies properly being rich, (see Lev. v. 7. 11. xiv. 21, 22. xxv. 49. Prov. iii. 27.) as ἀδυνατεῖν ταῖς χερσὶ, to *fail*, or to be *feeble in hand*, signifies the contrary state. And to *strengthen the poor man's hand*, means to *relieve* or *succour him*. Thus, Lev. xxv. 35. the commandment is, *If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay*—and, as the Hebrew has it, *his hand faileth,—then shalt thou relieve;* Heb. *strengthen him*. Grotius says, the words of this sentence are transposed, and that the sense is, He that keepeth the commandments shall become rich and powerful, *Qui mandata servat, is prævalet manu*, i. e. *præstabit opibus*. And Calmet is of the same opinion.

Ver. 2. *Pay thou thy neighbour again in due season.* Ver. 3. *Keep thy word and deal faithfully with him, and thou shalt always find the thing that is necessary for thee.*] Here the discourse is directed to the borrower (whom the observation in the next verse likewise concerns), to be punc-

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tual in keeping his promise, and observing the time of payment agreed on, which will encourage others or the same person to lend to him again with more readiness: that he will find his advantage in so doing, and will by that means at all times have a prospect of having his necessities supplied. For it is not so much hardness of heart, as the fear of meeting with one who may prove ungrateful, or a cheat, that discourages men from lending cheerfully, and assisting others by a free and gratuitous loan. But the direction here is, that notwithstanding what we may have heard of others' bad treatment, or fear to meet with ourselves, yet we must not be hard-hearted; but discretion must be coupled with brotherly-kindness, and worldly prudence with charity.

Ver. 4. *Many, when a thing was lent them, reckoned it to be found, and put them to trouble that help them.*] Πολλοὶ ὡς εὕρημα ἐνόμισαν δάνος. This is inaccurately translated; the sense is, Many esteem what is lent them as their own, as so much gain to them. For εὕρημα, εὑρεσις, ἐξεύρεσις, besides the sense of finding, signify also *lucrum* and *emolumentum*, profit or gain, and εὕρημα should be taken in this latter sense, both here and ver. 6. following. See note on xx. 9. where εὕρημα is taken in the sense of gain, and so rendered by our translators. They have made a mistake like this, Baruch iii. 18. οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξεύρεσις τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν, i. e. *They have no gain* or *profit from their works*, which they badly render, *whose works are not searchable.* The observation of the wise man here is, that many borrowers would willingly appropriate to themselves what they have taken up, instead of being ready and punctual to return the loan in time to such as advanced the money, and so have disappointed the creditor of what he depended upon and had occasion for, and obliged him perhaps to recover it by course of law: others, therefore, have refused or been cautious of lending, on account of such treachery and evil dealing, fearing to be defrauded themselves, (ver. 7.) which is what St. Ambrose means, when he says, "Cum istum fraudaveris cui debes, postea in tempore necessitatis non invenies creditorem." (De Tobia, cap. 21.)

Ver. 5. *Till he hath received, he will kiss a man's hand; and for his neighbour's money he will speak submissly: but when he should repay, he will prolong the time, and return words of grief, and complain of the time.*] To kiss the hands of another was anciently a ceremony practised only by slaves. Thus Arrian, ἄλλος τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς κατεφίλει, ἄλλος τὸν τράχηλον, οἱ δοῦλοι τὰς χεῖρας. (In Epict. lib. i. cap. 19.) And Macrobius, "Invenies dominum, spe lucri, oscula alienorum servorum manibus infigentem." (Saturn. lib. i.) It denotes here that servility and baseness, which a person who wants to borrow money will use to ingratiate himself, and his cringing and fawning likewise by flattering language and expressions to gain his ends. Some copies instead of χρημάτων have ῥημάτων, making no mention at all of money, which the Vulgate follows, *in promissionibus humiliant vocem suam:* but as all the copies agree in retaining τοῦ πλησίον, it seems necessary to follow the other reading, as our translators do. The following circumstances are very naturally described, and are the common excuses of bad paymasters—as, to say, The time of payment is not yet come, or longer time was expected, and would be more convenient,—to complain of the badness of the season, that it has been too dry or too wet, and the inclemency of it has occasioned sickness, and loss of cattle, spoiled their crop, and hindered them making money;—or of the badness of the times in general, that money is scarce, levies high, markets falling, &c.; and, if these reasons of delay are not admitted, to give some careless or surly answer: for thus I understand λόγον ἀκηδίας, and so the Geneva version has it, or to set the creditor at defiance.

Ver. 6. *If he prevail, he shall hardly receive the half, and he will count it as if he had found it; if not, he hath deprived him of his money, and he hath gotten him an enemy without cause; he payeth him with cursings and railings.*] This may be taken in two different senses, according as we understand it of the debtor or creditor, which the expositors are greatly divided about: with respect to the former the sense is, that if he be able to repay, as the marginal reading is, and the Vulgate, *Si autem potuerit reddere*, he will with difficulty be brought to pay half that is owing; and thus the Geneva version, *And though he be able, yet giveth he scarce the half again, and reckoneth the other half unpaid as a thing found; i. e.* as so much gain to him, *Alterum dimidium lucrifactum putabit*, says Grotius. Or, according to Calmet, that the debtor reckons by paying half, that he has given you, as it were, a part or share in something that he had found; and that you are under an obligation to him, as if he had done you a favour, by making you a partner with him in what he claims. If he be not able to pay at all, the creditor loses his whole debt, and all he getteth is ill-will and abusive language. But the confusion of this verse will be somewhat lessened, if we understand it of the creditor,—that if he be able to get any thing, he will scarcely receive half, and that which he recovers he must look upon as so much gain and good fortune, as the debtor did what he received at first, ver. 4. And if the creditor does not prevail to get any part of his money, he hath deprived himself of it (αὐτὸν for ἑαυτὸν, as Grabe understands it), he must be content to lose it, and, in return, the debtor turns his enemy without any reason. What follows must be understood of the debtor in either sense; and the treatment there mentioned, for favours received, shews the great baseness and ingratitude of the borrower. Seneca has a parallel observation upon the occasion, "Amico mutuum me roganti pecuniam si dedero, et amicum et pecuniam perdo."

Ver. 8. *Yet have thou patience with a man in poor estate, and delay not to shew him mercy.* Ver. 9. *Help the poor for the commandment's sake, and turn him not away because of his poverty.*] Notwithstanding what is before said of the treachery and tricks of debtors, the wise man does not intend here to discourage any from lending altogether, and doing good to a neighbour in that particular. His advice is, to be quick and ready in lending, and slow in redemanding; when necessity obliges him to come to you, put him not off by affected delays, nor make him, through often coming, and the solicitations he is forced to use, or by exacting a premium from him, purchase what you only lend him. Advance what he wants as freely as if you never expected to have it again, that if he does repay you, you may count it as so much unlooked-for gain, "Da quasi non recepturus; ut lucro cedat, si reddita fuerit." (Ambr. de Tobia, lib. i. cap. 3.) And if, being poor, he asks for a longer time of indulgence, wait with patience, and press him not to pay instantly, if he is not in a condition to do it; nor oblige him to it by any severity, nor exact any thing

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for forbearance. To enforce the duty of doing good to the poor, by a free and gratuitous loan, he derives the obligation from the revealed will of God, and the precept referred to is probably Deut. xv. 18. *If there be among you a poor man, thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need.* St. Ambrose reasons well upon this head, If you do not assist your brother, but for some advantage only you propose to yourself; if you do not lend to him but on the prospect or promise of usury and interest, what merit is there in the action, or what do you more than a mere heathen? Is it any instance of humanity to exact and draw from the poor, when thou wouldest be thought to relieve him? Or does it deserve to be called charity, when your only view in lending is to raise some profit to yourself? And, complaining of some usurers in his time, who took advantage of the necessities of the poor, he adds, "Fœcundus etiam vobis est pauper ad quæstum; talis humanitas, ut spolietis etiam cum subvenitis." (Ibid.)

Ver. 10. *Lose thy money for thy brother and thy friend, and let it not rust under a stone, to be lost.*] Though a necessary caution is to be observed with respect to others, yet where a friend or brother is in necessity, and wants something of thee, give it him freely and generously, without any prospect or covenant of a return. *Amicorum omnia communia*, and therefore thy friend claims a share with thee. If a friend or brother is taken here in a larger sense, as signifying any one of the Jewish race or human species, it may then be considered as a piece of advice to be charitable in general. Ἀπόλεσον ἀργύριον is not strictly to be understood; for what is given in this manner, even though there are no hopes of a return, is improperly called losing it; on the contrary, it is employing our money so advantageously, that there is no gain under heaven equal to such a loss. It means rather parting with what is valuable, and so it is used, Matt. x. 39. What follows, *Let it not rust under a stone, to be lost*, the Geneva version renders, *Let it not rust under a stone, to thy destruction*, εἰς ἀπώλειαν; for an account will be demanded of all treasure hid unprofitably in the earth, or wrapped up in a napkin. Several reasons are here assigned against hiding or hoarding up money:—1. It contracts rust. 2. It is liable to be lost, as not being known of perhaps by any other than the owner, who may chance to die without discovering it. 3. It is of no use, and may as well be lost, and would be of great help and service to many necessitous persons, if given or lent to them. It seems from hence probable, that the Jews sometimes hid their money in the earth, (see xx. 30.) and placed upon or near it a stone for a mark; and there are instances in history of money being found under such stones accidentally. (See Paul. Diacon. Hist. Longobar. lib. iii. cap. 6.)

Ver. 12. *Shut up alms in thy storehouses, and it shall deliver thee from all affliction.*] Mercy or charity shall befriend a man when he himself stands most in need of help; and, when there is little hope of safety elsewhere, the good deeds which he has done shall rescue him from troubles, or greatly alleviate them, and in the time of public danger shall be his shield and buckler. There is the like observation, xl. 24. *Brethren and help are against the time of trouble, but alms shall deliver more than both.* This and the foregoing verse are of the same import with, and perhaps taken from, Prov. xi. 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivereth from death.* "Nunquam memini (says St. Jerome) me legisse malâ morte defunctum, qui libenter opera charitatis exhibuit, habet enim multos intercessores, et impossibile est multorum preces non exaudiri." The Psalmist confirms the same from his own observation, Psal. xxxvii. 25. The Vulgate renders, *Conclude eleemosynam in corde pauperis, et hæc pro te exorabit ab omni malo.* And St. Cyprian has the same reading, Test. adv. Jud. lib. iii. And indeed this seems more agreeable to the context. The sense of the passage, according to our translation, is, Let not thy storehouses or granaries be for thine own use only, but let the poor man have some comfortable share with thee; nourish, feed, clothe him, succour him in his necessity, and by that means you will lay up your treasure in a place of safety and security; or rather, you will lodge it in heaven before thee, to procure an entrance for thee. Salvian says, the good and charitable provide in this manner for an easier passage thither: "Expeditos se non putant ad sequendum Deum, nisi omnia prius carnalium sarcinarum impedimenta projecerint, simul ut more hominum commigrantium, prius ad locum habitaculi sui res suas transferunt quàm seipsos: scilicet ut cum universa, quæ ad se pertinent, transtulerint, tunc ipsi ad plenam ac refertam bonis immortalibus domum, præmissa rerum omnium facultate, commigrent." (Lib. iv. cont. Avarit.)

Ver. 14. *An honest man is surety for his neighbour.*] *i. e.* He will be bound for him, if his credit and security are wanted or insisted upon, and will be a means to settle affairs, and make his neighbour safe and easy. But great discretion is necessary to be used in such an office of kindness; it must be done only to persons of honour, and such as are deserving of the favour, whose soul is too noble and great to turn such an act of kindness to the damage or disadvantage of the sponsor. Solomon often condemns suretyship, (Prov. vi. 1. xi. 15. xvii. 18. xx. 16. xxii. 26.) by reason of the many inconveniences and accidents which attend it on account of the baseness and carelessness of many debtors in satisfying their creditors, and thereby sacrificing their friends, and involving them in much expense and trouble. Our author speaks more cautiously himself upon this head, (viii. 13.) and reckons it as a thing certain, that he that engages for another's debt will be condemned at last to pay it: so that when he says here that an honest or good man, ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς, will be surety for his neighbour, he must mean that the principles of religion, or, however, of humanity, are too strong with a tender-hearted charitable man, to suffer him to see one of his own species, and perhaps neighbourhood and acquaintance, dragged to prison, to be fast bound there in misery and iron, without such a sympathy and yearning of his bowels as will incline him to take pity on, and be a sponsor for, such an unhappy object, even at his own peril, and perhaps against his own judgment in point of prudence.

Ver. 15. *Forget not the friendship of thy surety, for he hath given his life for thee.*] There are securities or bails of two sorts; the one is personal, body for body, life for life, such as that mentioned, 1 Kings xx. 39. and that of Reuben answering for Benjamin, Gen. xliii. 9. And the like may be observed of some prisoners and condemned persons, upon whose escape there is an obligation, accord-

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ing to the laws of some states, upon their keepers, who engaged for their appearance, to undergo the punishment in their stead. This sort of security the author probably may mean, from that expression, *he hath given his life for thee*, *τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ὑπέρ σου*. The other concerns money matters, and is the engaging for another's debt in a limited time, and thereby, in effect, taking it upon ourselves. This sort of bail may also be intended here; for by *life*, in this writer, is often meant *victus*, or that sustenance which is chiefly necessary to it. (See ver. 21, 22.) And so of the poor widow in the gospel it is said, *that she flung into the treasury*, *ὅλον τὸν βίον αὐτῆς*, *totum victum suum*, Vulgate: (Mark xii. 44.) so that the meaning here may be, that the sponsor, by engaging in another's cause, pledges his own fortunes and substance, and makes them liable to the penalty of the debt. The *formula fidejussionis*, as used by the ancients, with respect to both these sorts, is extant in Ulpian: "Quantam pecuniam Titio credidero, fide tua esse jubes?" *Do you answer for as much money as I shall lend Titius, and take all the danger upon yourself?* says the creditor; to which the surety answered, "Fide mea jubeo," and was called *præs*; *i. e.* "Sponsorem se præstans." The form with respect to life or liberty, was, "In quantum illum condemnari ex bona fide oportebit, tantum fide tua esse jubes?" And the answer was as before, "Fide mea jubeo." The surety in this case was called *vas*, "quasi pro reo ad tribunal vadens." (See Varro de Ling. Lat. lib. v.) Ausonius mentions and explains both these in the following verses:

"Quis subit in pœnam capitali judicio? Vas.
Quis, cum lex fuerit nummaria, quis dabitur? Præs."

Ver. 19. *A wicked man transgressing the commandments of the Lord shall fall into suretyship; and he that undertaketh and followeth other men's business for gain shall fall into suits.*] It is so great a misfortune and calamity to be bound for a thoughtless, ungrateful, and perhaps tricking debtor, who, when himself is secured, thinks no more of his friend, and overlooks all the kindness shewed him, (for so Grotius understands *ἀγαθὰ ἐγγύου*, ver. 16.) that the author may be excused for wishing this may be the portion of a sinner only to chastise him. The words may be considered either as a wish, as Calmet takes them, or a denouncing of God's judgments, as Grotius and our translators understand them. According to the former acceptation, the sense is, May the plague of an ill-placed suretyship not fall to the lot of the friendly and well-meaning; but such as are themselves knavishly inclined, have it for their scourge: may officious informers, restless promoters of law-suits, and busy intermeddlers in other affairs, barreters, and such as encourage and undertake scandalous causes, and infamous sorts of business, for mere filthy lucre, lose their ends, and suffer by such dishonest undertakings: may the charges occasioned through their villany, fall upon them, and themselves be made public examples of disgrace and infamy! Let this particularly be the punishment of such who are sureties for and engage to conduct any piece of knavery and wickedness; but such as are honest in their intention, and mean only the good and service of their neighbour, in what they undertake or promise for, may such fall into no disaster, nor suffer for their generous acts of kindness. The next verse contains the conclusion of all that is here said about suretyship, and the advice at last is briefly this: Help your neighbour, as far as you can safely, out of any strait or difficulty; but beware that you be not ruined yourself by any rash engagement, or fall into the same circumstances, by endeavouring to oblige or rescue him. Neither pity nor friendship demands so much as to exchange condition with the person you relieve, and, in order to make another easy, to make one's self and family miserable. Such compliments as are inconsistent with self-preservation may well be dispensed with, and a denial in this case is the voice of nature and reason.

Ver. 21. *The chief thing for life is water, and bread, and clothing, and a house to cover shame.*] The wise man here shews, that nature is content with a very little. The whole of what is necessary, if brought within proper bounds, is, food, raiment, and a lodging to cover shame. These may perhaps seem to be transposed, as clothing more properly covers shame; but if we attend to the context, the present reading may be justified, and a house be as well said to cover shame, as the want of a certain fixed dwelling exposes a man to disgrace; lodging too is as necessary to screen and guard, as clothing is to cover our nakedness. Jansenius says, that a *victus* is here described by water and bread: so *vestitus* includes raiment and lodging, both of which are necessary coverings; that as the simplicity of the former is designed to restrain luxury, so the bare mention of house and clothes was intended to prevent pride in apparel, or in stately and magnificent buildings. Grotius does not consider *ἱμάτιον καὶ οἶκος*, as distinct particulars, but makes the latter exegetical of the former, as if the reading was, *ἱμάτιον δὲ οἴκος καλύπτων ἀσχημοσύνην*, *vestimentum vero est domus (portatilis) obtegens ea quæ nuda dedecent*. This exposition, it must be confessed, seems somewhat forced; but thus much must be acknowledged, that our author, in the enumeration of the necessaries of life, (xxxix. 26.) omits this of lodging, as does St. Paul, 1 Tim. vi. 8. Drusius's comment is, "Quædam domi honesta sunt, et eadem foris, aut sub dio turpia;" as if he referred to Deut. xxiii. 13. where it must be confessed the very phrase of this writer, *καλύψαι τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην*, does occur, but the occasion is scarce of moment enough to be here inserted. Terence includes all the three particulars here mentioned, "Victus, vestitus, quo in tectum te receptes;" (Heauton. v. 2.) and Juvenal determines a sufficiency to be "in quantum sitis atque fames et frigora poscunt," Sat. xiv. where *frigora* alludes to both sorts of covering. Seneca has a passage still more pertinent and explicit, "Cibus famem sedet, potus sitim extinguat, vestis arceat frigus, domus munimentum sit adversus corpori infesta." (Epist. 8.)

Ver. 23. *Be it little or much, hold thee contented, that thou hear not the reproach of thy house.*] *Ὀνειδισμὸν οἰκίας σου.* The sense of which reading seems to be, If a man be contented with his present condition, though it be but a mean one, he will not through murmuring at it disoblige his parents or relations, as if he was ashamed of them; nor, through ambition or forwardness, as Drusius understands it, be the occasion that the meanness of his family and circumstances be known and reflected on. The Vulgate renders, *Et improperium peregrinationis non audies*, which is more agreeable to the context. The true reading therefore probably is, *ὀνειδισμὸν παροικίας οὐ μὴ ἀκούσῃς*· *i. e.*

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You will not expose yourself to the reproach and insult of the rich and powerful by thrusting yourself amongst them, when you can live in peace and comfort at home; and being satisfied with your own homely fare, you will avoid being reckoned a sponger and an intruder, nor be forced upon mean and servile compliances. The loss of liberty is too valuable an exchange for a false smile, or an accidental entertainment; and he that is of an unsettled temper and dissatisfied with his own condition, though it be but ordinary and mean, will be a slave all his life. "Serviet æternum, qui parvo nesciet uti, cui non conveniat sua res." (Hor.) Grotius understands by ὀνειδισμὸν παροικίας, travelling abroad, and leaving one's own country, and meeting with such sneers and affronts as sometimes happen with foreigners; but the former sense seems preferable. Solomon gives the like advice, and for the same reason, *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house, lest he be weary of thee and so hate thee.* (Prov. xxv. 17.) Phocylides gives the like caution:—

Μηδ' ἄλλου παρὰ δαιτὸς ἴδοις σκυβάλισμα τραπέζης,
Ἀλλ' ἀπὸ οἰκείων βιότων φαγέοις ἀνύβριστος.

Ver. 24. *It is a miserable life to go from house to house; for where thou art a stranger thou darest not open thy mouth.*] *i. e.* To talk or complain, *De summis injuriis os suum aperire non posse.* (Syr.) Calmet understands this of the poor and needy, who, being in want of necessaries, go from house to house, asking for alms, and seeking a lodging, whose manner of life sufficiently speaks a variety of wretchedness. It is observable that the Psalmist, among other imprecations against the wicked and ungodly, adds this instance of misery and unhappiness: *Let his children be vagabonds, and beg their bread; let them seek it also out of desolate places.* (Psal. cix. 9.) According to this interpretation, the advice here is not very unlike that direction given by our Saviour, Luke x. 7. *Go not from house to house;* it being the life of vagrants and beggars, and a disgrace to persons of character, and therefore particularly improper for his apostles, who were so highly commissioned. But I would rather understand this observation of the wise man's of retainers to great families, levee-hunters, and such as either have no house of their own, or seldom are at liberty to come near it, and prefer a splendid slavery to content and freedom within their own walls. Solomon aptly compares such to a bird that deserts its nest: *As a bird that wanders from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place.* The Greek is much stronger and closer to our purpose: Ὥσπερ ὅταν ὄρνεον καταπετασθῇ ἐκ τῆς ἰδίας νοσσιᾶς, οὕτως ἄνθρωπος δουλοῦται, ὅταν ἀποξενωσθῇ ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων τόπων. (Prov. xxvii. 8.)

Ver. 25. *Thou shalt entertain and feast, and have no thanks; moreover thou shalt hear bitter words.*] Ξενιεῖς καὶ ποτιεῖς εἰς ἀχάριστα. Grotius's conjecture here is very ingenious, ξενιεῖς καὶ ποτιεῖς εἰς ἄριστα· *i. e.* When you have fed them of the best, and made much of them in all respects, they will affront you. Some copies have ξενιεῖς καὶ ποτιεῖς ἀχαρίστους, which the Vulgate follows, and it affords a good sense; *i. e.* After all your trouble and expense, you will find you have entertained such as will prove ungrateful, and shall hear something unhandsome or disagreeable from them: *viz.* what follows in the two next verses, or some such insult and rudeness. And thus the Geneva version, *Thou shalt lodge and feed unthankful men, and after shall have bitter words for the same, saying,* &c. And so the Arabic. I think the confusion will be lessened, if we read with the Vulgate in the third person, and understand this and the two following verses of the imperious master of the house, that he will entertain you, and give you to eat and drink of the best, and at the same time will reproach you in some bitter and affronting manner.

Ver. 26. *Come, thou stranger, and furnish a table, and feed me of that thou hast ready.*] Probably this is spoken by the lordly owner of the house, by way of insult and sneer, as knowing the incapacity of the stranger, called such by way of reproach, to give an entertainment: or it may contain a real demand, to provide an entertainment for himself and friends, which seems probable from Prov. xxiii. 1, 2. in the LXX. where the wise man reminds the guest at some great table to observe what is set before him, and to prepare to make the like in return, Ἐὰν καθίσῃς δειπνεῖν ἐπὶ τραπέζης δυνάστου, νοητῶς νόει τὰ παραθέμενά σοι... εἰδὼς ὅτι τοιαῦτά σε δεῖ παρασκευάσαι. The Arabic indeed takes it otherwise, *Recede a nobis ut mensam apponamus, tu vero inter manus tuas comede,* intimating, that his presence was troublesome, that he stood in the way, should content himself with some fragments and be gone, as not worthy to make one among such company: but this comes too near the sense of the next verse. The term πάροικε in the beginning of this verse may be considered as an expletive, rather as an ornament of speech, than of any real signification. See instances of this Josh. xviii. 17. Luke xii. 37. xvii. 7.

Ver. 27. *Give place, thou stranger, to an honourable man, my brother cometh to be lodged, and I have need of mine house.*] Ἔξελθε, πάροικε, ἀπὸ προσώπου δόξης· *i. e.* Arise and be gone from before a person of figure and station, *a magnificentia convivarum.* (Arab.) I shall be ashamed to have such a one of low birth and mean appearance seen at my table, among guests of great distinction and nice taste. Grotius fancies an allusion here, and makes the sense to be, Depart from my house, thou stranger, and profane it not by thy presence: thou shouldest no more be seen there than in the temple; to which strangers, according to Josephus and the Jewish writers, had no admittance. The opposition in this light is beautiful. The sense of the first part is much the same with that of St. Luke, δὸς τόπον ἐντιμοτέρῳ σου, (xiv. 19.) and our translation of this passage is very like it. The author shuts up the chapter with the reflection, how very disagreeable and mortifying such contemptuous treatment must be to a man of understanding and real worth, who is neither fond to intrude himself like other impertinents, nor ignorant of the devoirs due to his superiors, as persons void of education are; nor thought unworthy by persons who esteem merit, though in a plain or unfashionable garb, to be admitted into the best company.

CHAP. XXX.

Ver. 1. *He that loveth his son, causeth him oft to feel the rod, that he may have joy of him in the end.*] See xxii. 6. When the wise man here says, that *he that loveth his son,* ἐνδελεχήσει μάστιγας αὐτῷ, a due abatement must be made; for the meaning cannot be, that a loving father should be continually beating his son. Our translators therefore have,

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with great tenderness as well as judgment, rendered it by *often chastising;* and so the Syriac has it. Solomon has many passages to the same effect; Prov. xiii. 24. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14. Nothing is of more importance, either for the interest of particular families or the good of the state in general, than a right education of children. Upon this depends the welfare and happiness of parents, and even that of the community. (Plato, lib. ii. de Repub. Aristot. Polit. lib. vi. Cic. de Offic. lib. ii.) But the education of children can never be rightly managed, nor happily executed, without some severity towards them, to suppress their sallies, correct their faults, and keep them in their duty: and though the tender age of children demands some indulgence, yet, as soon as the passions begin to appear, and the inclinations of nature to discover themselves in a dangerous and faulty manner, a parent should betimes subdue the growing evil, discountenance all ill habits or loose talk, by reproof, threats, or even the discipline of stripes. For if prudence will not permit a parent too much to demean himself to children's humours, or to suffer misbecoming freedoms, lest such a familiarity should abate of the reverence and submission due to them, much less should he be pleased with or laugh at their vices, or reckon that as a sign of a promising genius, which indicates only an early rankness and badness of the soil. The being thus strict, as to their conduct and behaviour, is the way to have joy of children in the end; ἐπ' ἐσχάτῳ αὐτοῦ, which the Vulgate, Arabic, and our version, understand of the father's comfort in his old age from a child so brought up. The Syriac applies it to the child, and takes ἐπ' ἐσχάτῳ adverbially. But then the reading should be, ἵνα εὐφράνθῃ ἐπ' ἐσχάτῳ ἐπ' αὐτῷ, as it is expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 2. *He that chastiseth his son shall have joy of him.*] Παιδεύειν has two senses, either to teach or to correct; the Vulgate renders in the former; we may understand it here in both senses, for teaching often is forwarded by correction; and a parent, who brings up a child under the apprehension of it, or the occasional use of it, shall bring him to more good, or have greater good by him, as the margin has it, than one who is over-fond and indulgent in all respects. The Vatican and Hœschelius have ὀνήσεται ἐπ' αὐτῷ, which seems preferable to the other reading, εὐφρανθήσεται ἐπ' αὐτῷ; as it prevents tautology, and the too quick repetition of the same phrase, and ὀνήσεται may be taken too in the sense of our version; for thus it is used, Philem. ver. 20. Ναὶ, ἀδελφὲ, ἐγώ σου ὀναίμην ἐν Κυρίῳ, *Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord,* which makes it probable that ὀνήσεται αὐτοῦ is the better reading. Solomon expresses the sense of this verse, Prov. xxix. 17. *Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest,* ἀναπαύσει σε, *i. e.* refresh and comfort thee. See Ecclus. iii. 6. *And shall give delight unto thy soul.* The Vulgate renders, *laudabitur in eo,* probably from a corrupt copy, which had αἰνήσεται, an easy alteration from ὀνήσεται; though even in that there is good sense,—that people will compliment a father upon a hopeful son, whose acknowledged learning, prudent conduct, and happy disposition, shew both the benefit of a good education and the parent's care and wisdom in bestowing it.

Ver. 3. *He that teacheth his son, grieveth the enemy; and before his friends he shall rejoice of him.*] Παραζηλώσει τὸν ἐχθρὸν, shall be envied by his enemies, *inimici sui invidiam excitat,* Syriac; and the Tigurine version is to the same purpose: *i. e.* They shall be afraid, lest a son so wisely educated and so well accomplished, should hereafter appear to their disgrace, disappoint their malice, and scourge their wickedness, ver. 6. Of such children, whose spirit promises to redress their father's wrongs, and appear for his safety and glory, we are to understand the Psalmist, when he says, *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them, they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate.* (Psal. cxxvii. 6.) On the contrary, their relations and friends triumph in persons of such worth, and place their safety and future fortune in them. The like is true of spiritual attainments: for the satisfaction and credit of the instructor rise in proportion to the catechumen's improvement, and his future reward will be accordingly. Thus St. Paul says of his converts, his children in the Lord, brought up in his holy nurture and admonition, and improving under it unto all pleasing, that they are his crown, his glory, and his joy. (1 Thess. ii. 20.) The gift of education, especially in the way of godliness, is above that of birth, and a natural father hath less to boast of than a spiritual instructor. Seneca has some fine sentiments upon this subject; the following speech of a virtuous and deserving son to his father, can scarce be paralleled: "Non est bonum vivere, sed bene vivere. At bene vivo, sed potui et male, hoc tantum est tuum quod vivo. Si vitam imputes mihi per se nudam, egentem consiliis, et id ut magnum bonum jactas, cogita te mihi imputare muscarum ac vermium bonum. Si bene vivo, in ipso beneficium majus quam quod dederas, recepisti: tu enim me mihi rudem et imperitum dedisti; ego tibi filium, qualem genuisse gauderes." (Lib. iii. de Benef. cap. 3.)

Ver. 4. *Though his father die, yet he is as though he were not dead, for he hath left one behind that is like himself.*] Ἐτελεύτησεν αὐτοῦ ὁ πατὴρ, καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἀπέθανεν. Literally, *his father died, and is as though he was not dead.* And so the Vulgate, *Mortuus est pater, et quasi non est mortuus.* But the rendering of the Arabic is more to be admired for the pretty turn, *Moritur iste, superstitem relinquens sui similem, imo non moritur, quia sui similem relinquit.* It is a most sensible pleasure and comfort to a good father in his lifetime to see his children daily copying him, treading in his steps, and transcribing his virtues; and when age reminds him of his mortality, he meets death through this pleasing prospect with calmness and composure; nor are his last moments disturbed and imbittered with any ungrateful reflection about their future welfare, as knowing that he leaves behind him such as are heirs of his virtues as well as his fortunes. He considers them as his image and representatives, as his own bowels, as living monuments of himself, nor need he be at any expense to perpetuate his memory. Such a father will never be forgotten while the children continue to wear his likeness, nor will his friends and acquaintance scarce miss him when he is gone: he talks with them in their looks, and instructs them still by their prudence and example. On the contrary, nothing is more afflicting than for a man to leave behind him degenerate children, and such as are vicious and ill-disposed; for a man, whose labour has been in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity, to leave his portion to one who hath not and will not labour therein, through the uncomfortable prospect of an unworthy and worthless offspring

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to succeed him, *his days are sorrows, and his travels grief.* (Eccles. ii. 21.) This and the two following verses are very beautiful, and shew the masterly pen of a second Solomon. (See Prol.)

Ver. 7. *He that maketh too much of his son, shall bind up his wounds, and his bowels will be troubled at every cry.*] The Vulgate renders *pro animabus filiorum colligabit vulnera sua,* following a (probably corrupt) copy, which had περὶ ψυχῶν υἱῶν, instead of περιψύχων in one word, which our translators follow. But περιψύχω signifying only *refrigero,* or, as Drusius would have it, *refocillo,* can scarcely be the true reading here. Complut. and from thence Grabe, prefer περιψήχω. Ψήχω, besides its primitive signification, means also πρᾴνω, *to court with gentle usage,* which sense agrees with Syriac, Arabic, and Tigurine versions, as well as our English. If this sense be followed, *shall bind,* &c. must mean, *shall have occasion to bind.* Syriac has, His wounds shall be many, *Blande tractantis filium suum multa erunt vulnera,* understanding the mischief as happening to the father; and so does the Arabic, *Qui blanditur filio, multa patietur flagella;* both of them adding *many,* I presume, to make the sense clearer and stronger; which is, That he that treats his son with too much indulgence and fondness, who gives him too much liberty, and lets him take his swing of pleasures, *qui voluptuarium facit filium suum* (Syriac), will repent of his ill-judged tenderness, shall have many things to grieve him, many inward wounds, to disturb his peace and quiet; his son's misconduct will give him fresh occasion of fear and trouble, and when he hears any noise or disturbance, he will be in pain for him, lest he be engaged in any fray, or have met with some accident. This paternal concern is finely worked up in the character of Micio:

> " Ego, quia non rediit filius, quæ cogito!
> Quibus nunc sollicitor rebus, ne aut alserit,
> Aut uspiam ceciderit, aut perfregerit
> Aliquid!" (Ter.)

There is also another sense favoured by Camerarius and Grotius; *viz.* that he that seasonably corrects his son, and keeps a strict hand over him, shall heal his wounds, *i. e.* prevent his following evil courses, and the mischief arising from them, and the concern which his ill-conduct would occasion him; and such an effect will the experience of his former severity have over him, that, if his father speaks in a louder voice than ordinary, or has but the appearance of a passion, he is affrighted and trembles, which the Tigurine version expresses very naturally: *Ad omnem vocem expavescit medullitùs;* and the Arabic yet more strongly, *Palpitatio cordis ejus ceu lima audietur.* But it does not appear that the verb denotes *correcting,* which, joined to other reasons, makes the first sense preferable.

Ver. 9. *Cocker thy child, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he shall bring thee to heaviness.*] These words, though spoken imperatively, are not a command so to do; but rather a caution to avoid it, as that advice in Ecclesiastes, *Rejoice, thou young man, in thy youth;* (xi. 9.) and that of our Saviour to his disciples, *Sleep on now, and take your rest.* (Matt. xxvi. 45. see Isa. viii. 9, 10. Nahum iii. 14. Eph. iv. 26.) So here the meaning is, Shew not too much fondness to thy child, nor wink at ἀγνοίας αὐτοῦ, his sins and follies, (ver. 11.) lest thou live to repent it, lest ἐκθαμβήσει σε, he quite astonish thee with his bad conduct and wicked actions. Play not with him, lest too much familiarity lessen thy authority, and thou make him incorrigible, by making thyself contemptible. Lose not thy power over him through too much easiness, but let thy sweetness and good-nature be tempered with awe and gravity, that the fear of thee be kept up and preserved. " Qui præest (says a learned moralist) debet et arridens timeri, et iratus amari, ut eum nec nimia lætitia vilem reddat, nec immoderata severitas odiosum." (Greg. Moral. lib. xx. 3.) As too much severity may seem unnatural, so the neglect of correction is faulty too, even upon the score of fondness. It is a just reflection of a modern writer, " If children are not to be won to goodness by kindness and indulgence, by exhortation and advice, they are to be compelled to it by severity and discipline, by threats and punishments. For, as naturalists observe of young trees, that crooked and stubborn plants are not to be straightened but by fire, so wrong and perverse dispositions are often not to be amended but by warm and severe correction." (Delany's Social Duties.)

Ver. 12. *Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat him on the sides while he is a child, lest he wax stubborn, and be disobedient unto thee, and so bring sorrow to thine heart.*] The Apostolical Constitutions give the like advice about chastisement, μὴ εὐλαβεῖσθε αὐτοῖς ἐπιπλήσσειν, κ. τ. λ. *Ne vereamini illos objurgare, et castigare cum severitate, non enim interficietis illos castigando, immo vero servabitis.* (Lib. iv. cap. 11.) It is said of Adonijah, the son of David, that his father had not displeased him at any time; but a learned prelate, who has discussed the subject of relative duties in the ablest manner, well observes, " That this is no example for other parents, unless their children behave themselves so as not to need reproof. Solomon was a great deal wiser than his father, and he advises parents never to regard the cries or pain of their children, when there was just occasion for it, or they were in danger of miscarriage. When parents see their children in hazard of falling into evil courses, they are not to consider whether what is most proper to reclaim them and prevent their misery, will grieve or anger them, but to venture that and do their duty. They are to have regard to what they intend should, and what in all likelihood will, follow, and that is, amendment; and not to consider how it will be taken at their hands. The good of their children is what the parents ought to regard; and though the method of procuring that may stir up their wrathful spirits, yet it is not to be declined on that account. The reasonable hopes of its yielding the fruits of righteousness and amendment to them that are exercised thereby, will justify what they do." (Fleetwood's Rel. Dut. disc. 4.) The like may be observed of Eli's children, who, if their father had seasonably restrained and severely punished them in time, would not have made themselves so vile, or brought that severe judgment upon themselves and their father's house. Among the works of St. Austin we have the following dreadful instance of a parent's negligence, and a son's unheard-of villany occasioned by it: " Cyrillus filium, ut scitis, habebat, et eum unicum possidebat, et quia unicus erat, cum superflue diligebat, et super Deum. Ideo superfluo amore inebriatus, filium corrigere negligebat, dans etiam potestatem faciendi omnia quæ placita essent illi. . . Filius luxuriose vivendo consumpsit partem bonorum suorum: sed ecce ebrietatem perpessus, matrem præg-

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nantem nequiter oppressit, sororem violare voluit, patrem occidit, et duas sorores vulneravit ad mortem." (Serm. de Cyril.) I must observe here, as before on ver. 1. that precepts of correction are not to be extended too far, or understood too strictly or rigidly; this I thought proper to intimate, chiefly with regard to what our author has said on that head, lest injunctions, seemingly so harsh, should create an aversion in your minds to this wise and most valuable writer, who has delivered so many useful truths for their benefit and improvement.

Ver. 13. *Chastise thy son, and hold him to labour, lest his lewd behaviour be an offence to thee.*] Παίδευσον τὸν υἱόν σου, καὶ ἔργασαι ἐν αὐτῷ, is the same as ἔργασαι ἐν παιδείᾳ, xxxiii. 25. Ἔργασαι ἐν αὐτῷ is not well translated, *hold him to labour;* it rather means, take pains with him to instruct him, and give him the advantage of a good education. The Tigurine version has, *Erudi filium, et elabora in hoc,* as if the copy it followed had, ἔργασαι ἐν τούτῳ. The true reading of the next sentence is that of the Alexandrian MS. ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῇ ἀσχημοσύνῃ αὐτοῦ προσκόψῃς, lest you suffer through his disgrace, and be reflected on for your negligence of him, and his scandalous way of living. And thus Calmet, *Instruisez vôtre fils, de peur qu'il ne vous deshonore par sa vie honteuse:* and the Arabic, *Ne tu ob insipientiam ejus crucieris.* Among other questions proposed by Ptolemy Philadelphus to the LXX. interpreters for their determination, according to Aristeas's history of them, this was one, "Quæ sit maxima negligentia?" and the answer was, "Si quis filiorum negligens fuerit, eosque nulla in re erudiat." Our author is thought by many to be contemporary with them, and by some to have been one of them. (See Corn. a Lap. in loc.)

Ver. 14. *Better is the poor, being sound, and strong of constitution, than a rich man that is afflicted in his body.*] Μεμαστιγωμένος εἰς σῶμα αὐτοῦ. The wise man here gives the first place to health above all temporal blessings whatever, and this was the opinion of the greater part of the ancient philosophers. Thus also St. Ambrose, "Prima sunt, quæ sunt animæ bona; secunda quæ corporis, salus, virtus, pulchritudo, &c. Tertia sunt quæ accidunt, divitiæ, potestates, patria, amici, gloria." (De Abrah. lib. ii.) Philo has the same division, ἐπὶ Ἀβραάμ. The Hellenists call all distempers μάστιγας, and there are frequent instances of this in the New Testament, Mark iii. 10. v. 29. 34. ὕπαγε εἰς εἰρήνην, καὶ ἴσθι ὑγιὴς ἀπὸ τῆς μάστιγός σου, where εἰς is used for ἐν, as in the passage before us; and Luke vii. 21. νόσων καὶ μαστίγων are coupled together as synonymous. (See Psal. xxxix. 10. 2 Macc. vi. 30.) The perjured wretch in Juvenal maintains a contrary opinion from our author with regard to the blessing of health, when he says, that it is better to be sick with the rich, than poor and in good health; so he can have but money, he compounds for blindness, lameness, or any bodily infirmity: "Et phthisis, et vomicæ putres, et dimidium crus," are nothing with him, if attended with this. (Sat. xiii.) But neither is the poet of this opinion himself, whose wish and prayer are, "Mens sana in corpore sano," (Sat. x.) nor any who have long known the want of health. Even a man with the rich gout would gladly, under a severe fit of it, change condition with one of his vassals, could he at the same time dispose of his pain.

Ver. 18. *Delicates poured upon a mouth shut up, are as messes of meat set upon a grave.*] Riches locked up in a sick man's coffers are equally as useless to him, as victuals set upon a dead man's tomb for his repast. For to a mouth shut up, as those of sick persons may in some sense be said to be, what signify the greatest rarities, or any nicetics in store, either of wine or provisions, since a sick stomach cannot relish them? They are to one grievously afflicted, either in body or in mind, as insignificant and useless, as if set before a mouth actually closed, or like those messes which the piety of the heathens set before their dead. The wise man here refers to the parental or sepulchral entertainments which were anciently much in vogue in the eastern and other countries, and particularly amongst idolaters, whose notion was, that the souls of the departed wandered about their sepulchres, and wanted a proper sustenance; and that it was a pious office to place bread and wine over their graves for their support and refreshment. (Varr. de Ling. Lat. lib. v.) The learned Spencer thinks that the Baalim, or hero-gods of the ancients, were designed to be honoured and propitiated by dedications or parentations of this kind, particularly Isis and Osiris. (De Leg. Heb. see Dent. xxvi. 14.) Epiphanius has a passage which expressly mentions this superstitious custom: the eatables, says he, they burn, and the wine they consume by way of libation; in this they do the deceased no good, and injure themselves. What he farther adds is very particular,—that when they bring these accommodations they call upon the dead person by name, for whom the feast is designed, ἀνάστα, ὁ δεῖνα, φάγε, καὶ πῶθι, καὶ εὐφράνθητι, *Arise, such a one, eat, drink, and rejoice.* (In Ancorat.) They were so extravagantly credulous as to believe the dead took pleasure in these repasts, and that the phantoms came to eat and drink voluptuously, whilst their relations feasted on the rest of the sacrifice, and ate in common, sitting round the pit or hearth, discoursing of the virtues of the person they came to lament. Besides the eatables, and the ceremony of pouring out the blood of the victims, it was customary at these solemnities to pour out wine, oil, honey, milk, or some other liquors in use, which sometimes they contented themselves with offering only, imagining their condition, as dead persons, would not so well admit of gross food. Such was the superstition among the heathen on this head. Among the Jews and first Christians, these repasts were only charity-feasts, designed principally for the benefit of the poor. The faithful were convinced that the dead could receive no advantage from nor partake of these feasts, and continued them only for the service of the living poor, who came to the place of interment to be fed and refreshed. Mention is made of them, vii. 33. Tob. iv. 18. Bar. vi. 26. not as any superstitious custom, but as a laudable rite for the help and maintenance of the poor. This custom prevailed among the Phœnicians, and from them passed to the Carthaginians, and other people of Africa. One meets with the remains of it among the Christians there in the time of St. Austin; but that father quite abolished this ancient custom for its abuse. (Aug. de Mor. Eccl. xxxiv. Serm. 15.)

Ver. 19. *What good doth the offering to an idol? for neither can it eat nor smell; so is he that is persecuted of the Lord.*] As an idol cannot partake of the burnt-offering (for so κάρπωσις and κάρπωμα are used by this writer, xlv. 16. Lev. iv. 10. 18. xvi. 24. xxii. 22. equivalent to ὁλοκαύτωμα), so he who is encompassed with infirmities and afflicted

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with sickness, as the margin has it, he whom God visiteth or chastiseth in his wrath with bodily evils (the Vulgate adds, *portans mercedes iniquitatis,* as if his sickness was brought upon him as a punishment for his wickedness), cannot relish any good cheer or fine entertainment, nor indeed taste any pleasure in life, (ver. 17.) He seeth the spread table, and the guests elegantly regaling themselves, and laments his loss of appetite and weakness of stomach, as the eunuch does his impotency upon the sight of a fair object. Καὶ στενάζων, at the end of the comparison, ver. 20. I suspect to be an interpolation, as it occurs just before, and the sense is more complete without it.

Ver. 23. *Sorrow hath killed many, and there is no profit therein.*] This is spoken by the figure litotes, for sorrow is not only not profitable but actually hurtful, and the effects of it very dangerous, for sorrow has brought death upon many persons by the illnesses which it has occasioned: it has likewise ruined the souls of many through the despair which it has cast them into, and put them upon hurrying themselves by violence out of the world, through the disrelish of a bitter life. Nor will sorrow be found of any service with respect to the evils or pressures of it; for if they are present, it is to no purpose to grieve, since we can neither remove nor remedy them thereby; and if they are future, such as we apprehend are coming, sadness is still fruitless, since it has no power to prevent them or keep them back; and perhaps they are imaginary evils only which are dreaded, and may never happen; and if real ones, the anticipating misfortunes is making them double. Calmet well observes, that there is but one species of sadness which religion authorizes, and is of service, and that is contrition and sorrow for sin. To be sorry after a godly manner, or, as the margin has it, according to God, is profitable in the highest degree, for such a pious sorrow *worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of;* (2 Cor. vii. 9, 10.) but the sorrow of the world, arising from accidents and misfortunes, past, present, or future, is not only useless, but very injurious; and, according to the same inspired writer, *worketh death.* The most sovereign remedy for sadness, which imbitters every man's cup more or less, is a good life, a pure conscience, and a firm and unshaken confidence in God. Some of the ancients have remarked, that sadness (not a religious one) is an enemy to the Holy Spirit, and that the spirit of prophecy in particular will not abide in a melancholy temper; and accordingly it is observable of the prophet Elisha, that he could not prophesy till a minstrel was brought to him, and the harmony of music had calmed his ruffled and disturbed mind, and had elevated his soul to a proper and becoming pitch. (2 Kings iii. 15.)

Ver. 25. *A cheerful and good heart will have a care of his meat and diet.*] To sadness, carefulness, envy, wrath, and other tormenting passions which destroy the health, hasten wrinkles, and occasion a premature old age, the wise man opposes a cheerful and merry heart. The Hebrew expresses this by a *good heart,* and so it is generally rendered by the LXX. (Deut. xxviii. 47. Judg. xvi. 25. xviii. 20. xix. 6. 9. Ruth iii. 7.) The sense here is, that a gay, open, and merry heart, instead of being subject to and indulging perplexing cares, instead of falling into indolence or carelessness, through grief or lowness of spirits, regales itself with good cheer and pleasantry of discourse, amidst a circle of companions and friends: a person of such a temper has a continual feast, and thereby enjoys a better share of health, and consequently a longer term of life. According to Grotius the sense is, That one of an easy temper is satisfied with all before him, at his meals he minds nothing else: *animus est in patinis,* all other thoughts and cares are then thrown aside and forgot. Bossuet thinks the wise man here advises to have a regard to what one eats, to observe a proper regimen in diet, which contributes greatly to health. The Syriac renders, *Cor bonum, multi sunt cibi ejus, et omne, quod comedit, ostendit super corpus ejus:* That one of a merry heart has the keener appetite, and is the better for his eating, and shews it by his size and complexion; like that of Solomon, *A merry heart does good like a medicine.* (Prov. xvii. 22.) There is a strange transposition of chapters and verses in the six following chapters in the several Greek copies and the Vulgate; nor has the latter part of this escaped the confusion. At chap. xxxvii. they agree again, and proceed regularly to the end.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *WATCHING for riches consumeth the flesh, and the care thereof driveth away sleep.*] In the former chapter the author mentions several causes which injure health, such as sadness, anger, envy, cares, &c. Here he continues the same subject, and instances in covetousness, gluttony, and drunkenness, which are equal enemies to health, and opposes to them temperance and a prudent and discreet use of the good things of this life, which are the proper means to preserve it, to procure content and satisfaction, and to prolong life. The observation of this writer upon the care and solicitude which attend the getting and keeping of riches, is very just. See James v. 3. where the apostle says, that *the rust of gold and silver shall be a witness against rich men, and shall eat their flesh as it were fire,* καὶ ὁ ἰὸς αὐτῶν φάγεται τὰς σάρκας ὑμῶν, where ὁ ἰὸς, by a metonymy, signifieth a carking solicitous care of heaping up riches, and is described, as here, to consume and eat the flesh. And thus *ærugo* is used by Horace,—"Animos ærugo, et cura peculi cum semel imbuerit." And so Plutarch, Ὑπολαμβάνει τις τὸν πλοῦτον ἀγαθὸν εἶναι μέγιστον; τοῦτο τὸ ψεῦδος ἰὸν ἔχει, νέμεται τὴν ψυχήν· (Περὶ δεισιδαίμον.) In St. Matthew, the deceitfulness of riches is compared to thorns which tear the flesh.

Ver. 2. *Watching care will not let a man slumber, as a sore disease breaketh sleep.*] Μέριμνα ἀγρυπνίας ἀπαιτήσει νυσταγμὸν, would be literally and more properly rendered, according to Calmet, Junius, and Grotius, Care and watchfulness will demand or require sleep; but Grabe does not approve of this reading; the true one he says is, ἀπωθήσει, *avertet.* (Prolegom. tom. iii. cap 4.) According to the sense of our version, the reading of the next sentence probably should be, καὶ ἀῤῥώστημα βαρὺ ἐκνήψει ὕπνου. And so Hœschelius says one MS. actually has it. The oriental versions likewise confirm this, *Ægritudo gravis somnum adimit.* And the Vulgate favours it. Junius follows the common reading, and has, *Infirmitatem gravem elicit somnus,* which affords a very good sense; *viz.* that sleep driveth away a sore disease, moderates the anguish and danger of it, as being the most simple and natural remedy for trouble, care, labour, and even sickness itself; according to that observation on Lazarus, John xi. 12. *If he sleepeth, he will*

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do well. Sophocles calls sleep ἰητρὸν νόσου. And Euripides, νόσου ἐπίκουρον. Curtius says of Alexander's soldiers, when he was very dangerously ill, "Non prius (a regia) recesserunt, quàm compertum est somno paulisper requiescere. Hinc certiorem spem salutis ejus in castra retulerunt."

Ver. 3. *The rich hath great labour in gathering riches together, and when he resteth, he is filled with his delicates.*] Ἐν τῇ ἀναπαύσει is inaccurately rendered here, *when he resteth,* and by the Geneva version, *in his rest;* it meaneth, that, after his great labour in gathering riches together, he retireth from business, and leaves it off, to enjoy them, and ceaseth to labour and toil any more. And so the oriental versions understand it, *Demum quiescit ad percipiendas delicias.* And thus ἀνάπαυσις is taken, xi. 19. and the rich man's finding rest, is explained by his eating from that time continually of or enjoying his goods; see Luke xii. 19. where he who had much goods laid up for many years, sings at length this requiem to his soul, ἀναπαύου, φάγε, πίε, εὐφραίνου· and thus Ephraim, εὗρηκα ἀναψυχὴν, i. e. ἀνάπαυσιν ἐμαυτῷ Hos. xii. 9. and so the man in Plautus,—"Dehinc certum est otio me dare, satis partum habeo:" and Horace,

"Hac mente laborem
Sese ferre, senes ut in otia tuta recedant,
Aiunt, cum sibi sint congesta cibaria." (Sat. lib. i.)

Ver. 4. *The poor laboureth in his poor estate, and when he leaveth off, he is still needy.*] Ἐκοπίασε πτωχὸς ἐν ἐλαττώσει βίου, i. e. *in want of things necessary for life;* so βίος frequently signifies in this book. See Prov. xxiii. 3. where *deceitful meat* is by the LXX. rendered ζωὴ ψευδοῦς. The rich and the poor both labour, but with different success; the rich takes pains to increase his riches, and to put himself in a condition to enjoy with comfort, in the decline of life, what he has got, and to live on the fruits of his labours the remainder of his days: the poor labours for a bare subsistence, and cannot get forward so as to lay up a stock, or viaticum, for his future necessities; and when he is old, instead of tasting the sweets of repose, and living upon what he had beforehand provided, he finds himself in the same state of poverty as he set out with, and is obliged to repeat his daily fatigue, though his strength almost faileth him, and he is but a shadow of his former self. Vatablus and Drusius understand this and the foregoing verse thus: There are some so lucky as to have success in every thing they undertake, and others who are always as unfortunate; the former heap up riches, often unexpectedly, and wealth comes to them without their seeking; the others continue poor, though they take never so great pains; some misfortune or other pulls them back, and fixes them to their former wretchedness, (xi. 11, 12.) This inequality in their states is the appointment of God's providence; his blessings upon a man's labour, or the want of it, makes the difference, (xi. 14. Psal. cxxvi. 1, 2. Prov. x. 22.)

Ver. 5. *He that loveth gold shall not be justified.*] *i.e.* Will not be just. *Non erit justus,* Jun. and the Syr. *Non erit insons.* According to that of Solomon, *He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.* (Prov. xxviii. 20.) His eagerness to accumulate wealth will put him upon many acts of fraud, violence, and injustice. "Nunquam pudor est properantis avari."

He that followeth corruption shall have enough thereof.] Ὁ διώκων διαφθοράν, αὐτὸς πλησθήσεται. The copies vary here: some have οὗτος, others αὐτὰ, all of them, as I conceive, wrong; the true reading seems to be, αὐτῆς πλησθήσεται, which our translators follow, and so Dr. Grabe, from conjecture, restores the place. Διαφθορὰ, which is here rendered *corruption,* by a figure means corruptible things, φθαρτὰ, as silver and gold; (1 Pet. i. 18.) and the sense is, He that is too intent upon getting riches shall be corrupted, seduced, and betrayed, by them. *Per easdem seducetur.* (Syr.) Grotius conjectures the true reading of the Greek to be, ὁ διώκων διάφορον, οὗτος ὀλισθήσεται, i. e. *He that loveth money shall fall,* or will transgress often; διάφορον is used in this sense, vii. 18. xxvii. 1. xlii. 5. 2 Macc. i. 35. iii. 6.

Ver. 6. *Gold hath been the ruin of many, and their destruction was present.*] Πολλοὶ ἐδόθησαν εἰς πτῶμα. There are many fine sentiments in the heathen writings upon the immoderate or unlawful pursuit of riches; but that short one of St. Paul's, 1 Tim. vi. 10. is beyond all, ῥίζα πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἐστιν ἡ φιλαργυρία. Some copies read here, πολλοὶ ἐδέθησαν χάριν χρυσίου, which Junius follows; *i. e.* Covetousness hath put many upon stealing, and other crimes, which have been the occasion of their being imprisoned, and laid in irons. Thus Calmet, *Plusieurs ont été mis dans les liens à cause de l'or.* Many also have suffered death for the crimes which they were drawn into by the charms of gold, and though their destruction was plainly before their face, ἐγενήθη ἀπώλεια αὐτῶν κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν, and they knew their fate, yet they would run upon it for the sake of money.

Ver. 8. *Blessed is the rich that is found without blemish, and hath not gone after gold.*] Ὃς ὀπίσω χρυσίου οὐκ ἐπορεύθη. This phrase is often used in Scripture, and generally in a bad sense, denoting the following some idol, or using some idolatrous practice. In ver. 7. gold is called *a stumbling-block* or an abomination; and they that are too fond of it are said there *to sacrifice to it* as their idol. And by St. Paul, covetousness is expressly called *idolatry,* Col. iii. 5. The going after gold, means, the setting the heart upon it, and trusting in riches. And so the Vulgate expounds it, *Beatus (dives) qui post aurum non abiit, nec speravit in pecunia et thesauris.* The temptations to sin, occasioned and administered by money, are so many and powerful, that nothing is more rare or more worthy of commendation than a man that is rich, and at the same time innocent, just, and humble. He that can possess abundance without being attached to his wealth, or puffed up by it, and can part with it without much regret and concern, is truly perfect. To be poor in spirit amidst a flow of riches, to be humble in a high estate, to be in the midst of fire without burning, in the midst of flatterers without being exalted with pride, and in the thickest of temptations without falling by any of them; to have the power of doing evil even with impunity, and not to make use of it to any bad purpose; of such a behaviour a man may justly glory, ἔστω εἰς καύχησιν, let him have his due praise. As such instances of a just carriage and superior virtue are very rarely to be met with, in an overgrown fortune, well may the wise man ask in the next verse, who or where is the unblemished rich man? and we will call him blessed, for he is a sort of miracle, and has performed wonders.

Ver. 10. *Who hath been tried thereby and found perfect? then let him glory. Who might offend, and hath not offended; and done evil, and hath not done it?*] This is not

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spoken of human frailty in general, but of men's propensity to sin in money matters only; and so St. Austin confines it: he interprets this passage of concealing or withholding what is another man's right. "If you have (says he) restored to your neighbour his own, when nobody but you two were together at the delivery of it, and God only was witness;—if you have restored to the son after the death of his father what he had deposited with you, and the son knew nothing of it;—or if you have met with a purse of money accidentally upon the road, and nobody saw you take it up, and deliver it to the right owner as soon as you could discover or overtake him, then this eulogium of the honest and perfect man belongs to you." (Com. in Tit.) We find many such cases put and determined in the writings of moralists; and several instances occur of heathens, whom no law bound but that of natural conscience, who have acted disinterestedly upon such occasions; and, from a principle of honesty, have nobly withstood an advantage they might have made. When an ignorant or needy person hath offered things to sale for less than the value, they have generously corrected the mistake, shewed the real worth, and paid the full price. (Vit. Isid. ap. Phot. Cod.)

Ver. 12. *If thou sit at a bountiful table, be not greedy upon it; and say not, There is much meat on it.*] Literally the translation is, Dost thou sit at a great table? open not thy throat upon it; *i. e.* Do not shew thyself greedy or voracious of what is set before thee, by eating too much because thou seest such plenty. We have the like advice, Prov. xxiii. 1—3. Or the sense may be, Do not shew thyself an epicure or glutton, by talking too much about victuals, or commending too savourily and lusciously what is before thee on the table. For though it may be an instance of civility and politeness to seem pleased with the entertainment in general; yet to dwell upon the pleasures of eating, the charms of a well-spread table, and the regaling the appetite; to enlarge upon the excellency of this dish, and the delicacy and rarity of that, and the great satisfaction arising from tickling the palate by such a pleasing variety—betrays rather gluttony than any useful knowledge or valuable accomplishment. Or if with Calmet we suppose a Hebraism here, and understand πολλά γε in the sense of too much, as רב (*multum*) is used, Numb. xvi. 7. Deut. i. 6. ii. 3. the meaning then will be, Do not, when you see the quantity of victuals and variety of dishes on the table, exclaim and find fault that too much is provided, which shews either covetousness or jealousy in you: it looks as if you expected or dreaded the like expense, that you are vexed, as apprehending an equal obligation upon you to make the like provision in your turn; or that you are jealous and envious at the other's superior fortune and grander way of living, and therefore condemn the entertainment for its profusion and prodigality, as not being able to give the like yourself, or unwilling through want of spirit. Whether it be jealousy or avarice that occasions your reflections, nothing can be more disagreeable than such a temper. In the following verse it is called a wicked or an evil eye, and so the Hebrews term it. (See xiv. 8, 9. Prov. xxiii. 6. Matt. xx. 15.) One cannot have a stronger instance of an evil or covetous eye, grudging and exclaiming against every appearance of expense, as so much waste and profusion, than in the traitor Judas, who had indignation against the pious disciple for anointing the feet of Jesus with costly ointment: *Why was this waste of the ointment made?—why was it not sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?* not that he cared for the poor, but was an envious thief. (John xii. 5, 6.) His eye was evil, because she was so hospitable and good. Athenæus remarks, that the Egyptians did not set their dishes upon the table as is the modern custom, but they were carried round the company, that the guests might help themselves. (Lib. iv. cap. 13.) Our author wrote this book in Egypt; but it is manifest from this verse, and the context, that he refers to the manner of sitting at table and serving up dishes on it, according to the custom of the Greeks, who in the time of this writer were masters of Egypt, and had introduced their customs into it.

Ver. 13. *Remember that a wicked eye is an evil thing; and what is created more wicked than an eye? therefore it weepeth upon every occasion.*] Διὰ τοῦτο ἀπὸ παντὸς προσώπου δακρύει. This cannot be true spoken of the eye in general, nothing being more excellent in its kind; it must therefore mean an evil or niggardly eye. The sense is, What is more wicked than such an eye? or rather, as the Bishops' Bible has it, *What thing created is worse than a wicked eye?* The Syriac and Arabic add, that God hates such an eye, probably because he hates every thing that is evil. The next sentence, *Therefore he weepeth upon every occasion,* is far more obscure: πρόσωπον, it is certain, is applied to things inanimate: Grotius says, "Omne id quod exterius spectatur, aut indicium præbet, vocant Hebræi Panim, Græci πρόσωπον." (Com. in loc. see Leigh's Crit. Sac. in voc.) Thus the shew-bread, because it was to be set before the face or in the presence of the Lord continually, in Hebrew is called the *bread of faces,* or of *presence;* and by the LXX. ἄρτος ἐνώπιος. (Exod. xxv. 30.) Now if πρόσωπον be taken in this larger sense, the marginal reading, *before every thing that is presented,* will afford a plain and natural sense; *viz.* What is more wicked than an eye which lusteth so to gratify a gluttonous appetite in eating of every dainty which is set before it, that it will even weep if it imagines it shall not be satisfied? This sense seems confirmed from Prov. xxiii. 1. where παρατιθέμενά σοι, i. e. *what is set before thee,* as our version has it, in the Hebrew is, אשר לפניך, *quod ad facies tuas,* as Pagnin renders. Messieurs of Port-Royal apply this passage to the master of the feast himself,—that being a covetous, jealous, and suspicious person, he is so affected with the countenance and behaviour of the guests whom he has invited, that he cries, or is ready to cry, whether they eat too much or too little, are too free or too sparing, too merry or too sad. Grotius likewise expounds it of a covetous entertainer, who weeps at every thought or appearance of expense, *ab omni conspectu,* sc. *impendii.* Or may we not understand this verse of the lust of the eye in the first transgression, that, as a natural punishment for his then wickedness, tears flow from every face? or, putting ἐπὶ for ἀπὸ, that every eye sheds tears? μνήσθητι seems to point to some fatal time, and what time have we so much cause to remember?

Ver. 14. *Stretch not thine hand whithersoever it looketh, and thrust it not with him into the dish.*] Οὗ ἐὰν ἐπιβλέψῃ, μὴ ἐκτείνῃς χεῖρά σου, καὶ μὴ συνθλίβου αὐτῷ ἐν τρυβλίῳ. The rendering of the Bishops' Bible is more explicit and plain, *Lay not thine hand upon every thing that thine eye seeth*

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probably following a copy which had ὁ ἐὰν ἐπιβλέψῃ, which may seem to be countenanced by αὐτῷ in the next sentence. Συνθλίβεσθαι is not *to thrust*, as we translate it, and as the Syriac also has it, but *to be squeezed* or *pressed;* or, taking it in the middle voice, *to squeeze* or *press*. Perhaps the author means, that persons should not be so eager as to press their hands one against another in the dish. But how are we then to understand αὐτῷ? Vulgate omits it, and some copies instead of it read ἐν τῷ τρυβλίῳ, which gives an easy sense. Our translators render *with him;* but who is the person intended by *him? Neighbour* is mentioned in the following verse, but not before. Arabic puts *socios* for it, which has a good meaning; but the best way, as I conceive, of settling the difficulty will be to join αὐτῷ with τρυβλίῳ, and then the sense will be, Do not scramble or crowd hands in the very dish, which shews not only great rudeness, but voraciousness. The advice, as contained in the whole verse, seems to be this; Cast not your eyes on the nicest dishes, nor long after the best morsels therein, nor rudely seize on what pleases you most; but, with regard to eating, restrain both your right hand and right eye: for even in this sense, of curbing the appetite, the learned Spanhemius understands that precept of the gospel. Grotius expounds the passage of contending or striving with others for a place at table, which too is rude, vulgar, and shews the want of true taste and breeding.

Ver. 15. *Judge of thy neighbour by thyself, and be discreet in every point.*] Νόει τὰ τοῦ πλησίον ἐκ σεαυτοῦ, καὶ ἐπὶ παντὶ ῥήματι διανοοῦ. This maxim, as it is of excellent use, ἐν παντὶ ῥήματι, in every thing, or upon all occasions, and of great moment in the conduct of life, so is it no less serviceable when applied to eating, of which, from the context, it must be understood. And in this light the sense is, As you would not like to see another greedy and voracious, and seizing at your own table what is most delicate, or to his goût; so from hence form your own conduct, not to offend in the like particular, nor take the same indecent liberty; as you do not approve of such freedoms in others, so imagine they will condemn the like in you. Thus Junius, *Ex teipso de aliis judica, qui nolles ab altero patinam exhauriri.* And the Arabic, *Scias portionem sociorum tuorum parem esse tuæ, idemque eos velle ac te.* If I should take it ill,—*Positum ante mea quia pullum in parte catini sustulit esuriens:* I should not snatch at any rarity from another's plate. And if I should be displeased at another's taking before me, or from me, what pleases his taste most, I ought not to be so selfish as to take what is most nice for my own palate.

Ver. 16. *Eat as it becometh a man those things which are set before thee; and devour not, lest thou be hated.*] The Vulgate adds very properly, *frugi, utere quasi homo frugi his quæ tibi apponuntur; i. e.* Use with temperance, or as a temperate man should, what is set before thee. Though the sense of the present rendering may very well be justified; *i. e.* Eat as a man should, with decency and moderation, and devour not like a beast of prey, which seizes on every thing before it. A sober and discreet person eats to satisfy nature only; an intemperate one to pamper and inflame. When Socrates one day invited a number of friends to dine with him, his wife was concerned how she should entertain them, and provide for them suitably to their rank:—If they are temperate and modest, says the philosopher, there is enough; if they are not so, they are not worth troubling ourselves about them. (Ap. Laert. lib. ii.) This reply was proper from one whose maxim it was, that a man should eat only to live, not live only to eat. St. Austin laments the great power of the sensitive appetite, even over himself, and his impotency to subdue it, and says, that the victory over it is truly praiseworthy, and the effect only of God's grace: "Certo quotidie contra concupiscentiam manducandi et bibendi . . . et quis est, Domine, qui non rapiatur aliquantulum extra metas necessitatis? Quisquis est, magnus est, magnificet nomen tuum." (Confess. lib. x. cap. 31.)

Ver. 17. *Leave off first, for manners' sake; and be not unsatiable, lest thou offend.*] Either the master of the feast or his guests, through voraciousness. As it is not expected or required that you should cease eating as soon almost as you are set down, which may be a sort of silent rebuke to the rest of the company, as if they ate too much, and interpreted as if you were not pleased with what was provided; so neither shouldest thou make thyself remarkable by eating more, or longer, than others, which is yet more impolite: modesty and a respect for the company demand this. Thus the Tigurine and oriental versions, *Modestiæ causa desiste primus.* To have done last, or help one's self first, equally offends against decorum and good breeding. True politeness is always attended with a decent modesty; and such as betray a want of this virtue through self-indulgence, and a contempt of others, can never be thought perfectly well-bred or thoroughly accomplished. Clemens Alexandrinus spends a whole chapter in laying down rules for temperance and sobriety, and has intermixed some which regard decency and politeness, and particularly instances in intemperance, as a breach both of duty and good manners. (Pædag. lib. ii. cap. 2.) Ovid's advice is not very unlike that of this wise man's:

> "Neve diu præsume dapes, sed desine citra,
> Et capias paulo, quam cupis esse, minus."

Ver. 20. *Sound sleep cometh of moderate eating: he riseth early, and his wits are with him; but the pain of watching, and choler, and pangs of the belly, are with an unsatiable man.*] Ὕπνος ὑγιείας, the sleep of health, *somnus salubris*, as the Syriac has it. Horace's description of the temperate man is, that, after his being refreshed by sleep, —"Vegetus præscripta ad munia surgit," Sat. lib. ii. 2. where he mentions the very same inconveniences attending luxury as the wise man here does, and the contrast is most beautifully drawn. Pliny mentions, as the consequence of too much or too high feeding, "furiales somni, inquies nocturna." Porphyry's comparison is very just, that a full meal is like Sisera's banquet, at the end of which there is a nail struck into a man's temples. A philosopher's treat, therefore, says Plato, is preferable to that of any other person, because there is no remembrance of it after in the head, whatever there may be in the memory; and the guests even enjoy it the next day, by perceiving no bad consequences from it. Nothing is more frequent in the heathen moralists than to advise their friends not only to practise temperance, but to be able and willing to bear even hunger and thirst, because such a habit wonderfully advances a man in the study and practice of wisdom: for the mind is then best enlightened when it is free from the burden of meat; and

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to pamper and regale the body is but to make the prison of the soul the stronger. "No man (says a pious prelate) ever repented that he rose from the table sober, healthful, and with his wits about him; but many have repented that they sat so long, and continued that bad custom, till their health, their understanding, their virtue, and their God, departed from them." (Bishop Taylor's Serm.) And, to finish the character, the epicure, after his full meal, ἀσθμαίνει, pants for breath, a prelude of what is coming upon him, and is on a sudden surprised with a stroke of an apoplexy, or found dead in his bed.

Ver. 21. *And if thou hast been forced to eat, arise, go forth, vomit, and thou shalt have rest.*] Εἰ ἐβιάσθης ἐν ἐδέσμασιν, ἀνάστα μεσοπορῶν. If you have been constrained or over-persuaded to eat, and through the importunity of others have overcharged your stomach, and find it out of order, rise from the midst of the company the very first opportunity you can with decency. The wise man in the foregoing verses had in the strongest manner recommended sobriety and temperance; but as it may sometimes happen, even to the most regular persons, to be engaged unawares in some sort of excess, through inadvertency, too much complaisance, or the influence of example, here he advises instantly to unload the stomach upon such an occasion; but he neither approves of the excess, nor of the unseemly way to remove it, but only by way of physic and necessity; he thinks it more advisable to avoid illness by easing the stomach privately, than to keep in it what may not only be disagreeable and troublesome, but dangerous and hurtful; not to attempt to cure indigestion by a free glass, but to remove the mischief from intemperance by a timely discharge. Debauches always hurt the constitution, and therefore it is better to prevent them altogether by abstaining from that excess, which cannot be indulged without danger, nor cured but by a remedy which carries something disagreeable or shameful in it. Calmet observes, that ἔμεσον is not in the Vatican nor some other editions, which he thinks the copyists might drop, as carrying in its notion something unseemly: but, if this was their reason, they were too nice and delicate; even the Scripture, which is remarkable for its care in this respect, scruples not occasionally to mention it; (Prov. xxiii. 8. Isa. xxviii. 8.) nor is the mention of the remedy to be condemned, which upon such an accident is allowed to be highly proper; but the occasion, the eating and drinking to excess, which is so faulty. The advice, according to the oriental versions, is, to retire from company, to go to bed, and sleep off the debauch.

Ver. 22. *In all thy works be quick, so shall there no sickness come unto thee.*] Whenever thou findest thy stomach disordered through intemperance, follow instantly the prescription above advised, so shalt thou escape sickness, or some bad consequence, that might have fallen upon thee. The context necessarily requires this, as the primary sense. It may, indeed, mean in general, Be active and diligent in all thy undertakings, (see the like expression, Prov. xxii. 29.) so shall thy work succeed better, and thou shalt even improve thy health thereby; or if, with the generality of expositors, we understand this purely of bodily exercise, the observation will be just in the following sense,—Be active, athletic, and laborious; let exercise be your physic, and you shall escape thereby a number of diseases: for in reality the greatest part of men's illness arises either from intemperance, spoken of before, or from indolence, which may be supposed to be condemned here: where both these, *viz.* temperance and exercise, are joined together, we have reason to expect health, and there is a comfortable prospect of a vigorous old age.

Ver. 23. *Whoso is liberal of his meat, men shall speak well of him, and the report of his good housekeeping shall be believed.*] The Psalmist says, *So long as thou dost well unto thyself, men will speak well of thee;* but it is no less true, what the wise man here observes, that he that does good unto others shall have their praise and commendation. (Psal. xlix. 18.) As the liberal man is called λαμπρὸς ἐπ' ἄρτοις, so the same metaphor is continued in καλλονῇ, which means beneficence, and by St. Ambrose is rendered *bonitas.* To this is opposed πονηρία, in the following verse, which means sordidness and covetousness, as it does, ver. 13. above. By ἄρτος, here rendered *bread* simply, we are to understand victuals or provisions in general, and so it is often used, as in that description of Joseph's entertainment of his brethren, it is said, *He ordered to set on bread;* (Gen. xliii. 31.) and in that petition of the Lord's prayer, *Give us this day our daily bread.* Solomon expresses himself in the same manner, and upon the like occasion, *He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed, for he giveth of his bread to the poor.* (Prov. xxii. 9.) The sense of the whole verse is, That the good, beneficent, and charitable man, who dealeth his bread to the hungry, and takes all opportunities of helping and obliging others, will have many advocates; men will always be disposed to believe, and report every thing to his advantage; there are so many instances of his goodness, and so many known proofs of his generosity and kindness, that his credit is firmly established, and his name will be always mentioned with honour. Whereas niggardliness will as certainly disgrace a person; his hard heart and mean actions shall raise him many enemies; nothing can be said of the miser so bad, but will be believed and propagated, and many things shall be aggravated or invented to make him appear still worse, and more pinching than he really is.

Ver. 25. *Shew not thy valiantness in wine.*] Value not thyself upon a strong head, much less affect the character of a hard drinker, nor pride thyself in being able to bear much liquor without being disordered or disguised; provoke not others on that account, *mero certare,* to drink with you, by challenging them to trials of that sort; for the account of temperance is not to be taken from the strength of a man's head, but from the measures of religion; and though men may not force their understanding, nor disorder themselves by very plentiful draughts, and, by a particular strength, I will not call it happiness, of constitution, be able to talk still, and transact business and the affairs of the world, yet may they be intemperate notwithstanding, as not being fitted for the things of the Spirit, nor the work and business of God; and though they offend not in the mere act, they are devoid of the spirit of sobriety. We may properly distinguish between the drunkard and the hard drinker; the former drowns his senses in his cups, and does it often; he loses all that distinguishes the man, his reason, his speech, his erect posture, and often his sense of duty and religion. This indeed may sometimes happen through a head naturally weak, or made so by repeated de-

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bauches, but still it is drunkenness; for it is not the quantity of intoxicating liquor, but the being disordered, and the habit and custom of it, that denominates the drunkard; he is not such merely from an accidental slip, for even good men, such as Noah, have been so surprised, but from indulging and continuing in a known infirmity, and not prudently guarding the weak part, where he is sensible his failing lies, and thereby is the oftener exposed to disgrace and sin. The hard drinker, on the contrary, is one who sits long and drinks deep; he gives and receives challenges, and comes off conqueror; he is fond of a round of company, and is the last to break it up: one shall perceive little or no alteration in him after a hard service, no want of reason or memory, no faultering in his voice, no doubtful or uncertain steps; he seems comparatively cool and unconcerned, is scarce warm or elevated, and yet, considering the quantity consumed, and the time lost at it, such a one deserves not to be called a temperate person, as he is immoderate in the use of those good things which God intended only for refreshments; and though he be so fortunate, through the advantage of a strong head, not to appear a drunkard, yet he will scarce escape censure and reflection, nor the woe denounced by the prophet upon such as *are mighty to drink, and men of strength to mingle strong drink.* (Isa. v. 11. 22.)

Ver. 26. *The furnace proveth the edge by dipping, so doth wine the hearts of the proud by drunkenness.*] According to Jansenius, the sense is, That as the blade is proved by dipping, and contracts more toughness thereby, so the hearts of men, by being drenched in liquor, *fiunt ad nocendum promptiora,* become more quarrelsome, and inclined to mischief. But the meaning, I conceive, rather is, As the fire proves the temper of the blade, and the smith easily distinguishes upon trial the goodness of the steel, so does wine, immoderately taken, lay open men's hearts, and discover their temper and humour without disguise. The common reading of the Greek, in almost all the copies, is, κάμινος δοκιμάζει στόμωμα ἐν βαφῇ, οὕτως οἶνος καρδίας ἐν μάχῃ ὑπερηφάνων, but the true reading seems to be, κάμινος δοκιμάζει στόμωμα ἐν βαφῇ, οὕτως οἶνος καρδίας ὑπερηφάνων ἐν μέθῃ, for (besides that Clem. Alex. quoting this passage, omits the words ἐν μάχῃ) quarrelling, that certain attendant upon drinking, is mentioned ver. 29. and so is needless here. The Vulgate seems to have followed a copy that read in this manner, *Vinum corda superborum arguet in ebrietate potatum,* which Junius and our translators follow; and thus Calmet takes it, *Le forgeron distingue aisément une bonne arme, et un bon trenchant par le feu, et par le trempe; ainsi le vin decouvre le cœur des superbes dans l'yvresse.* The old adage says, *in vino veritas;* but experience shews that men at that time do not always speak the truth, but often exceed it; their conceit of themselves is much raised, and they are apt then, through self-sufficiency, to boast of imaginary accomplishments, and to deliver themselves not only with freedom and boldness, but often with rudeness and insolence; and therefore the author, not without good reason, inserted καρδίας ὑπερηφάνων. Of all the poets Theognis comes nearest this writer on the subject, who uses the very same simile, to shew that wine discovers the thoughts even of the most cautious and wise. (Γνωμ. 499.)

Ver. 29. *Wine, drunken with excess, maketh bitterness of the mind, with brawling and quarrelling,* &c.] See Prov. xx. 1. xxiii. 29. Hor. Carm. lib. i. 18. And thus Philo, ἰδεῖν μέντοι καὶ τοὺς ἐπαποδυομένους πολυοινίᾳ, κ. τ. λ. *Videmus istos qui quotidie descendunt in certamen temulentiæ, et hoc agunt solum ut vini plurimum in ventrem ingerant, symbolas conferre tanquam in aliquid utile, mulctari tandem rebus omnibus, opibus, corpore, anima. Hæc enim conferentes, et rem familiarem minuunt, et corporis vires per delicatum victum frangunt, atque molliunt, et animas, hiberni torrentis in morem, immodicis epulis inundatas, demergunt in barathrum.* (Περὶ μέθης.) St. Chrysostom observes very justly, that men are afraid of natural death, and yet they ought to fear that less than a death which happens to them by intemperance: the former strikes by an inevitable necessity, the latter is hastened by a voluntary corruption; the one is by the appointment of God, the other through the instigation of the devil; the former is a separation of soul and body, the latter a shameful destruction both of the one and the other; by the former the soul being disengaged from the body becomes more free, and, if righteous, approaches to the likeness of angels; in the latter, the soul is wholly immersed, sunk, and lost in the irregularities and disorder of the body; its reason is clouded, its will enslaved, and the soul abandons itself to anger, pride, lust, and other criminal passions. (See Hom. 29. in Gen. ix.)

Ver. 31. *Rebuke not thy neighbour at the wine, and despise him not in his mirth; give him no despiteful words, and press not upon him with urging him (to drink).*] The observation is the same with that of Solomon, that there is a time for all things, which reason can best discover, and discretion knows how to use and apply; for example, it is impertinent to propose business and matters of consequence, at a time when people are met for pure refreshment and relaxation; it is also improper to dispute with or attempt to rebuke persons in drink, when they are least able and disposed to attend to any argument or remonstrance. Advice then is not only useless, but it is often dangerous to give it, and much more is it so to oppose or contradict one in that condition, especially a passionate, proud, or powerful person. The fate of Clitus and Callisthenes, the favourites of Alexander, who put them to death for contradicting him in his cups, should in prudence discourage such an attempt. And if bare opposition will give offence, much more will opprobrious words, and ill-timed reflections upon a man's disorderly and loose way of living, be sure to irritate him. The last particular is, *Press not upon him with urging him to drink; i. e.* Take not the advantage of the condition you find him in, to urge him to drink more, much less force it upon him; think it not any addition to thy honour, wisdom, or goodness, to impose upon one who cannot help or judge for himself, or to have contrived and completed his downfal. Thereby thou makest thyself a partaker of his sin, and are answerable for all evil consequences that may happen. The Vulgate renders, *Ne premas illum in repetendo; i. e.* Entice him not to drink by any artful means,—as, by proposing, says Calmet, some favourite healths to him, which you know he cannot withstand, and thereby engaging him to pledge you; which, though a common, is an insidious way of gaining an advantage over another, and cheating him under the mask of friendship. It was a commendable decree at Ahasuerus's royal feast, and worthy to be introduced into all company, that none should be compelled to drink, but every man

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should do according to his own pleasure; (Esth. i. 8.) and to prevent disorders of this kind was part of the business of the architriclinus, who is mentioned in the beginning of the next chapter.

CHAP. XXXII.

Ver. 1. *IF thou be made the master of a feast, lift not thyself up.*] The literal rendering of the Greek is, *Have they made thee a ruler or master?* and thus the Vulgate, *Rectorem te posuerunt? noli extolli.* The wise man seems to continue here the subject of feasts and entertainments, and alludes to a very ancient custom among the Greeks and Romans, and, as it should seem, among the Persians also, from Ahasuerus's banquet, (Esth. i.) which was, to appoint a ruler of the feast, ὁ συμποσιάρχης, *Rex vini*, as Horace, or *Dominus convivii*, as Varro calls him, who should have the care of every thing and person, and prescribe what each should drink. The author of this book, though he wrote in Egypt, speaks here according to the custom of the Greeks which ruled over it at that time. The king, ruler, or master of these feasts, for by all these names he is called, was appointed either by casting lots, to which Horace refers, "nec regna vini sortiere talis," or by the choice of those who were met at the entertainment together. This is not to be understood of such feasts, where company came together by a set invitation, but of such where each person contributed his symbolum, or share, towards the common expense, and had a vote to appoint the architriclinus, or president. The grave Cato seems pleased with their rules, or *leges convivales*, and expresses his satisfaction at the appointment of such an overseer. "Me vero et magisteria delectant a majoribus instituta; et is sermo, qui more majorum summo adhibetur magistro in poculis." (De Senect. Orat. 5. in Ver.) At these feasts every thing was conducted with the greatest decorum, without any irregularity or excess; so that men of letters, philosophers, old men as well as the younger sort, did not scruple to attend them: and their agreeable conversation and improving discourse were not less entertaining than the music which accompanied them. (Plut. Sympos. lib. i. Athen. Deipnos.) The master, who had the care and conduct of the whole, acquainted each person when it was a proper time to retire, and thereby prevented any quarrels or disturbance. The wise man, in the latter part of the verse, advises the ruler himself not to be exalted upon the honour done him; but to study rather to content and please his guests, than to feast or regale himself, and to consider himself rather as their steward for the time, than as their superior. Plutarch gives the same advice upon the like occasion, nor is it very different from that of our Saviour, ὁ μείζων ἐν ὑμῖν, γενέσθω ὡς ὁ νεώτερος, καὶ ὁ ἡγούμενος ὡς ὁ διακονῶν. (Luke xxii. 26.)

Ver. 2. *And, when thou hast done all thy office, take thy place, that thou mayest be merry with them, and receive a crown for thy well-ordering of the feast.*] Ἵνα εὐφρανθῇς δι' αὐτοὺς, καὶ εὐκοσμίας χάριν, λάβῃς στέφανον. Literally the rendering is, That you may rejoice on their account, *ut lætetis propter ipsos* (Vulgate), when you see them pleased with what you have done and provided, and may receive a garland or crown by way of ornament. Not only the guests were crowned with flowers, (Wisd. ii.) but the master of the feast likewise; and sometimes he was created by this ceremony only, which Plautus intimates, "Do hanc tibi florentem florenti, tu sic eris dictatrix nobis." (In Pers.) The Greek does not necessarily confine this to feasting, though the Vulgate and our translation do. It is applicable to any persons in a public post, who have the care of others committed to them, and have discharged their trust with sufficiency and credit. Bossuet and Messieurs of Port-Royal apply this and the former verse to the rulers and governors of the church: the latter have this fine reflection,—No man must intrude himself into the pastoral office without being regularly chosen and lawfully appointed thereto; nor must he be puffed up on account of the charge he is intrusted with, but be humble even among those that are under his care, and live with and among them as one of them; for a minister of Jesus Christ ought to consider, not the dignity which distinguishes him above others, but his own condition as a man and as a sinner, which equals him to others: he ought to consider that he is appointed, not so much to rule over men as over vice and sin; and to place his joy and satisfaction not in the rank which raises him above his brethren, but in the welfare of the souls committed to him; not in the power, state, or pomp, which surrounds him, but in acting up to his character, and discharging the whole of his duty. And having faithfully dispensed the word of truth, and fed his flock with spiritual food at the holy table, he will be praised by Jesus Christ, the founder of that spiritual repast, and by all the guests likewise that partake of it, being at present a father and physician to such as are under his direction and charge, as they will be hereafter, in the presence of God, and at his coming, both his glory and joy.

Ver. 4. *Pour not out words where there is a musician; and shew not forth wisdom out of time.*] Ὅπου ἀκρόαμα, μὴ ἐκχέῃς λαλιάν. Ἀκρόαμα signifies a concert or symphony of music, not only among the Greeks, but even among the Latins, who borrowed it from them, as appears by its use in Cicero, Macrobius, and other writers. The Vulgate renders, *Ubi auditus non est, non effundas sermonem*, as if ἀκρόασις had been the reading; which affords a good sense likewise, and agrees well with the latter clause, *viz.* Do not lavish your discourse before persons not disposed to hear or to attend to it; know first the taste of the company, and adapt your subject accordingly. But that of our translators seems preferable; That even an elder, to whom the compliment was paid to speak first, and whose observations at all other times were so welcome and valuable, should defer his harangue, when the company is listening to and intent upon music; for that the best things, the most serious and important reflections, lose their beauty and grace when ill-timed; should consider that discourse and music have both their times, and often make part of the same entertainment; that as music itself would be ungrateful and unseasonable in the midst of the former, so neither should the pleasure and harmony of the latter be disturbed and interrupted by any morose cynic or conceited philosopher, who should officiously stand up and expect to be heard, when the ears of the company are otherwise engaged.

Ver. 5. *A concert of music in a banquet of wine is as a signet of carbuncle set in gold.*] By a *banquet of wine* is meant a festival-day, a day of rejoicing and indulgence: for on common days and at their ordinary meals they drank

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no wine. That the ancients had a great regard for music, and used it at their feasts, see Quintil. lib. i. Hor. lib. iii. 11. where he says, "Divitum mensis et amica templis, testudo." It is certain, that, after the entertainment, a harp was brought in to and presented to each of the company, who played on it in their turns. Thus Tully, "Ille mos fuit, ut in conviviis post cœnam circumferretur lyra, quam ex ordine pulsarent convivæ." (Tuscul. Quæst. lib. i.) At first the company sang together a hymn in honour of Bacchus; (Plut. Sympos. lib. i.) afterward the guests repeated and sang verses in honour of famous men, heroes, and benefactors. (See cap. 44.) "Carmina in epulis a singulis convivis esse cantata de clarorum virorum laudibus, in Originibus scriptum reliquit Cato." (Cic. in Brut.) According to Varro, some modest and ingenious youths were appointed to chant the praises of their ancestors to music. This was the practice among the heathens. As to the Jews, they at their great feasts sang hymns in praise of the Lord, (Matt. xxvi. 30.) and they began and ended them with these, as is evident from the practice of our Saviour, who sang a hymn with his apostles after his last supper. Philo, describing the customs of the Therapeutæ on their festival-days, and particularly on the seventh day of the week, when they always met together, says, that before they sat down to table to their repast, they lifted up their hands and eyes to heaven, to implore the blessing of God upon what was before them; (see ver. 13.) and afterward they sat down in order. The elders, as it became them, had the chief of the discourse, and resolved such doubts and questions as were proposed to them with great gravity and discretion: after the repast they all rose up; and the person who presided at the ceremony began a hymn, either a new one of his own making, or one composed by some prophet or bard in honour of God. For there were a number of such ancient hymns, which were sung with music before the altar, some as they stood without motion, and others as they modestly danced, with a different pitch and modulation of voice. As soon as the president began to sing, and had set the tune, all the rest followed in a lower voice. At the conclusion, they all united, and sang together with a loud voice, men and women, without distinction, forming a melodious harmony, by the mixture of deep and shrill notes. Such was the order observed by the Therapeutæ at their public repasts; nor did they scruple the use of music upon such occasions, composed of instruments and voices, though they were reckoned persons of the most strictness, seriousness, and wisdom, among the Jews. (De Vit. Contempl.) See xl. 20. xlix. 2. Isa. v. 11, 12. Amos vi. 5, 6. where, though the ill uses only, made by the wicked Israelites of their music in their banquets of wine, are mentioned by these prophets, yet are they nevertheless good proofs how much it was in vogue among them.

Ver. 7. *Speak, young man, if there be need of thee, and yet scarcely when thou art twice asked.*] There are several senses of this verse, according as it is pointed. 1. Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, ἐν χρείᾳ σου, μόλις. And so the Vulgate, *Loquere, adolescens, in causa tua vix.* 2. Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, ἐν χρείᾳ σου, μόλις δὶς, ἐὰν ἐπερωτηθῇς. 3. Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, ἐν χρείᾳ σου, μόλις, δὶς ἐὰν ἐπερωτηθῇς· which is followed in our version. 4. Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, ἐν χρείᾳ σου, μόλις. δὶς ἐὰν ἐπερωτηθῇς, κεφαλαίωσον λόγον, which takes in the first words of the next sentence, *Si bis interrogatus fueris, habeat caput responsum tuum*, but renders it very inaccurately, which means only speaking succinctly and briefly. The whole of the advice here given to young men, necessary to suppress their known and great forwardness, is, when in company with persons of age, merit, and distinction, to speak little, and only when they are asked or pressed to it, and then to comprise much in a little. For as silence makes none, so little talk makes the fewer slips. I shall hence take occasion to correct the rendering in Psal. lxii. 11. where our version is, *God spake once and twice, I have also heard the same: that power belongeth unto God.* The Geneva Bible has, *God spake; once or twice I have heard it:* nor is Coverdale's more correct: the true rendering is, —God spake once, *viz.* at the delivery of the law; and I have learnt two things from thence; *viz.* his omnipotence and mercy, that power belongeth unto God, and that he is also merciful. And thus the Vulgate: *Semel locutus est Deus, et duo hæc audivi, quia potestas Dei est, et tibi, Domine, misericordia;* which Jansenius has well paraphrased, *Duo ab eo audivi, nempe quod solius Dei sit potentia, quæ possit omnia quæ vult; et quod tibi, Domine, sit summa clementia, quâ, quæ potes, etiam velis.* And thus the LXX. ἅπαξ ἐλάλησεν ὁ Θεὸς, δύο ταῦτα ἤκουσα, ὅτι τὸ κράτος τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ σοῦ, Κύριε, τὸ ἔλεος. κ. τ. λ. And so the Targum, *Legem unam locutus est, et hæc duo audivi, Deo inesse robur, et misericordiam.*

Ver. 9. *If thou be among great men, make not thyself equal with them; and, when ancient men are in place, use not many words.*] Have a deference to great men, and a reverence for ancient ones, if thou comest where they are: the quality of the former demands the one, and the wisdom of the latter the other. Think yourself happy in having an opportunity of hearing and learning from them some moral or religious truths. The Son of God himself seems to have followed the advice in the latter clause, when, at the age of twelve years, he chose to be in the midst of the doctors. It is not said of him that he attempted to teach or instruct them, as he might, being the wisdom of the Father, but, as he had rather appear a pattern to others in what he then did, that he heard and listened to them, and asked them questions, as if he himself would learn of them. The Vatican, Drusius, and Hœschelius, follow a different reading of this clause, *viz.* καὶ ἑτέρου λέγοντος, μὴ πολλὰ ἀδολέσχει· *i. e.* 'When another is speaking, be not thou talkative;' which too is a good piece of advice, and necessary to be inculcated, especially to young persons, who are not the best judges of decorum; but the Vulgate, oriental, and Tigurine versions, follow the reading and sense of our translators. See note on vii. 14. where there is the like advice.

Ver. 10. *Before the thunder goeth lightning, and before a shamefaced man shall go favour.*] Καταπεύδει ἀστραπὴ· *i. e.* Lightning hasteneth or fleeth before the thunder; and so Junius, *Ante tonitru celer præit fulgur.* Our version does not reach the force of the Greek. The sense is, As lightning is seen some time before the thunder is heard, so modesty in a person before he begins to speak recommends him the more to the favour and good opinion of others. When the speaker appears in some sort of confusion at first setting out, it shews a diffidence of himself and a regard for the audience, which generally engage them in his

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favour, and will help to excuse some accidental faults; but when a confident person begins to open, who seems by his air and looks to demand attention and to be secure of applause, his conceit raises a prejudice against him, and takes off from his merit, if real. The like is true of carriage; a modest, decent, and respectful behaviour before persons of gravity and figure, recommends young persons greatly to their esteem and notice: it prepossesses them in their interest, and is often more successful than a forward intrusion or clamorous importunity.

Ver. 11. *Rise up betimes and be not the last, but get thee home without delay.* Ver. 12. *There take thy pastime, and do what thou wilt, but sin not by proud speech.*] Ἐν ὥρᾳ ἐξεγείρου would be better rendered, Rise up in good time before the rest of the company, or before you have drank too much, for sobriety and temperance are as great recommendations of youth as modesty; and when you return home, use some diversion or moderate exercise for health's sake, and to digest a full meal, and be not disputatious or quarrelsome, angry or touchy with thy family, or any about thee, through conceit of thyself, raised and occasioned by the fumes of wine. As reserve before superiors at table, and elsewhere, is always becoming, so the wise man advises at certain seasons, and especially after an entertainment, some innocent amusement, by way of health and relaxation. Young minds are neither to be discouraged by too much application, nor made effeminate by indolence, or a constant succession of pleasures.

Ver. 13. *And for these things bless him that made thee, and replenished thee with his good things.*] After the entertainment is over, fail not to return thanks to God for the blessings there received. The custom of praying to God at rising from table, or, in other words, saying grace, is a dictate of natural religion, and practised by all civilized people, not only among Jews and Christians, but even among the heathens. St. Paul mentions it, 1 Tim. iv. 3—5. when he says, *God hath created meats to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.* It may also be inferred from Deut. viii. 10. Philo mentions it as a custom among the Therapeutæ. (De Vit. Contempl.) And it is certain it was practised by the Jews; for in some of their writings the following form is preserved: the master of the house, or some principal person among the guests, holding a cup filled with wine, says, "Gratias agamus Deo nostro, quia edimus de suo;" to which the guests replied, "Sit laudatus Deus noster, de cujus bonis comedimus, cujusque benignitate vivimus." After which they joined in repeating Psal. xxxiv. 9, 10. *O fear the Lord, ye that are his saints, for they that fear him lack nothing: the lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.* And when the person that began the thanksgiving has added, "Benedictus sis tu, Domine Deus noster, Rex mundi, qui creas fructum vitis," he just tastes the cup, and distributes it to all the guests to drink of it; which custom seems followed by our Saviour at his last supper: (Luke xxii. 17.) and at the conclusion of it a hymn was sung by him and his apostles, supposed by the learned to be, according to Jewish tradition, Psal. cxiii. to the end of Psal. cxviii. St. Chrysostom makes the following useful reflection upon Hannah, the mother of Samuel, returning thanks after eating: "Hoc igitur a fœmina lucri consecuti sumus, ut sciamus et post convivium orare. Quisquis enim ad hoc præparatus fuerit, nunquam in ebrietatem incidet, nunquam in edacitate distendetur: sed quoniam expectationem precationis habet, fræno imposito animo, conveniente mensura attinget ex omnibus quæ fuerint apposita, multaque benedictione tum animam, tum corpus, implebit. Siquidem convivium, quod a precatione cœptum in precationem desinit, nunquam deficiet, sed quovis fonte uberius nobis omnia afferet bona—proinde oportet tum in initio, tum in fine convivii, gratias agere Deo, ob hanc præcipue causam, quod haud facile prolabemur in ebrietatem, si nos ipsos in venerandam adeo consuetudinem constituerimus. Quin si quando surrexeris crapula potuque gravatus, ne sic quidem abjicias consuetudinem." It was also in use both in the Greek and Latin church, as appears from the former's Horologium, and from the Roman Breviary.

Ver. 14. *He that feareth the Lord will receive his discipline, and they that seek him early shall find favour.*] Ἐκδέξεται παιδείαν. *Accipiet doctrinam ejus* (Vulgate); shall receive instruction from him, or wisdom as his gift, (vi. 36, 37.) And thus Calmet, *Recevra de lui instruction;* οἱ ὀρθρίζοντες are such as are early at their prayers. Grotius, *Qui mane surgunt ad orandum Deum,* these shall obtain his favour, or be blessed by him; *seront benis de lui,* as Calmet renders; and so the Geneva version, *They that rise early to seek him shall find favour.* The author expresses himself exactly in the same manner, xxxix. 1. 5, 6. *He that giveth his mind to the law of the Most High, and is occupied in the meditation thereof . . . will give his heart,* ὀρθρίσαι πρὸς Κύριον, *ad vigilandum diluculo ad Dominum* (Vulgate), *and will pray before the Most High, and make supplication for his sins, and he shall be filled with the spirit of understanding.* The moral of the Israelites being obliged to gather the manna before the sunrising, was, according to the excellent author of the book of Wisdom, that we should be hence instructed, to prevent the sun in giving God thanks, and at the dayspring pray unto him; (xvi. 28.) to bless God early each morning, as for his other benefits, so particularly for the safety of the night past, and the sweet refreshment of beloved sleep. (See note, in loc.)

Ver. 16. *They that fear the Lord shall find judgment, and shall kindle justice as a light.*] Syriac, *Reverentes Dominum sapient in judiciis ejus.* They shall not only be filled with the knowledge of the law, (ver. 15.) but shall do what is right, and their good deeds shall be as a burning light, shall shine far and near; or, in the words of the Psalmist, *They shall bring forth righteousness as the light, and judgment as the noonday.* (Psal. xxxvii. 6.) According to Calmet, the sense is, They shall be enlightened by God, and shall receive from him justice and judgment, which shall shine like a glory round them. According to that of Solomon, which this writer probably alludes to, *The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day: but the way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.* (Prov. iv. 18, 19.)

Ver. 17. *A sinful man will not be reproved, but findeth an excuse according to his will.*] *i. e.* They hate to be reformed, according to that description of the ungodly, Psal. l. 17. and that of our Saviour, *Every one that doeth evil, hateth*

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the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. (John iii. 20.) But the sincere and well-disposed person will esteem it as a favour done him, to be admonished of his faults; thus David wishes, according to the old translation, *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head.* (Psal. cxli. 5.) The wise man adds, as a farther instance of the perverseness of the wicked, κατὰ τὸ θέλημα ἐξευρίσκει σύγκριμα· *i. e.* He will find some pretext, or excuse, or example, to authorize and justify what he has done, or some explanation, softening, or evasion of the law, according to his mind. Or, as Calmet expounds it, the sinner is so wilful and opinionated, that he will listen to no instruction, he will be directed by none but himself; *Ejus vitæ institutum est propriæ voluntatis consectatio.* (Arabic.) And as he chose to pursue death in the ways of his own seeking, like the hypocrite, ver. 15. he shall be exposed and brought to condign punishment, and shall receive σύγκριμα, *condemnation; trouvera la condemnation, comme il a voulu.* Bossuet and Junius understand by σύγκριμα κατὰ τὸ θέλημα, *judicium sibi conveniens,* that the sinner, instead of coming near those who will reprove him, and set before him the things which he has done, seeks out such as agree with him in opinion, who are of his mind, and for his purpose, and will flatter and encourage him in his wickedness. A sinner, says St. Austin, hates the truth because it condemns him, he flies from true physicians and useful remedies, because he loves his disease, and will not be cured: he is fond to be deceived, and there are enough to do it. He cares not to be told that his soul is dangerously sick and wounded, and he finds persons who assure him that it is quite well and safe, though these are like guides who lead a man to a precipice.

Ver. 19. *Do nothing without advice, and when thou hast once done, repent not.*] There is no one precept which this wise man has delivered so often, and pressed so strongly, as that a man should not depend upon himself, or trust to his own understanding, but consult others who are able to advise him, and give him their opinion and assistance; that none but a proud and self-opiniated person, or one that is a stranger in the school of humility, and unacquainted with that virtue, would venture to act otherwise, τὸ ποιῆσαι μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ ἄνευ βουλῆς, as it is expressed ver. 18. But Grotius thinks that sentence an interpolation or corruption arising from some of the like words in this verse. The advice here given is like that of Sallust, "Priusquam aliquid facias, consulto; ubi consulueris, maturè facto opus est:" If thou actest in this prudent and cautious manner, repent not; *i. e.* thou wilt not repent, like that, *This do and live, i. e.* thou shalt live. And thus the Vulg. *Sine consilio nihil facias, et post factum non pœnitebis.* Grotius says, the true reading is, καὶ μετὰ τὸ ποιῆσαι ἄνευ βουλῆς, μεταμελοῦ; And if you do any thing inconsiderately and rashly, without advice, repent of it, or, you will have cause to repent of it.

Ver. 20. *Go not in a way wherein thou mayest fall, and stumble not among the stones.* Ver. 21. *Be not confident in a plain way.*] *i. e.* Be not rash, or attempt such things as are attended with danger, lest you come to some harm or mischief, as those are most likely to get a fall or accident who choose to walk in rugged and stony ways; and, on the other hand, be not over confident in things or persons which seem to promise most security, as it is possible, even in a seemingly level and smooth way, to meet with a slip or hurt, or some unforeseen mischief from persons one least suspects. Beware and guard against both these extremes. The Greek is, μὴ πιστεύσῃς ἐν ὁδῷ ἀπροσκόπῳ, but the copy which our translators follow read, ἀπροσκόπτῳ. Grotius dislikes both these, and proposes a third, *viz.* ἀπροσκοπητῶ, *viæ non bene exploratæ; i. e.* Trust not thyself in a way that is unknown to thee, or that thou hast not tried, nor inquired after.

Ver. 22. *And beware of thine own children.*] This is a consequence of the former verse, as expounded of not being too confident in things or persons, which seem to promise most security, for even amongst the nearest relations there may be unnatural treachery, and a man's *worst foes may be those of his own household,* as the Vulgate here inserts, from Matt. x. 36. Grotius understands the passage of a father taking a prudent care that his children do not ruin him by extravagance; but this is pardonable where it happens, in comparison of what others have done, who, though obliged by the ties of nature, and those of duty and gratitude to please, honour, and preserve, their parents, have notwithstanding been their betrayers, and, through ambition or some resentment, been the instruments of their deaths: as Sennacherib was slain at a time and by those he least suspected, even by his own sons, when he was worshipping in the house of his false god. (2 Kings xix. 37.) Very remarkable to this purpose is the advice, Micah vii. 5, 6. *Trust ye not in a friend, put not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.* And much to the same effect is that of Jer. ix. 4. *Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.* (See Ecclus. xxxiii. 19.) The wise man's advice here seems very incoherent and abrupt, without being connected in some such manner, and illustrated by the context.

Ver. 23. *In every good work trust thy own soul, for this is the keeping of the commandments.*] Ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ πίστευε τῇ ψυχῇ σου. Grotius says, the true reading is, ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ, Θεῷ πίστευε τῇ ψυχῇ σου, i. e. *in every action trust in God with thy whole heart;* he that trusts in him will be careful to keep his commandments. A very learned writer thinks it would be agreeable to the author's meaning to translate the passage thus, Believe with thy soul, for this is the keeping of the commandments; and has the following useful reflection: "What is it that the wise man would have us believe with the soul? that the thing is good which we intend to work? but unless it be such in itself before it be intended by us, it will sooner make our belief bad, than become any ways the better by our believing it to be good. For to trust our own soul, or to believe that that is good, which in its nature is either bad, or not good in such a degree as we imagine, is to believe an untruth; and even to do that which in its own nature is good, with doubt or scruple that it is evil, is to sin against our conscience. But there is no need of any casuistry in this case; for the author here presupposes the works he speaks of to be good in themselves, and acknowledged for such

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by all. But then we are to observe, that it is one thing to do that which is unquestionably right and good, and another to do it rightly and well; for it is not every performance of what is good, but the performing of it constantly and discreetly, as knowing it to be good, and delighting therefore in the practice of it, which denominates a man to be good, or a keeper of the commandments. The commandments, according to our author, are the total object, or complete rule of righteousness; and to believe with the soul, does not here mean naked faith, or bare assent, but such a complete and practical knowledge of good and evil, as to incline the faculties of our souls to avoid the one and choose the other. And this is explained in what follows by way of an exegetical repetition in the last verse of this chapter, and the first of the next. . . . The expression here is not much unlike that of St. Paul, (Rom. x. 10.) *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.* St. John, it is observable, takes the belief in Christ, and keeping God's commandments, as terms reciprocal, or actually inferring one another, 1 John iii. 23, 24." (Jackson's Works, tom. i. p. 729, &c.)

CHAP. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *THERE shall no evil happen to him that feareth the Lord, but in temptation even again he will deliver him.*] Providence takes a particular care of good men to preserve them from evil, especially to avert the harm that wicked men intend them; or, if God permits them to fall into some misfortune or disgrace, it is only to prove their constancy and fidelity, and to reward them with a far more exceeding weight of glory. St. Paul says the same, Rom. viii. 28. *We know that all things work together for good to those that love God.* (See Prov. xii. 21. Tob. xii. 7.) The sentiments of the Roman orator are very fine on this head, and much to be admired: "Nunquam viro bono quicquam mali evenire potest, nec vivo, nec mortuo, nec unquam ejus res a Diis immortalibus negliguntur." Badwell points the Greek thus, τῷ φοβουμένῳ τὸν Κύριον οὐκ ἀπαντήσει κακὸν, ἀλλὰ ἐν πειρασμῷ; i. e. *No evil shall happen to one that feareth the Lord, except in temptation,* or *by way of proof and trial:* Syr. *Nisi per modum tentationis;* but at length, after having proved their faith and patience, he delivers them out of their troubles, and this he will do often, and as they stand in need of help, for so καὶ πάλιν should be rendered. In one edition the reading is, ἀλλ' ἐν πειρασμῷ καὶ πάλῃ ἐξαιρεῖται αὐτὸν; *i. e.* He will deliver him under his trials and conflicts; *In tentatione et lucta eripiet illum.*

Ver. 2. *A wise man hateth not the law; but he that is a hypocrite therein is as a ship in a storm.*] See xxxii. 15. The good man, if afflictions or temptations assault him, is steadfast and unmoveable, not tossed to and fro with fear and uncertainty, nor halting with divided affections betwixt God and mammon, his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. He is like the house built upon a rock, against which the floods and tempests beat to no purpose. Whereas the hypocrite, the dissembler with God, who serveth him not in sincerity and truth, or the *wicked man,* as the Syriac and Arabic render, hath no hope nor comfort, is under perpetual anxiety, and in danger of suffering shipwreck; for want of an anchor in his soul, sure and steadfast, he is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed; nothing is more frequent than to express an uncertainty, or bad state of mind, by this comparison. In ver. 5. his thoughts are compared to a rolling axle-tree; *i. e.* they are vague and unsettled, pursuing no proper object. He has no steady principle within him to act by, nor any fixed rule of prudence, justice, and truth, to proceed upon, but is carried about by every new opinion or doctrine that offers, changing his own according to the inclinations and sentiments of those he converses with. St. James describes the double-minded man in like manner, as unstable in all his ways, i. 8. Some copies, instead of ὡς ἐν καταιγίδι πλοῖον, have ὡς ἐν καταιγίδι πολλῶν; i. e. *is as in a tempest* or *hurricane of many winds and waves.* And thus Junius, *Versatur ut in procella multorum fluctuum.*

Ver. 3. *A man of understanding trusteth in the law, and the law is faithful unto him as an oracle.*] I conceive it would be better rendered, as *the oracle; i. e.* of *urim,* for all oracles were not to be depended upon. In the Old Testament we find, that when people had occasion and a desire to know the mind of God in any difficult or doubtful case, they went to the high-priest, who, asking counsel for them after the judgment of *urim* before the Lord, (Numb. xxvii. 21.) the Lord was pleased to give them such answers, as clearly discovered his will in the case propounded, which were therefore called his oracles. It is with relation to this oracle that the Hebrews called the sanctuary the house of counsel. Some corrupt copies read, ὡς ἐρώτημα δῆλον, others, δηλῶν, or δικαίων, but the true reading undoubtedly is, ὡς ἐρώτημα δήλων, for by it the LXX. always render the oracle of *urim.* The marginal reading accordingly is, *As the asking of urim, i. e.* to consult the law, which is a complete rule, extending to all needful cases, is as certain a direction as consulting the judgment of *urim,* and the promises made in the law are as much to be depended on as that infallible answer. And therefore David might well say, *Thy law is the truth,* (Psal. cxix. 142.) alluding probably to this oracle, which was also called ἀλήθεια. A late learned writer has an ingenious conjecture, that *thummim* was a copy of the moral law put into the pectoral, a copy written in some roll, or engraven in some stone, (accordingly the royal prophet says, *The law is perfect,* Psal. xix. 7.) and that our author here opposes the law to the oracle, the *thummim* to the *urim,* saying in effect, The law laid up in the ark is as certain a rule to go by, in the moral course of a man's life, as the oracle from above the ark, where the *urim* was an appendage of God's Schechinah, was a direction in extraordinary cases. (Tenison of Idol. p. 364.) Scaliger takes in both these, and renders this passage, *Tanquam urim et thummim.* (De Emendat. Temp. p. 654.)

Ver. 6. *A stallion horse is as a mocking friend, he neigheth under every one that sitteth upon him.*] *i. e.* He seems pleased with his rider, whoever he be, but is thinking on his own gratification. He neighs not to entertain him, but to express his own satisfaction and wantonness. In like manner the false friend who imposes upon all those who put any confidence in him, is always obliging and complaisant to such as entertain him, or advise with him, not out of respect to them, or to do them any real service, but the better to serve himself, and to carry on his own selfish views. He forms his speech and answers according to the humours and dispositions of those who consult him, and changes them again, as theirs chance to vary. Like

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the parasite in Terence, "Negat quis, nego; aiunt, aio" Calmet understands by *a mocking friend*, one, *Qui captat risus hominum, famamque dicacis*, who has a fling at every one that comes in his way, and will sacrifice even his friend to his joke, as Horace truly describes him. (Sat. lib. i.) Clemens Alex. uses the same simile, and calls a noted adulterer, Ἵππος εἰς ὀχείαν, whose unbridled lust, unwarrantable freedoms, and wicked attempts, justify the comparison.

Ver. 7. *Why doth one day excel another, when as all the light of every day in the year is of the sun?*] This does not respect the inequality between the days of summer and winter, or the variety of weather attending those seasons; the question proposed by the wise man seems principally to be, Whence the difference betwixt holy-days and working-days, and whence the institution of the sabbatical year, and year of jubilee, with respect to common years? for so the Vulgate, *Quare dies diem superat, et iterum lux lucem, et annus annum?* has not the same God equally established them all, does not the same sun enlighten all, and every day in common enjoy the privilege and benefit of his light? whence then the observable difference? one can give no other reason for this distinction, but the will, the decree, for so Grotius understands γνῶσις here, and the wisdom of God, who has so appointed it. There is none in nature for the difference between days, nor have particular days originally any peculiar merit of their own, antecedently to positive appointment. The choice and distinction which God has made seems purely arbitrary, and to be resolved into his mere pleasure, who, as he thought proper to diversify seasons, so may be presumed not without reason to have established festivals, and made them different from other days: for so I choose to render ἠλλοίωσε in the following verse, and so it is used by our translators, ver. 11. upon an occasion not very unlike.

Ver. 9. *Some of them hath he made high days, and hallowed them, and some of them he hath made ordinary days.*] Ἐξ αὐτῶν ἔθηκεν εἰς ἀριθμὸν ἡμερῶν· *i. e.* Some of them he hath put into the number of common days, and others he has set apart for his own use, as peculiar days, and of greater solemnity. He appointed religious seasons and feasts for the more regular, uniform, and solemn performance of his worship; and to affect the minds of men with a greater awe and reverence for his Divine Majesty, by setting peculiar marks of distinction upon special and appointed times for his service. Hence the original of the institution of the Jewish sabbath, which he appointed to be observed in memory of his resting from the works of the creation: hence that of the Passover, and other Jewish festivals. And such, in the Christian church, are the days of our Saviour's nativity, passion, resurrection, ascension, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, which have been hallowed from the earliest times, and carry their own reason with them for being observed. Seneca has assigned a civil reason also for the distinction of days, "Legum conditores festos dies instituerunt, ut ad hilaritatem homines publice cogerentur, tanquam necessarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum:" (de Tranquil. cap. ult.) which is also intimated Deut. v. 14.

Ver. 10. *And all men are from the ground, and Adam was created of earth.* Ver. 11. *In much knowledge the Lord hath divided them, and made their ways divers.* Ver. 12. *Some of them hath he blessed and exalted, and some of them hath he sanctified, and set near himself: but some of them hath he cursed, and brought low, and turned out of their places.*] There is a fine chain of reasoning from ver. 7. to ver. 15.; the argument proceeds in the following manner: As amongst days, though all are enlightened by the same sun, and are all equal in that respect, some are nevertheless preferred before others, God by his knowledge and decree having separated them, and has himself made the distinction, by consecrating some days as festivals, and continuing others as ordinary days only: so all men by nature, and the condition of their creation, are equal; all were created of earth, and taken from the same matter or clay from whence Adam himself was taken, *Omnes ex terra, unde creatus est Adam* (Vulgate), and all are partakers of and infected with his sin and corruption; and yet, what a difference is to be observed betwixt men! What a variety of conditions, ranks, qualities, employments, tempers, and of good and evil fortune among them! God by his wisdom put this difference between them,—the condition of each is according to his appointment, and they are such, because he has so determined it. In the beginning of the world God chose Seth and his posterity; at the deluge, Noah and his family; from the descendants of Shem, Abraham and his family; among the children of Abraham, Isaac; and among those of Isaac, Jacob; and out of Jacob's family, Levi and Aaron, and their posterity: on the contrary, he cursed the race of Canaan, and cast them out of the holy land, whilst he poured his favours with great profusion on the Israelites; he took away the priesthood from the family of Eli, and translated it from Abiathar to Zadoc; (1 Kings ii. 27. 35.) he rejected the family of Saul, and exalted and glorified the house of David: as he drove Shebna from his station and dignity, and called Eliakim in his stead, whom he clothed with his robe, and strengthened with his girdle. (Isa. xxii. 19—21.) Again, God graciously conducts and leads some in the ways of godliness, and permits others to wander in ignorance, and to commit wickedness with greediness; the former he blesses and sanctifies, and keeps always steady in his service, through the mighty succour of his grace; the other he leaves to follow their own corrupt will, and continues them under the curse. They may each of them be considered as clay in the hand of the potter; he makes the former vessels unto honour; and the others, vessels unto dishonour, to display his mercy in the one, and his justice in the other. And God is equally worthy to be revered, both by men and angels, whether his bounty is pleased to remit, or his justice to demand, his due. There is nothing in this or the following verse to countenance the doctrine of predestination or reprobation, as some interpreters would represent them. It seems more proper to understand the wise man, as speaking of God's universal providence over all beings, and particularly over mankind, without descending to particulars; or of the absolute power which he exercises over his creatures, tempered, at the same time, with infinite wisdom and justice.

Ver. 14. *Good is set against evil, and life against death; so is the godly against the sinner, and the sinner against the godly.* Ver. 15. *So look upon all the works of the Most High, and there are two and two, one against another.*] It was the general opinion of the ancient philosophers, that the world was made up of contraries. It is wonderful to con-

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sider, says St. Austin, how that contrariety and opposition happen, which are observable in all the works of God, and which indeed add to the beauty and order of the universe: there are orders of good angels, friends of God and men; there are other orders of evil and proud spirits, professed enemies to them both; and these two kinds are always divided against each other. The like is observable upon earth: there is an assembly of saints, which is the body of Jesus Christ; and an assembly of the wicked, which is the body of Satan, and these two are contrary the one to the other, and are at continual variance. There is moreover in every man, and particularly in every one which serves God, two surprising contrarieties: for the true Christian resembles the angels by the purity and goodness of his life; but he resembles the brutes in the animal life, which his body leads. His soul, as to its superior part, is as a heaven where God dwells; but in its lower faculties, where concupiscence and the other passions lodge, it is as a hell, actuated and influenced by suggestions and impressions from the devil. Eternity and time, light and darkness, good and evil, strength and weakness, joy and sorrow, peace and war, life and death, are discoverable in man; all these contrarieties subsist in the same mortal subject, and cease only with life, when the soul, being disengaged from the chains of the body, which kept up this war, and free from self-love, shall be happily and eternally swallowed up in the contemplation, and love, and enjoyment, of God. What is here observed of man in particular, is true of the creation in general: every thing in nature has its contrary, and from this observation, as before, from the difference between days, the wise man means to illustrate the different proceeding of God with mankind, either with respect to their natural state, as prospering some, and humbling and abasing others; or their moral state, as blessing some, and cursing others. But in this variety consists the beauty of nature: the opposition between contraries helps to illustrate it, as the obscurity of the night makes us the more perceive and admire the beauty of the day. The contrarieties observable in the universe, are like antitheses in a discourse; they not only surprise, but please us, and as these add greatly to the beauty of an oration, so the infinite wisdom of the Creator is displayed in the disposition of the world, though made up of contraries, and is more to be admired for a contrast, so justly mixed and so happily tempered. (De Civit. Dei, lib. ii. cap. 18.)

Ver. 16. *I awaked up last of all, as one that gathereth after the grape-gatherers; by the blessing of the Lord I profited, and filled my wine-press, like a gatherer of grapes.*] The wise man does not say that he was the last of all the prophets, or that prophecy was intermitted for a long time, and revived again in him, as some have weakly and industriously expounded it; but he represents himself as the last of all those of his nation, that had made collections of moral sentences or proverbs; or the least of all that had gone before him in this sort of undertaking, as St. Paul calls himself, with a true spirit of humility, the *least of all the apostles*, upon another occasion; that he only gleaned after them, as his design was not an original or wholly new work, but rather a collection of scattered and fugitive pieces, which being too few to fill a book of themselves, and so liable to be lost, were incorporated with his own, and together composed this larger work of the same kind. (See the first Prologue.) Solomon, we read, spake three thousand proverbs; (1 Kings iv. 32.) out of which were either collected such as were most useful by the men of Hezekiah, which seems most probable, or they added some of their own, which passed under the name of Solomon, which are comprised from Prov. xxv. to the end of xxix. Out of the works also of Agur, who wrote many memorable sayings, were those weighty sentences collected, which occur Prov. xxx. to the end of the book. In like manner this writer compiled his work from some valuable materials and collections of others; nor is it at all improbable, that many wise maxims were added by the last Jesus to his translation of his grandfather's works. (See Pref.)

Ver. 19. *Give not thy son and wife, thy brother and friend, power over thee, while thou livest; and give not thy goods to another, lest it repent thee, and thou entreat for the same again.*] The advice here and in the four following verses, may either respect parents or rulers, and persons in authority. To the former the advice is, not to strip themselves of their substance, in favour of their children, lest, by leaving themselves too bare, through an inclination to gratify them, they hereafter be necessitated to ask and entreat for that again which they parted with too soon and hastily, or be obliged perhaps to sue them for relief. It is putting too great a confidence in them, which is often abused, and forfeiting their power and authority. It is preposterous, as well as shameful, for a father to be a suppliant to his children, or to cringe and crouch to their presence; and, therefore, (ver. 23.) the advice is, not to part with so much of their fortunes and substance in their lifetime, as to reduce themselves, but to dispose of their effects by will, and appoint a distribution at their death. The like may be observed of the other relations here mentioned; *viz.* a wife, brother, or friend, who, though dear, are not to be complimented at the expense of a man's authority, character, and fortunes: nor ought such grants to be expected, or engagements insisted on, as to hurt a man's circumstances, or to endanger his own freedom and liberty. As addressed to magistrates and persons in public posts and employments, the advice is, to govern freely and independently, not to be swayed by interest or affection, nor to give too much authority and influence to relations, friends, or domestics, that none may be able to reproach them, with betraying their honour, or abusing their power, through partiality, or any servile compliance; nor themselves be exposed to the inconveniences and disgrace of being under the influence and direction of favourites: for thereby a person in authority is liable to be made the tool of their ambition, avarice, or resentment; to have all faults and grievances charged upon him, whilst others have the credit of doing all the service, and the advantage of gaining themselves friends or fortunes. For, as Calmet very justly observes, it is generally believed, that more is owing to the person that procures the favour to be done through his power and interest, than to him who actually confers the favour; the former does the business in reality, the other only lends his name.

Ver. 25. *If thou set thy servant to labour, thou shalt find rest; but if thou let him go idle, he shall seek liberty.*] In the remainder of the chapter the wise man lays down rules for the right management of slaves, for so Calmet under-

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stands the context, rather than of servants. The condition of slaves was, and is, very different from that of servants: the latter are equally free as their masters, and serve only because they themselves choose it: they limit the time and nature of their service, and agree for a certain proportion of wages. Slaves, on the contrary, belonged to their master, were his property, had no time or liberty of their own, nor power even over their own bodies. They were born slaves, and generally died so; as their masters bought them, so they could sell them again at pleasure. The author advises that slaves should not want three things especially: 1. Bread, by which we are to understand food, a certain and sufficient allowance for every day. 2. Correction for any great fault; if they have been, for instance, malicious, wicked, unfaithful, rebellious, or fugitives; but not to be rigorous or excessive (ver. 29) for every transgression. There are numberless tragical instances of mischief done by slaves, driven to despair through the cruelty of their masters: nor has there been any where a *bellum servile*, but the hard treatment of slaves was a chief occasion of it. Punishments proportionable to their faults are both allowable and necessary, as slaves have no generous principle, nor any other motive to act by than their fear. 3. Labour; nothing being more dangerous, or of worse consequence to a slave, than idleness. If not employed, and set to work, he will contrive to do some mischief, or take the opportunity to run away, and get his liberty. It is wisely observed, *Nulla major vel nequissimi hominis custodia, quam operis exactio.* (Columel. lib. i. cap. 8.) The ancients, who speak of the management of slaves, express themselves upon the subject like our author, and give the same directions. Aristotle enjoins the very same particulars, ἔργα, κόλασιν, καὶ τροφὴν, and observes, that if they are well fed, without work or seasonable correction, they will grow insolent and unruly: and if hard worked, and often corrected, and not fed and maintained, it is not only an instance of cruelty, and a great discouragement to them, but that such severe treatment not only puts them upon making their escape, but even sets them at liberty.

Ver. 30. *If thou have a servant, let him be unto thee as thyself.*] Hitherto the wise man has spoken of bad slaves, he comes now to speak of good ones, which may be extended to servants likewise; and accordingly the Vulgate, with great propriety, inserts *fidelis: si est tibi servus fidelis.* When a person lays out his whole time and care in his master's service, and makes it the study and business of his life to consult his good and promote his interest, how can such a servant be too much encouraged, or rather, how can he be rewarded enough? A dutiful and faithful servant has been by some writers considered in the next degree to a child, and even before a child that was undutiful. And this probably is Solomon's meaning, *A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.* (Prov. xvii. 2.) The Romans, by a term of respect, called such, *Familiares.* Seneca makes the like observation: "Ne illud quidem videtis, quam omnem invidiam majores nostri dominis, omnem contumeliam servis detraxerint? Dominum, patrem familiæ appellaverunt; servos, familiares." (Epist. 47.) Nor can any thing nearer resemble the advice in the beginning of ver. 31. than when he says, "Vive cum servo clementer, in iter quoque et in sermonem admitte, et in consilium, et in convictum."

Because thou hast bought him with a price.] Ἐν αἵματι, *Periculo vitæ tuæ* (Grotius), alluding to captives or slaves taken in war, and got with the hazard of life. The sense, according to him and Calmet, is, If, among the prisoners, you meet with a slave who proves faithful and deserving, regard such a one as a treasure. Consider that you might have been his captive as he is now yours, for nothing is more precarious than the chance of war. Behave therefore to him as you would have wished and expected yourself, upon an exchange of conditions. Castalio renders, *Quoniam consanguineum eum comparasti*, as if he had read ἐνὶ αἵματι, in the sense of ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματος, Acts xvii. 26. The Syriac, too, *Ne pugnes in sanguinem tui ipsius*, seems also to favour this sense. Drusius's conjecture is very ingenious, and probably right, that the Greek translator mistook the meaning of the original word דמים, which is commonly *blood;* but in the Targumists, as well as rabbins, it signifies also *a price*, as our version rightly has it; perhaps, originally, *the price of blood*, the price at which life was redeemed, and thence more generally *any price;* and, mistaking this, he might as probably translate it αἵματι as αἵμασι, the true rendering. For the LXX. translate דמים sometimes by a singular, as 1 Chron. xxii. 8. and elsewhere. דם also signifies *likeness.* May it not therefore be translated, Thou possessest one in thy likeness, and, as such, he deserves to be used mercifully, though a slave? Junius says, that, as the wise man reasoned before *ab utili*, so he does here from the rights and ties of humanity. Messieurs of Port-Royal conclude this chapter with the following useful reflection: If the slave who is faithful and diligent ought to be as dear to us as our life, and to be respected as a brother, how much more ought we to express our tenderness and kindness towards those who serve us with faithfulness and affection, and whose condition is so different from that of slaves? For we ought to consider them, not only as partaking of the same nature with us; but as redeemed and purchased by the same blood of God, and called and appointed to the same state of glory. For which reason, we ought not to treat them with severity or threats, as knowing that we are all servants of the same common Master, who is in heaven, and has no respect of persons.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. *DREAMS lift up fools.*] Ἀναπτεροῦσιν ἄφρονας, *i. e.* Dreams elevate or buoy up with hopes, as it were with wings, silly credulous people. The poets give wings to dreams, to denote their uncertain and fleeting nature; and such as are weak enough to give attention to them, are properly described in the next verse as catching at shadows, and pursuing after the wind. They have no foundation or reality in nature, but are the sport of imagination, and the reveries of a weak and superstitious people; for none else are capable of building their hopes, or fixing a dependance upon them. And therefore nothing is more ridiculous than the art of oneirocritics, which pretends to interpret dreams and predict future events, and dispose of the precarious gifts of fortune from thence. Such pretenders can have no certain rules to proceed by, as there are in other sciences; nor such as go to and confide in them, any reasonable grounds for their faith in them.

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And how indeed should dreams have any certain power or influence upon men's actions, which are arbitrary, and depend often upon the agency of second causes, and owe their own original to a distempered fancy, or the fumes of indigestion, or some indisposition or humours of the body, and are always observed to be most frequent and wild in sick persons?

Ver. 3. *The vision of dreams is the resemblance of one thing to another, even as the likeness of a face to a face.*] Dreams are only a fantastical, though lively, representation of things real, as the likeness of a natural face in a mirror; there is no more reality in one than the other. The visage represented in a glass is nothing, and what the imagination paints at random in a dream has no more truth in it. Turn away from the glass, and there are no remains or traces in it of what appeared there before; and, when one awakes, often nothing at all is remembered, and generally but imperfect images, resembling those that appear in a false glass, which represents things distorted and confused. We sometimes dream of things which are monstrous and inconsistent, and have no originals in nature, and sometimes we can perceive a distant relation in them to something that has before passed. We can discover a resemblance in them to thoughts that we have indulged, or to some incidents in company or conversation. It is well known by experience, and confirmed by the wise man's observation, (Eccles. v. 3.) that a multitude of business, which a man has been doing or thinking of, shall occasion him to dream about it at night, and his dreams will have some resemblance to his waking thoughts; and thus Macrobius,—"Cura oppressi animi, vel corporis, sive fortunæ, qualis vigilantem fatigaverat, talem se ingerit dormienti." (Lib. i. cap. 3.) Scipio has the same observation upon the appearance of Africanus to him in a dream. (See Somn. Scip.)

Ver. 5. *Divinations, and soothsayings, and dreams, are vain; and the heart fancieth, as a woman's heart in travail.*] The rendering of the Vulgate is very observable, and expressed in the strongest terms of abhorrence,—*Divinatio erroris, et auguria mendacia, et somnia male facientium, vanitas est.* By *vain* we are to understand lying and deceitful; and so the Scripture, which condemns these arts, calls them. Our author observes of them, that they are as chimerical and absurd as the vain imaginations and unaccountable longings of a woman with child. Persons that listen to them, or fix any dependance upon them, conceive strange fancies, are big with hopes without foundation, are restless, and travail with pain, fearing the event, and at length either miscarry, or bring forth only wind. The Romans had this vain superstitious custom in most of their enterprises, to conjecture beforehand of the event by certain tokens which they noted in the flight of birds, or in the entrails of beasts, or by other the like frivolous divinations; from whence, as oft as they could receive any sign which they took to be favourable, it gave them such hopes, as if their gods had made them more than half a promise of success. In which conceit though they manifestly erred, yet this notion, says the learned Hooker, was many times the chief cause that they did prevail; and, being persons strongly fanciful and fondly superstitious, it gave them courage for all adventures. (B. v. Eccl. Polit.) Tully has exposed these arts, and the whims of his credulous countrymen, with much strength of reasoning, and great humour and facetiousness. (De Divin. lib. ii.)

Ver. 6. *If they be not sent from the Most High in thy visitation, set not thy heart upon them.*] Though dreams, generally speaking, were idle and false, and the reliance upon them a piece of fond credulity, yet were there some true ones that claimed a regard, as being supernatural intimations of some great event to be fulfilled in its season. Such were all those prophetical ones in Scripture, whose completion attested their veracity and original. The heathens acknowledged in like manner two sorts of dreams: the one true, proceeding from God; the other false and deceitful. Homer accordingly supposes two gates from which these issued: the first came from Jupiter, through the porta cornea; the other through that of ivory. (Odyss. lib. xix.) Lactantius has the same observation. (De Opif. Dei, cap. 18.) But what way is there, it may be asked, to distinguish mere natural dreams, the effect of fancy and imagination, from such as are really supernatural and Divine? It may properly and safely be observed, that such dreams as were sent by God had generally distinguishing marks of their Divine authority and truth; as either the importance of the subject-matter of them, the time when they happened, or the being sent to persons of particular note and eminence, or their having unusual and preternatural circumstances attending them. It was an opinion generally received in the early ages of the world, that dreams, so confirmed and attested, were sent purposely from heaven. (See Gen. xxviii. 12. xxxi. 11. xli. 8. Job iv. 12. xxxiii. 14, 15. Dan. ii. 19.) Homer speaks the general sense of his own age, when he says, καὶ γάρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν. The principal dreams which we meet with in sacred and profane history, are such as have happened to persons of the first rank and character, either to patriarchs, prophets, saints, or other holy persons, as Moses, Jacob, St. Paul, &c. or to kings, princes, and judges, as Pharaoh, Abimelech, Solomon, Cyrus, Joseph, &c. who may be considered as the deputies and vicegerents of Providence. And the subject of their dreams has been of the greatest moment; for either they had respect to the church, as in that celebrated dream of Alexander the Great, (Joseph. Antiq. lib. ii. cap. 8.) and that no less famous one of Nebuchadnezzar: or else they regarded the state, as the dreams of Pharaoh in particular, admonishing him betimes to provide for his country, that the seven years of plenty might relieve the seven succeeding of famine: or, lastly, they had an auspicious aspect upon both, as in the case of Gideon, and most of the Jewish wars before the coming of Christ. But remarkable, more particularly, were the dreams of Joseph, which were so many presages of his future surprising greatness, at that time not to be expected, and at a great distance, taking their rise from the very ill and undeserved treatment which he had met with from his brethren. And it may be farther observed of dreams, that they have been often vouchsafed to the faithful in their distress, and struggling under some great pressure, in the way of mystery and comfort, of which Jacob's ladder is a pregnant instance; and the like is discernible in the history of Polycarp. (See Cave's Lives, vol. i. p. 118.)

Ver. 7. *For dreams have deceived many, and they have failed that put their trust in them.*] This is a natural consequence of the observation, ver. 2. If such as regard dreams

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catch at shadows, and follow after the wind, no wonder that such as trust in them find themselves disappointed. But this is not the worst that happens to them; for they who regard, or, as the marginal reading is, *have their minds upon dreams*, seldom escape Satanical illusions. The devil deceives them with an appearance of truth, to win their assent, and to gain their confidence the more, and then often plunges them into grievous errors and great misfortunes. He abuses their credulity and superstition with equivocal answers, with specious and promising appearances, and prepares them for some worse and greater deceit. Such who have the weakness to believe or trust in dreams, will proceed to more ungodliness, their temper will incline them to apply to forbidden arts, to consult magic, divination, sorcery, and all sorts of lying vanities, which are the invention and artifice of the spirit of darkness and error.

Ver. 8. *The law shall be found perfect without lies, and wisdom is perfection to a faithful mouth.*] Ἄνευ ψεύδους συντελεσθήσεται νόμος, καὶ σοφία στόματι πιστῷ τελείωσις. As the law threatens those with the heavy wrath of God who listen to and go after diviners, and such as practise curious and magical arts, (Lev. xix. 26. Deut. xiii. 1. 5. xviii. 10.) so we may be assured that those threats will be executed in their utmost rigour. The law shall be fulfilled συντελεσθήσεται in all its predictions and denunciations, without any equivocation or deceit, which the heathen oracles abounded with. And thus the Geneva version, and that of Coverdale, *The law shall be fulfilled without lies.* If you desire to know the truth, and the best rules for your conduct and actions, consult not magicians or conjurors, but wise and holy men, who are conversant and well versed in the law of God; they will teach you in sincerity the word of truth, and conduct you in the right paths; and wisdom in a faithful mouth, such as theirs (for so, from the authority of the Vulgate, I would render the Greek), is perfection, or may be depended upon as an oracle, or as *the oracle*, properly so called. The sense is not unlike that xxxiii. 3. (See note.) Or, with Calmet, we may consider this verse as an answer to an objection; You will say, If I apply not myself to such as make it their business to interpret dreams, and to foretell future events, how shall I know what I ought to do, or in what manner to proceed in many cases, or how distinguish a true from a false dream, and act with safety, and to my content and satisfaction? God's law, says this wise man, is the best rule for your conduct, it is alone sufficient to satisfy all proper and reasonable inquiries; and you will find among the teachers and interpreters of it many persons of great knowledge, as well as of known candour and sincerity, who will give you better and more certain instruction than you can possibly draw from wizards and diviners. To the law and to the testimony;—there is the only infallible direction, such as speak not according to this word, are deceivers; there is no light in them, nor illumination, or comfort to be expected from them.

Ver. 9. *A man that hath travelled knoweth many things, and he that hath much experience will declare wisdom.*] If with some copies we read ὁ πεπαιδευμένος, which the oriental versions favour, the sense then is like that Matt. xiii. 52. *Every scribe, which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven*, is so well furnished, as to be able to bring forth *out of his treasure things new and old;* and then this will conclude the whole upon dreams: if we read πεπλανημένος, which our translators follow, a new subject then will begin here, which contains the advantages of travelling, and of experience and knowledge in worldly affairs. The wise man's observation here is, That he that has not seen the world, or hath not travelled for that purpose, and thereby had an opportunity of knowing mankind, knows nothing in comparison. A mere speculative knowledge, such as is acquired by reading, signifies but little alone. To form an accomplished person, one capable of shining in public business, the knowledge of men is requisite, as well as of books, and nothing is of more service in this respect than travelling. By this the great names of antiquity rendered themselves so famous, and gained their learning and improvement. It was thus Ulysses obtained the character of one of the wisest and most experienced princes in the world; and Pythagoras and Plato arrived to that pitch of knowledge, which so justly recommended them. The like may be observed of Socrates, who, out of his great love of wisdom and from the hopes and prospect of improvement, submitted to learn of every great master he could hear of at a distance. Nor need we after this wonder, that a renowned queen, who had a thirst for knowledge, should herself travel as far as from Sheba to Jerusalem, to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and be improved by it. (Matt. xii. 42.)

Ver. 12. *I was ofttimes in danger of death: yet I was delivered, because of these things.*] Τούτων χάριν, *i. e.* by means of the experience and knowledge which I had acquired in my travels. And thus the Arabic very expressly, *Propter experientiam evasi.* The Vulgate joins τούτων χάριν to the first sentence, *Aliquoties usque ad mortem periclitatus sum horum causa: et liberatus sum gratia Dei;* as if in his travels, like St. Paul, who was in journeyings often, he had been in frequent danger of death, by *perils in the sea, by perils of robbers, by perils in the wilderness*, &c. (2 Cor. xi. 26.) But none of the Greek copies countenance this sense. Junius carries τούτων χάριν forward, and begins the next verse with it, but there is no necessity nor authority for this. To his own happy experience of God's loving-kindness in his travels, and the dangers attending them, the wise man subjoins a fine reflection in the five following verses, that God will take equal care of all that fear him, and put their trust in his mercy; his providence will watch over them, and protect them, as it did his favourite Israelites in the wilderness. This holy assurance, that the Lord will never fail them that seek him, is the hope and stay of the righteous in their distress, and is indeed a consequence of the fear of the Lord. For the fear of the Lord includes in it a well-grounded hope and confidence in him. Solomon, accordingly, represents a holy trust in God, as naturally flowing from this religious fear. (Prov. xiv. 26.)

Ver. 18. *He that sacrificeth of a thing wrongfully gotten, his offering is ridiculous; and the gifts of unjust men are not accepted.*] The wise man expresses here the great abomination of gifts or sacrifices accompanied with injustice, and the dislike which God has to them, according to his own declaration, *I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt-offering;* (Isa. lxi. 8.) *i. e.* such as are so presumptuous and wicked, as to think that they can propitiate Almighty God, by offering him part of what they got by deceit or violence. Such offerings are rather mockeries, than any real tokens of regard or duty, as the Vulgate and

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marginal reading have it, from a copy, probably, which had either μωκήματα or μωμήματα instead of δωρήματα, which is followed by our translators. Liberality and charity, to be acceptable to God, and have their perfect work, must be done without the least violation of equity and justice; for a man cannot in any sense be said to be good, or perform a good action, when it is accompanied with some evil at the same time. Good actions, with respect to both God and man, are at all times seasonable, and instances of our love to both; but they are not to be performed to either at the expense of what is just and right. This cannot be better explained than by the instance of Saul, who spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen of the Amalekites, and the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord in Gilgal, which was sin unto him, and severely punished as such. When God commands any act of justice to be done, or forbids any act of injustice, the rejecting the word of the Lord, or the disobeying him in that instance, under the pretence of serving him in another, is styled stubbornness and rebellion. Samuel hath well determined this case, when he says, *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.* (1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.) If David would not offer a burnt-offering of that which only cost him nothing, until he had made it his own by a valuable and just price; and if the prophet condemns the offering the blind, and the lame, and the sick, for sacrifice, because it ought to be perfect, and without blemish, (Mal. i. 8.) how much more are goods unjustly gotten, the wages and fruit of iniquity, to be looked upon as affronts and desecrations, if offered unto the Lord? It is, in the language of the same prophet, offering polluted bread upon the altar, (ver. 7.) and cursed is that deceiver which hath in his flock a male; *i. e.* something that is right, and against which there lies no objection, and yet voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing, (ver. 14.) which is sure to displease him.

Ver. 20. *Whoso bringeth an offering of the goods of the poor, doth as one that killeth the son before the father's eyes.*] God is the father and protector of the poor, whose bread in the next verse is said to be his life; to take this away, or by any act of violence to diminish his little substance, is in some sort to take away his life. To offer to God, or to his use and service, what has been by oppression, and an unwarrantable stretch of power, taken from the needy, is here, by a most apt and beautiful metaphor, compared to that shocking instance of inhumanity and cruelty, the spilling the blood of a son in the sight of a fond and tender father. The best actions, even though intended for God's honour, yet if they are founded in injuries, in wrong and robbery, are but such sacrifices, as were offered in Tophet, where murder was the oblation. They are a sort of Thyestean feast, according to profane history, or inviting the father to partake of an unnatural repast upon his own son. Or it may not unaptly be illustrated by the ewe-lamb in sacred history, which the poor man had brought up and nourished with his children, and had such a tenderness for, that it lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter; and yet, dear as this was to him, the rich oppressor could spare his own numerous flocks and herds to seize upon this, and offer it to his guests for their entertainment. (2 Sam. xii. 3, 4.) In the primitive church neither the unjust publican, nor the usurer, nor the extortioner, was thought worthy of the honour of being admitted to the offertory, though permitted to enjoy the other privileges of religion: (Apost. Constit. lib. iv. cap. 5.) nor would they accept of an estate given to pious uses, which was known to be got by injustice and extortion, nor allow any to enrich the corban, or even to endow a church, with the spoils of the poor. This desecrated the good design; it was, in the language of the prophet, *to build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.* (Micah iii. 10.)

Ver. 21. *The bread of the needy is their life; he that defraudeth him thereof, is a man of blood.*] This is more clearly expressed in the next verse, *He that taketh away his neighbour's living slayeth him; and he that defraudeth the labourer of his hire, is a bloodshedder.* The Vulgate rendering of which is strong and remarkable, *Qui effundit sanguinem, et qui fraudem facit mercenario, fratres sunt.* As the wages of the hired servant are his bread, and the support of his life, to take away or withhold his subsistence, whereby he should comfort and maintain life, is *interpretativè* to take away the very life itself, or to shed his blood. The wise man's design is to press the great duty of equity and compassion to the poor and needy, and to enforce that precept, Deut. xxiv. 14. *Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy;* where the Targum has, *Thou shalt not oppressingly withhold nor diminish his wages.* (See also Jam. v. 4.) And the reason of this prohibition is, lest such oppressions should tempt them to do some desperate and wicked thing; to expose, perhaps, or kill their children, when not able to maintain them, after the cruel manner of the heathens, who were frequently guilty of this inhumanity, and thought it no crime, when their poverty lay hard upon them, and as it were constrained them to it. Many melancholy instances of which are to be met with both in the Greek and Roman history. Those, therefore, who, by injustice or oppressions, drive the poor to such extremities, are not improperly called men of blood, which is a Hebraism, and denotes bloodshedders. This piece of common justice due to the hireling, seems implied in that precept which forbade the muzzling of the ox which trod out the corn; (Deut. xxv. 4.) which does not merely respect the care and preservation of that useful and laborious beast; for, as St. Paul argues, *Does God take care of oxen?* but its true design no doubt was, to instruct a dull and carnal people, that they ought not to injure or defraud the labourer of his hire. Nay, the law was so strict in this particular, as to appoint it to be paid at the very time it was due; for thus the command runs, *At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.* (Deut. xxiv. 15.) And here especially that rule of the civilians obtains, "Minus solvit, qui tempore minus solvit;" *i. e.* He pays less than he ought, who pays not in due time, or when he ought to do it.

Ver. 23. *When one buildeth, and another pulleth down, what profit have they then but labour?* Ver. 24. *When one prayeth, and another curseth, whose voice will the Lord hear?*] This may be considered in two views, either as it stands connected with what goes before, or with what follows. In the former, it may be explained thus,—If you offer

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to God victims unworthy of him, such as are any ways lame or imperfect, or the sacrifice of oppression and injustice, *viz.* such as were got by robbery or violence, what advantage will it be to you? it will be like the labour of him who builds with one hand, and pulls down with the other. In the latter, it may be understood thus,—As doing and undoing in words or actions is lost labour, and as a man's purifying himself after some defilement is fruitless, if he pollutes himself again by a fresh approach to the unclean thing; so, after expiating one crime, if a man commits another, or repeats the same, if out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing, what is this but dissembling with God, and repairing the breach with untempered mortar? If you would prevail with God, and expiate your sins thoroughly, and offer to your Creator a sacrifice well pleasing to him, it must be seasoned with justice, and accompanied with a sincere and uniformpiety, which is the subject of the next chapter. Grotius applies these texts to the religious disputes between different sects, whose petitions to God are as different as their respective opinions. The success or establishment which one prays for, the other deprecates; the trophies which one erects, the other is for pulling down; the rites which one extols, the other abhors and condemns; and what one blesses as primitive and apostolical, the other curses as superstitious and profane. Whose voice of these shall God hear? and amidst such a variety of jarring opinions, may we not with Pilate inquire, what is truth? truth we are sure is but one, though errors be almost infinite. Truth is not such an arbitrary and precarious thing as men's interest and passions make it: truth cannot go beyond the word of the Lord, nor is it in Balaam's power to alter it; *that only which God blesseth, is blessed; and that only which he curseth, is cursed.*

Ver. 25. *He that washeth himself after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again, what availeth his washing? so is it with a man that fasteth for his sins, and goeth again and doeth the same. Who will hear his prayer? or what doth his humbling profit him?*] With respect to the dead we meet with three sorts of washings. 1. Βαπτισμὸς τῶν νεκρῶν, washing the dead corpse itself. (Acts ix. 37.) 2. Βαπτισμὸς ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν, *a baptization for the dead.* (1 Cor. xv. 29.) 3. Βαπτισμὸς ἀπὸ νεκρῶν, which is meant in this place, and signifies, a washing from the pollution contracted by the touch of the dead corpse. Some carried this farther, and maintained that even going among the sepulchres, or touching a bone, or standing too near persons that were breathing their last, was such a pollution as was to be washed away by a legal and ceremonial lustration. The force of the author's reasoning is to the following effect,—As the water of separation, and the ashes of the heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctify to very little purpose towards purifying the flesh, if the person so purified contracted a fresh defilement, by going near to or touching another dead body; so it is equally fruitless for a man to hope by an outward and formal repentance to expiate his sins, if he is not circumspect and careful not to offend in the like particular again. For then the unclean spirit returns with more violence and power upon him, and brings with him *seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and his last state will be worse than the first.* (Matt. xii. 45.) This fine reflection of the wise man is equally applicable to national sins, which cannot be expiated by the mere appointment of solemn days of humiliation and fasting, except a general reformation succeeds, and the old leaven of wickedness be purged away.

CHAP. XXXV.

Ver. 1. *He that keepeth the law, bringeth offerings enough; he that taketh heed to the commandments, offereth a peace-offering.*] *i. e.* He that is mindful of the commandments of God, and careful to perform them, serves God more acceptably, than he that offers to him a multitude of vain oblations. For it is not the number of men's offerings, but the integrity of their lives; not their incense, but their obedience, which God delights to be honoured by. Outward sacrifices are only holy, when they are joined with the inward sacrifice of the heart; and he no otherwise regards the outward religious works of piety, than as they are visible marks of that spiritual and invisible worship, which he claims as his due, and is the very essence of true religion. (John iv. 23.) It is evident that the Old Testament gives two different representations of religion, the one respecting the mere outward ceremonial performance, the other the spiritual design of the law. The holy patriarchs and prophets, and other eminent persons among the Jews, regarded chiefly the spiritual and moral sense, the true meaning and spirit of the law, as does this writer; and from many passages in the law and the prophets, it is evident that the moral law was chiefly regarded and insisted on, and the observance of this was what gave a value to the other positive rites, and was indeed the substance of those Mosaical shadows.

Ver. 2. *He that requiteth a good turn, offereth fine flour; and he that giveth alms, sacrificeth praise.*] The sense generally given of the first part of this verse is, that the sacrifice of a grateful heart is more acceptable to God than that of beasts, or any oblation; and thus Junius and our translators understand it: but, I think, charity may here be meant as well as gratitude, and ὁ ἀνταποδιδοὺς χάριν be one that returns charity for the blessings himself hath received of God. And thus both parts of the verse will agree; for in these sapiential books the latter clause is generally exegetical of the former. Χάρις seems to be taken in this sense, Acts ii. 46, 47. where, according to some critics, the meaning is, that they did eat their bread, ἐν ἁπλότητι, in liberality and openness of heart, ἔχοντες χάριν, doing acts of charity unto all the people. And when the apostle bids the judaizing Christians to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, (Heb. xiii. 15.) the advice, according to a very learned prelate, is, that they should make their offering of alms (instead of the fruits of their herds and flocks), joined with praises and thanksgivings to God, in token of their gratitude, and because with such sacrifices God was well pleased, as it follows in the next verse. This seems exactly answerable to that of the Psalmist, *Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the Most High:* (Psal. l. 14.) *i. e.* A truly thankful heart, gratefully acknowledging God's benefits, is the most acceptable sacrifice to him, and above all the peace-offerings thou canst bring. (Bishop Patrick's Mens. Myst. p. 307. and De Muis, in loc.) The LXX. render here, Θύσον τῷ Θεῷ θυσίαν αἰνέσεως, and the

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Vulgate, *Immola Deo sacrificium laudis*, which are agreeable to the phrase, Θυσιάζων αἰνέσεως in this writer. And in this sense we are to understand the prophet, when he says, *We will render the calves of our lips; i. e.* instead of the sacrifice of calves, or bullocks, we will offer to thee the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which is the fruit of our lips, καρπὸν χειλέων ἡμῶν, as the LXX. have it. (Hos. xiv. 2.) It may be proper to observe, that these and such-like expressions, though spoken simply, are to be understood comparatively, and when we say, "That God doth chiefly respect the inward disposition of the heart, we must beware that we do not hereupon so worship him in spirit only, as to take away all outward worship and honour from him." (Hooker's Eccl. Pol. b. vii.) The good and charitable man may also in this farther sense be said to sacrifice praise, as, in doing alms, he offers a tribute of thanksgiving; for alms are to be considered under the notion of a lord's rent, which God justly challenges from men, as their acknowledgment to him, as their great Lord and proprietary.

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt not appear empty before the Lord.* Ver. 5. *For all these things (are to be done) because of the commandment.*] This is what Moses appointed in the law, Exod. xxiii. 15. Deut. xvi. 16. The wise man here explains the precept, and gives the true design and meaning of it. The command is general; nor were the poor, and such as were in ordinary circumstances, excused from bringing gifts, and making their offering. God indeed respects chiefly the moral proofs of men's love and regard for him, such as fidelity in his service, obedience to his will, and a grateful acknowledgment of his goodness; these are the sacrifices which he most delights in, as it is the heart which he principally regards. Not that sacrifices were hereby abolished, or the obligation among the Jews to offer them taken away; God still expected the outward service and offerings to be made in his temple by all the poor as well as the rich, and herein has condescended to their necessities, in not prescribing or insisting on the quantity or value of them; that if any was unable to sacrifice a sheep, he might bring a lamb, and if a lamb was too much, he might offer corn or fine flour: and if these too were wanting, God was pleased with vows of obedience and adoration solely. These were never to be dispensed with; but the other, the ritual part, was not to be left undone, where there was an ability and power, because of God's appointment and command. These gifts and oblations were continued in the Christian church, and called sacrifices; whence St. Cyprian chides some of the rich, that they threw nothing into the corban, and came into God's house *sine sacrificio*, or empty. (De Op. Eleem.) These always made a part of the eucharist, and a perfect communion was called κοινωνία μετὰ προσφορᾶς. And as it was accounted a favour to be admitted to the offertory, so was it a punishment to communicate χωρὶς προσφορᾶς.

Ver. 6. *The offering of the righteous maketh the altar fat, and the sweet savour thereof is before the Lord.*] Virtue and goodness are the best recommendations of any sacrifice; the mere outward performance is ineffectual to reconciliation, and the obtaining the favour of God. As expiation, atonement, and propitiating the offended Deity, was the end of all material sacrifices, so were they more or less acceptable and effectual, according to the inward sense, qualifications, and dispositions of those who offered them. Or the meaning may be, that he that is a truly good man will always give to God of the best. It appears from many instances and precedents under the old law, that such as had the most unfeigned regard to God and religion, were always the most forward to bestow upon God that which was most perfect. Thus, when Abel presented God with an offering, it was the fattest of all the lambs in the whole flock; he honoured him not only out of his substance, but with the very chiefest thereof; of Cain it is only said, that he brought simply an offering. We see herein the difference between a true and a false, a sincere and a hypocritical heart: they both offer, the one bringeth his gift of the fattest and best which he hath, and in the zeal of his soul wishes it much better; the other thinketh any thing good enough, the blind or the lame, the scabbed or the rotten: and herein he is a representative and father of all such sacrilegious ones in later times, who either rob God of his offerings, or serve him only with the refuse, which they would not offer to their governor. (Mal. i. 8.) From this behaviour of Cain, St. Chrysostom raises this fine reflection: εἰ ἀνθρώπους τοὺς ὁμογενεῖς οἱ τιμᾶν βουλόμενοι, κ. τ. λ. *Si nostri generis hominibus quos veneramur, prima et præcipua damus, illaque offerre maxime volumus, quæ præ omnibus illis digna videntur; quomodo hominem offerentem Deo non oportebit Deo pretiosiora, et magis eximia offerre?* (Hom. 26. tom. ii.)

Ver. 8. *Give the Lord his honour with a good eye, and diminish not the first-fruits of thine hands.*] Gifts, sacrifices, and offerings, were of an honorary nature. For as it was thought anciently an affront for any to make a solemn approach unto a king without some present, especially when any favour was asked or expected, so was it counted dishonourable to God for any to wait upon him in his solemn worship empty-handed. (Exod. xxiii. 15.) For the true God, as well as the false deities, was supposed to be appeased and delighted with the honour of gifts and offerings, especially when those who brought them were duly purified. The sense here is, That we are not only to worship God with our lips, and give him praises with our tongues, but he has farther required, that we should give him an active honour, *i. e.* worship him with our substance. The Psalmist describes this plainly, (Psal. xcvi. 8.) *Give unto the Lord the honour due unto his name;* and what that honour is the next words shew, *Bring presents*, or *an offering, and come into his courts.* This too must be done with a good eye; *i. e.* generously, without any mixture of covetousness, and uprightly, without any diminution; and the present must be of the best and most excellent in its kind. (Exod. xxii. 29, 30. Numb. xviii. 26. 29, 30. Prov. iii. 9.) Ἀπαρχὴ, or the *first-fruits*, was commanded to be given of the very best, hence it became a term for the choicest things; and in this sense the LXX. always use it. The Jews distinguished offerings into two sorts, one of which they called righteousness, or what was strictly and exactly according to the proportion required by the law; and the other they called mercy or bounty, being above the proportion fixed. According to which notion he that performed the first sort was named a just man, and he that exceeded it was called a good man. The sense therefore of this verse may be, Do not only do what is necessary and strictly legal, but make some free-will-offering, as a voluntary oblation to the honour of God; or, more briefly, Do

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not stint yourself to a mere legal righteousness, in giving thy first-fruits to God, or his receiver, the priest.

Ver. 9. *In all thy gifts shew a cheerful countenance, and dedicate thy tithes with gladness.*] Ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ ἁγίασον δεκάτην. To *sanctify*, according to the Jewish sense of it, means to apply or appropriate to some religious use; as the first-fruits and tenths were set apart for the maintenance of the priests and Levites, the repairs of the temple, and for providing the daily sacrifice. The vowing or dedicating tithes was very ancient. Jacob promises, that, of all which God should give him, he would give the tenth unto him. (Gen. xxvii. 22.) It was likewise customary, even among some heathen nations, to dedicate tithes to the deity whom they adored. Among the Jews the payment of them was established, the priests lived upon them, as God's alms, and he assigned unto them a great part of that maintenance which the Jews brought to him. See Numb. xviii. 22. Deut. xviii. 4. where the law requires, that they should give the first-fruits of their land unto the priest, but does not determine the quantity; yet, because Ezekiel says, (xiv. 13.) that they should offer the sixth part of an ephah of a homer, their wise men concluded that they were bound to bring at least a sixtieth part to God for his ministers. But notwithstanding this, they accounted him but a covetous man that brought no more, and they called this a terumah, or the heave-offering of an evil eye. For thus Maimonides: A good eye, *i. e.* a liberal person, brings one part of forty; a mean eye, *i. e.* a man that hath some, but a less degree of goodness, one of fifty; and an evil eye, *i. e.* a niggard, one of sixty; less than which it was not lawful to give. (See Patrick's Mens. Myst. p. 164. Seld. Hist. Tyth. cap. 2. Ainsw. on Numb. xviii. 12.) This may also be applied to charity, which is a gift to God, and its value is enhanced according to the alacrity and readiness expressed in it. Thus St. Chrysostom, μέγεθος οὐκ ἐν τῷ πλήθει, κ. τ. λ. *Magnitudo eleemosynæ non in multitudine opum sita est, sed ex alacritate dantium judicatur. Propter hoc et qui potum frigidæ dedit, acceptus est; ut discamus, quod ubique rectam mentem requirit universorum Dominus. Fieri potest ut qui parum habet, liberalis admodum sit propter alacritatem; et qui multa possidet, minor videatur his qui parum habent, propter sordidi animi tenacitatem.* (Tom. ii. Hom. 56.)

Ver. 10. *Give unto the Most High according as he hath enriched thee; and as thou hast gotten, give with a cheerful eye.*] This may be understood either of the payment of tithes, or of charity in general, either of which may be considered as a tribute, or an acknowledgment to God for what he has bestowed, and as a likely means to procure his farther blessing; and therefore should be cheerfully given, in proportion to men's circumstances and fortune. Tobit has well determined this, *Be merciful after thy power; if thou hast much, give plenteously; if thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little, for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward in the day of necessity,* (iv. 7—9. Psal. xli. 1. Prov. xix. 17. 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. Heb. vi. 10. xiii. 16.) Καζεύρεμα χειρὸς, which is the reading in all the Greek copies, I conceive should be καθ' εὕρεμα χειρὸς, and so the Alexandrian MS. alone has it. It means,—Give cheerfully according to the gain of thy hands, (for so εὕρεμα is used, and should be understood in this book, see note on xxix. 4.) give according to thy stock and substance, whether it be ox, calf, kid, or lamb; let thy liberality be as God has prospered thee, nor fear to be made poor thyself by such acts of goodness, nor let avarice or private interest suggest any such excuse to you. To make any gift or sacrifice acceptable, it must be done in a manner likewise worthy of God; it must be done with a willing heart, and with such a satisfaction as may even shew itself upon the very countenance. And so the command is to the children of Israel, (Exod. xxxv. 5.) *Whoso is of a willing heart, let him bring his offering unto the Lord; and every one whose heart stirred him up, and whom his spirit made willing, brought accordingly the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle.* (Ver. 21.) And in that great offering of David and the people, towards building the temple, mention is particularly made of their ready and cheerful heart, *that the people rejoiced, because with a perfect heart they offered willingly unto the Lord.* (1 Chron. xxix. 9.) And in his solemn thanksgiving, David, who rejoiced also with them with great joy, says, *I thank thee, O God, that I should be able to offer so willingly after this sort, for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* (Ver. 14.) It is therefore an instance of unspeakable goodness in God, to receive and reckon it as a gift, when we return to him but an inconsiderable part of what he has given us, and not only to promise sevenfold for a reward of our gratitude, as is mentioned here, but, as the gospel assures us, a hundredfold, both in this world and the other. Of so great consequence and moment is cheerfulness, and a hearty concurrence in all gifts, duties, and offerings, made to God: and so true is that reflection of St. Austin, "Nemo invitus benefacit, etiamsi quod bonum est facit." (Confess. lib. i. cap. 12.)

Ver. 12. *Do not think to corrupt with gifts, for such he will not receive.*] Μὴ δωροκόπει, οὐ γὰρ προσδέξεται. Grotius understands it in the sense of our translators, of hoping to bribe or corrupt God by gifts; which mean and wicked attempt the Scripture condemns in many places. But δωροκοπέω is more generally and would be better rendered, *De donis reseco.* Agreeable to which is the marginal reading, *Diminish nothing of thy offerings;* which Junius and Jansenius follow; the latter has, *Ne decurtes munera.* The Tigurine version understands it of goods unjustly gotten, *Ne offeras parta sordibus munera;* and the Vulgate, probably of such as are blemished and imperfect. However the determinate sense of the word be, to offend in any of these instances is to affront God; nor will the magnificence, state, glory, or reputation, of a man make any difference. God neither regards the person nor sacrifice itself so much as a pure intention, and a heart truly devoted to him.

Ver. 15. *Do not the tears run down the widow's cheeks? and is not her cry against him that causeth them to fall?*] See Luke xviii. 3. where the parable is proposed under the person of a widow, rather than of a poor man, to make it the more affecting, as that sex is more exposed to injuries, and widows generally above others. Quintilian observes, *Per se imbecilla est fœmina, et affert infirmitati naturali non leve pondus, quod vidua est.* Such as are used with violence, and forced to undergo uncommon hardships and oppressions, are said to cry to heaven for vengeance: (Gen. iv. 10. Exod. ii. 23. 2 Macc. viii. 3. Luke xviii. 7. James v. 4.) and thus the martyrs cry, ἕως πότε οὐ κρίνεις.

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(Apoc. vi. 10.) God has declared himself the protector of the widow, and the father of the orphan: he places his greatness in being the support of the weak, as well as in ruling the mighty, and in particular he is the defence of those that are poor in spirit, to whom earth is as a place of banishment, and heaven the habitation longed for. By *the widow* here we may either understand, according to the Port-Royal comment, the church, when under a state of persecution, or such pious afflicted souls as cry day and night unto God to avenge them speedily; and when they are reduced to such an extremity as seemingly to be past all help and recovery, then it is that God appears in their behalf, and makes bare his arm in their defence, and heaven interests itself in their quarrel.

Ver. 17. *The prayer of the humble pierceth the clouds; and till it come nigh he will not be comforted.*] Humility, or a mean and low opinion of ourselves, when we address the great and incomprehensible majesty of God, is a necessary qualification for acceptance. As it relates to prayer, it consists in disclaiming all right or pretence of merit to the bounty and munificence of God; and in submitting ourselves entirely to his wisdom and providence, both with respect to the benefit itself petitioned for, and likewise the time and measure of it; and, lastly, that we should consider ourselves not only as dependent creatures, but also as sinful and unworthy creatures. The wise man here takes notice of three particulars, or effects of the prayer of the humble:—1. That it is so effectual as to pierce the clouds. 2. That it is so persevering, as not to desist till it reaches to and is presented before the throne of God. 3. That it is so importunate and fervent, as not to return back till it hath obtained its request. All virtues and graces exalt us towards heaven, say Messieurs of Port-Royal, and, as it were, knock at its gate for admittance; but it is humility that effectually opens it, and brings us to the throne of him who ascended not thither, till after he had demeaned and emptied himself, and would not enter into his glory till he was made perfect through humility and sufferings.

Ver. 18. *For the Lord will not be slack, neither will the mighty be patient towards them, till he have smitten in sunder the loins of the unmerciful, and repaid vengeance to the heathen; till ye have taken away the multitude of the proud, and broken the sceptre of the unrighteous.*] Μακροθυμία, *patience*, or *long-suffering*, signifies slackness in punishing; and so the sense may either be, that the Almighty will not delay to do justice to them, *viz.* to the humble or afflicted, or will not be slack to execute justice upon them, *viz.* the unmerciful, or the heathen, to whom ἐπ' αὐτοῖς seems to refer. This place cannot be better illustrated than by comparing it with Luke xviii. 7. *Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him; and will he be slack towards them, or forbear long to punish their enemies?* καὶ μακροθυμῶν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς; for so the words should be pointed and rendered; and then the next sentence is better connected, *I tell you he will avenge them speedily.* The author seems here to hint at the Greeks, Syrians, and such to whom the Jews were at this time in subjection in Judea, Syria, and Egypt, and to intend comfort to his countrymen, by assuring them that their enemies should feel the weight of God's arm, and experience his mighty vengeance, if they continued to oppress them, as in former time he poured forth his wrath upon the Egyptians, Canaanites, Chaldeans, and other nations, for the cruelties used to his chosen. But as it does not often happen that God appears so openly and so instantly in the behalf of his oppressed servants, as to punish such as afflict them, by some remarkable judgment in this life, we may properly understand this place of the last great day, to which he will reserve the complete avenging of his suffering members; when he will break the sceptre or power of the proud or ungodly, and overthrow all that is great in this world, that will presume to oppose or exalt itself against him.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Ver. 1. *HAVE mercy upon us, O Lord God of all, and behold us.* Ver. 2. *And send thy fear upon all the nations that seek not after thee.* Ver. 3. *Lift up thy hand against the strange nations, and let them see thy power.*] The author having spoken, in the conclusion of the former chapter, of the mighty force and energy of prayer to succour the humble and afflicted, and to procure help for them against their enemies and oppressors, begins this with a set prayer to God, that he would be pleased favourably to look upon and assist his scattered and distressed people, who, at the time when this work was composed, were dispersed in Egypt, Syria, and all the provinces of the east, and beyond the Euphrates, and those that remained in Judea and Jerusalem, were sometimes subject to the kings of Syria, sometimes to those of Egypt, and in their turns victims of their power and ambition. This so low and mortifying a state afflicted the good Israelites, they fervently beseeched God to have mercy upon and to restore tranquillity to his people, and either to convert the hearts of the idolatrous nations, strangers to his fear and worship, or to lift up his hand against them, and destroy them with a mighty destruction; or to deliver his chosen from them with a mighty and stretched-out arm, as he formerly delivered their ancestors in the time and under the conduct of Moses. The things the wise man here prays for, are the very same the Jews continued to expect in our Saviour's time, by and under the Messias; *viz.* the conversion of the gentiles to the one true God, the destruction of certain nations, their enemies, the restoration of all their tribes, and the working of miracles; in both ages they prayed that God would hasten the accomplishment. (See note on l. 23. and Bishop Chandler's Def. of Christian. p. 42.)

Ver. 4. *As thou wast sanctified in us before them, so be thou magnified among them before us.* Ver. 5. *And let them know thee, as we have known thee, that there is no God, but only thou, O God.*] The former verse will admit of a double sense, which may either be, As thou hast made thine anger visible and conspicuous, in punishing us, thy chosen, with so much rigour, before the heathen, so use them, in like manner, before our eyes; pour thy vengeance upon them in our sight, and let us in our turns be witnesses of their ruin and overthrow. Or thus, As in ancient times thou madest thy power to appear, by bringing thy chosen out of Egypt, in the sight of the heathen, and against their will; so do the same wonders for us, their children, before these our oppressors, and shew thy great mercy, by delivering us from the bondage and slavery we labour under, that we

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may be witnesses of thy marvellous works, as our fathers were of those thou didst for them in the land of Egypt, and at the Red Sea. In this prayer we find the most pressing motives that can be made use of, to incline the Almighty to favour his people, and to engage him in their behalf and assistance. The author here urges every inducement, and neglects nothing that can be persuasive; and when he doubts the sufficiency of his own reasons, for the obtaining his petition, he has recourse to God himself, and enforces his plea from the honour of the Divine nature, engages God to interpose, for his own glory's sake, and not to give up his people finally into the hands of their enemies, who would not only come into his inheritance, but insult him, their only God and King, for deserting them, Psal. lxxix. 9—11. which is the substance likewise of some other Psalms. This part of the prayer seems pretty much the same with that of Esther, for her people, *O Lord, give not thy sceptre to them that be nothing, and let them not laugh at our fall: remember, O Lord; make thyself known in the time of our afflictions, O King of the nations, and Lord of all power: for they have stricken hands with their idols, that they will destroy thine inheritance, and quench the glory of thy house, and of thine altar.* (Chap. xiv. 9. 11, 12.)

Ver. 6. *Shew new signs, and make other strange wonders.*] *i. e.* Ἐγκαίνισον σημεῖα, Renew the miracles which thou didst under Moses against Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and by Joshua against the Canaanites; and add new ones to them, that foreign nations may discern thy infinite power, exerted in wrath against the enemies of thy people, Israel: and let the heathens know, and be convinced by the power of thy miracles, that thou only art God, that their idols are lying vanities, their kings but weak mortals, whose life and death are in thy hand, that, urged by the dread of thy omnipotency, they may cease to oppress thy chosen.

Ver. 8. *Make the time short, remember the covenant.*] The Greek copies vary here in their reading; some have μνήσθητι ὀργῆς, others μνήσθητι ὁρισμοῦ, *memento finis*, as the Vulgate has it; others μνήσθητι ὁρκισμοῦ, which our translators follow. God's oath or covenant, and the assurances given them by the prophets, were the ground of hope of the blessings expected by the Jews, both before and in our Saviour's time. What this oath was is fully explained, Ecclus. xliv. 21, 22. it was the blessing of all men, and the covenant assured by an oath to Abraham, and established with Isaac: it was the covenant of kings that he made with David, to exalt his horn for ever:—his mercy, whereby he promised *a remnant unto Jacob, and a root unto David, or a Messias to come out of his loins,* Ecclus. xlvii. 11. 22. as the Jews understand the words of Isaiah there alluded to. (See Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 43.) And thus the holy men in the Old Testament, in their prayers, frequently remind God of his covenant and promise, (2 Chron. vi. 42. Psal. cxix. 49.) and make mention of his servant David, or Abraham, or Isaac, or Israel, for whom they knew he had an especial kindness, thereby to move his regard or compassion. Some understand the wise man, when he says, *Make the time short,* as if he prayed that God would hasten to their succour, and let the calamities that shall come upon their enemies make haste. (Deut. xxxii. 35.) But this petition may be considered in a higher sense, as a prayer for the speedy coming of the Messiah. All the saints who lived before the appearance of Christ have besecched God, in the same importunate manner, to hasten the time of his advent. On this account St. Bernard piously laments, that, when the holy patriarchs and prophets waited for this blessing with so much impatience, and prayed for it with so much warmth and earnestness, Christians should at length receive it with so much coldness and indifference, and be so little affected with the mighty mercy of his coming.

Ver. 10. *Smite in sunder the heads of the rulers of the heathen, that say, There is none other but we.*] This probably refers to Psal. cx. 5, 6. where it is prophesied of the Messiah, *That he shall wound even kings in the day of his wrath; that he shall judge among the heathen, and fill the places with the dead bodies, and smite in sunder the heads over divers countries.* The author seems to mean here the kings of Syria and Egypt, chiefly the former (for the Ptolemies, kings of Egypt, were on many occasions kind to the Jews); and among these, the character suits best with Antiochus Epiphanes, who, if he did not affect Divine honours himself, hindered the paying them to the true God. His blasphemies are expressly foretold, Dan. vii. 25. viii. 25. xi. 36. and his history, as recorded in the books of Maccabees, shews that he was an enemy to all religion, and even defied God, and that the end of this cruel oppressor was as miserable as his life had been wicked. The Vulgate renders, *Contere caput principum inimicorum,* following a copy which had ἐχθρῶν instead of ἐθνῶν. This and the foregoing verses shew the vindictive temper of the Jewish people.

Ver. 11. *Gather all the tribes of Jacob together, and inherit thou them as from the beginning.*] When this author wrote, the far greater number of the Jews was dispersed in different provinces of the east, in Greece, Africa, and in the Isles: it was a common and settled form of their prayer, to beg of God to recall the several tribes that were dispersed, such of them as were not yet returned into Judea, but were the outcasts of Israel. We have several instances in the book of Psalms of this devout request. (See Psal. cvi. 45. cxxvi. 5.) See Ecclus. xlviii. 10. where Elias is said to be *ordained to restore the tribes of Jacob.* To which agrees Matt. xvii. 11. which refers to this tradition. This restoration the Jews promised themselves before or at the coming of their Messiah. Grotius observes, that κατακληρονομεῖν is here to be taken in *forma hiphil,* as it is used by this writer, xliv. 21. and then the sense will be, Cause thou them again to inherit, *Fac iterum terras possideant,* the countries which thou hast given them, as they did in the days of David and Solomon; and thus Junius, *Tribue hæreditatem ipsis, sicut principio.*

Ver. 12. *O Lord, have mercy upon the people that is called by thy name.*] *i. e.* Have pity upon that people, Λαὸν, who are known by the name of the people of the Lord; thou art their Father, their Husband, their Master, their King; and art pleased to style thyself the God of Abraham and of Israel. The Hellenist Jews love to call the Israelites Λαὸν, the better to distinguish them from the heathen, who were called Ἀλλόφυλοι and Ἐθνικοί. And so Λαὸς and Ἔθνη are opposed, Acts xv. 14. where, speaking of the profane or gentile nations called to the gospel, God is said to have got Λαὸν ἐξ Ἐθνῶν. Bishop Fell observes, that St. Cyprian accordingly chooses to call the faithful *plebem,* and not *populum,* and condemns Tertullian for inaccuracy in using so general a term. (Not. in lib. i. Testim. ad v. Jud.)

And upon Israel, whom thou hast named thy first-born.]

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This term not only signifies the order of birth or generation, but the degree of love and favour with Almighty God, Exod. iv. 22. Psal. lxxxviii. 28. in the LXX. and particularly 2 Esd. vi. 55—58. They looked upon themselves to be the peculiar people of God, as being the posterity of Abraham, and pretended that God owned them alone for his children and favourites, and that for their own and forefathers' merit he would never forsake them. They prided themselves also in their holy city, where God, they imagined, fixed his abode, as in the capital of his kingdom, and in their temple, where the Schechinah dwelt, which they thought God, for his own sake, would not fail to preserve. All others, who were not favoured with the like privilege of descent, or with such visible tokens of God's presence, they called unclean, Isa. xxxv. 8. and looked on them as no better than dogs, disregarded and neglected by God; and this common phrase among the Jews, our Saviour is thought to allude to, Matt. xv. 26. It has been observed of the Jewish writers, that they are naturally given to magnify their own nation and privileges more than any other people living, which appears no where more clearly than in the apocryphal writings, where frequent instances occur of this vanity, even in the times of persecution and distress.

Ver. 14. *Fill Sion with thine unspeakable oracles, and thy people with thy glory.*] The Geneva version has, *Fill Sion, that it may magnify thine oracles;* which is the marginal reading, and seems more agreeable to the Greek: or, Fill Sion with thy favours, with the effects of thy mercy and loving-kindness, by fulfilling thy oracles, and making good thy promises, that it may celebrate thy praises, and thy people may have fresh occasion to publish and display thy glory: or, Fill Sion with thy presence; (*majesta tua*, Arab.) and let tokens of it appear there as formerly. The oriental versions have, *Et templum tuum gloria tua redundet; i.e.* Let the glory of the Schechinah adorn thy temple, following a copy which probably had *ναόν σου*, instead of *λαόν*, which is in all the present editions.

Ver. 15. *Give testimony unto those that thou hast possessed from the beginning, and raise up prophets that have been in thy name.*] The sense is pretty much the same, whether we read *κτήμασι* or *κτίσμασι*, *προφήτας* or *προφητείας*: *i. e.* Give unto Israel, whom thou hast chosen for such a number of ages past, and to whom thou hast vouchsafed so many proofs of thy love, fresh testimonies of thy regard and notice: remember the ancient predictions in their favour, and fulfil the promises which the prophets have made in thy name, that thou wouldest not cast off thy chosen when they call upon thee in their distress. Ἔγειρον *προφήτας* does not relate to the coming of new prophets, as some have understood it; nor is to be considered as a wish of that sort; for when the prophets had prepared the way for the reception of the Messiah, by pointing out the several material circumstances relating to his coming, the gift of prophecy ceased: neither was there any public succession of prophets for the space of four hundred years together before the coming of Christ, on purpose to raise in men's minds a more earnest expectation of that happy advent. It is rather a wish, that God would accomplish and fulfil the former prophecies in his name. And so the Hebrew word is rendered by the LXX. 1 Sam. iii. 11, 12. And thus the Syriac and Arabic versions, *Affirma testimonia servorum tuorum, et adveniant vaticinia prophetarum tuorum, qui nomine tuo locuti sunt.* (See Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 42.)

Ver. 16. *Reward them that wait for thee, and let thy prophets be found faithful.*] Reward the patience and holy trust of thy people, who, notwithstanding their many calamities, revolutions, and reproaches, have continued true and faithful in thy service, and have not, since their captivity, lapsed again into idolatry, as their ancestors did under their kings before: or, Comfort them that live in hopes of the completion of thy promises, with the happy accomplishment of the predictions, that thy prophets may be found true and faithful in what they foretold. The author seems to insinuate here, that the Jews, at this time, waited for the Messiah, or that Prophet, by way of eminence, foretold and promised Deut. xviii. 15. and by all the successive prophets. And accordingly, by the coming of the Messiah, all the oracles and prophecies were fulfilled, and the faith of his saints, who had waited for him with so much eagerness and constancy, was blessed and rewarded; and by it God filled his people with those spiritual and true blessings, of which that of Aaron was only a figure, and shewed himself the eternal God, the Lord of ages, by bringing to pass, *ἐν συντελείᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος*, what he had foretold and promised four thousand years before.

Ver. 17. *O Lord, hear the prayer of thy servants, according to the blessing of Aaron over thy people.*] *i. e.* Let us mercifully partake of those blessings, and reap the benefit of that solemn form, which thou hast appointed the high-priest to pronounce, and may the full force of the benediction (Numb. vi. 24—26.) light upon thy suppliants; *ἱκετῶν σου*, as the margin has it, and Grabe prefers to *οἰκετῶν*, the common reading. According to Bossuet, the author here requests of God, that the true, regular, and lineal priesthood in the family of Aaron may continue, and not such a corrupt and venal one as was under Antiochus Epiphanes, purchased with money by Jason and Menelaus, to the manifest wrong and injury of Onias, the regular and true high-priest, (2 Macc. iv. 8. 23.) However that be, this passage certainly contains a very particular commendation of the established ministry, its usefulness and efficacy. For God could give, if it pleased him, his gracious favours to his people, without the priest's intercession, but he on purpose appoints him to be the ministerial asker, and to be the means to derive upon his people his designed goodness. He could not more effectually grace and distinguish his servants, than by declaring, that what they should beg, he would the more readily give; thus confirming and recommending their ministry and service to all true members of the church. If this was more attended to, the contempt of the ministry and of church-power would be less complained of: in health men would regard the priest's prayers as the stated means to draw down God's blessing; and in time of sickness would apply to him, as the people did to Samuel, *Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not.* (1 Sam. xii. 19.)

Ver. 18. *The belly devoureth all meats, yet is one meat better than another.* Ver. 19. *As the palate tasteth divers kinds of venison, so doth a heart of understanding false speeches.*] This and what follows is very improperly connected with the foregoing prayer; but so it is in all the versions and editions. The sense seems to be, As the

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stomach promiscuously receives all sorts of food, but all do not digest alike, nor are equally wholesome, so the mind receives all sorts of thoughts, though not equally profitable and good: and as the will has various affections and desires, but the objects of them are not equally innocent, so the mind is capable of different sorts of knowledge, but they are not alike useful; for the knowledge of the law of God and of religious truths is of most importance, and preferable to all science whatsoever. Epiphanius has exactly the same sentiment, νοῦς μὲν ῥήματα διακρίνει, λάρυγξ δὲ σῖτα γεύεται. Or thus, As the palate distinguishes venison from common and ordinary meat, so does an understanding heart separate between flattery and real friendship, true and false reasoning, profitable and evil discourse. But as the mouth should be kept clean, that the taste may be more quick and exquisite, so the mind, in order to form a right judgment, should be free from prejudice and prepossession.

Ver. 20. *A froward heart causeth heaviness; but a man of experience will recompense him.*] Ἀνταποδώσει αὐτῷ. Drusius prefers αὐτῇ, to agree with καρδία, or λύπη, and so the Geneva version, *A froward heart bringeth grief, but a man of experience will resist it.* By *a froward heart* is meant a wicked and deceitful person; who often takes the unwary in his snares, and involves them in mischief; but a man of prudence and experience will beware of and find out his artifice and designs, will oppose and punish him according to his deserts. For so ἀνταποδίδωμι is often used by our translators.

Ver. 21. *A woman will receive every man, yet is one daughter better than another.*] Various are the senses of this place; but a good one, I conceive, may be given of it, without any such reflection upon the modesty of the sex, as Grotius and some other expositors have thrown upon them. May not therefore the meaning either be, that every woman will receive addresses, but there are some among the sex who deserve a preference before others? Or, that women are not nice and scrupulous, when addresses are made to them, about the mere person or beauty of a man; but a regard is not undeservedly had to the beauty of a woman, which is a perfection that distinguishes them from one another, and is engaging in the eyes of the other sex. But I take the true meaning of the author to be, that if in marriage regard is only had to the propagation of the species, it is but of little consequence where the choice falls; but if happiness be the thing proposed, and you would have a valuable companion, an agreeable and accomplished partner for life, regard then ought chiefly to be had to virtue and good qualities.

Ver. 23. *If there be kindness, meekness, and comfort, in her tongue, then is not her husband like other men.*] If to her beauty a wife adds such engaging qualities as strict virtue and modesty, prudent economy, obliging behaviour, and such good sense and address, as, by her winning carriage and agreeable manner, to soothe the passions and cares of her husband, and double occasionally his joys; if she is not haughty and imperious with her beauty, and places not her merit in her person, she cannot fail of crowning his utmost wishes. Possessed of such a treasure, he should bless his choice, and set a just value upon his happiness, which has made him even an object of envy. "Non est vir ejus humanæ conditionis," as Castalio well expresses his good fortune; his lot is above that of common mortals, it resembles that of the blessed above, where love and harmony reign triumphant.

Ver. 24. *He that getteth a wife beginneth a possession, a help like himself, and a pillar of rest.*] Ὁ κτώμενος γυναῖκα, ἐνάρχεται κτήσεως, βοηθὸν κατ' αὐτὸν καὶ στύλον ἀναπαύσεως. The Vulgate with great judgment inserts, *Bonam, qui possidet mulierem bonam; i. e.* He that has a good wife in all respects, has laid the best foundation of his house, has the surest grounds to build his hopes of happiness upon, and of raising a family to his mind. Junius transposes the words here, and renders, *Qui comparat mulierem adjumentum simile sibi, et columnam requietis, incipit possessionem constituere,* which is clearer and more explicit than our version. According to Grotius, ἐνάρχεσθαι means *facere imperare,* and is to be understood in *forma hiphil,* as βασιλεύειν is sometimes taken: *i. e.* He that takes a wife, sets over his house and fortunes a helpmate and an assistant, equal to himself, that will divide his cares, and in whose prudent management and economy he may safely confide, and will be to him a pillar of security, as well as of agreeable rest. According to this sense, the pointing of the Greek should be, ὁ κτώμενος γυναῖκα, ἐνάρχεται κτήσεως βοηθὸν κατ' αὐτὸν, καὶ στύλον ἀναπαύσεως. The oriental versions give this by way of advice, and such as rally the matrimonial state, or indulge themselves in criminal liberties in celibacy, would do well to remember it, *Inter præcipuas possessiones tuas posside uxorem bonam, adjumentum enim est tibi simile.*

Ver. 25. *Where no hedge is, there the possession is spoiled; and he that hath no wife, will wander up and down mourning.*] As, by the breaking down the fence of a vineyard, all they that go by pluck off the grapes; and the wild boar out of the wood doth root it up, and the wild beasts of the field devour it; so fares it with his house, who is without a proper helpmate to order and direct his domestic concerns; all things are in confusion for want of management, and without a careful superintending eye his substance is in danger of being devoured by strangers. And thus the Syriac, *Ubi non adest sepes, racemabuntur vineæ; et ubi non adest uxor, omnia detecta sunt ac dilapidata.* A man so solitary and alone, is obliged either to leave all things at random, or to trust wholly to servants, whose fidelity is not always to be depended on. But in a well-regulated family, where a prudent woman presides, such inconveniences and disorders are prevented. Whilst her husband is abroad, and attending public business, and providing what is necessary in his sphere, she discreetly orders affairs at home, and looketh so well to the ways of her household, that the heart of her husband can safely trust in her without any apprehension of waste or spoil.

Ver. 26. *Who will trust a thief well appointed, that skippeth from city to city? So who will believe* [*trust*] *a man that hath no house, and lodgeth wheresoever the night taketh him?*] *i. e.* An unmarried man, being always unsettled, is esteemed but little better than a vagrant; as he hath no wife, no little family to engage him to be at home, and to endear him to it, he is vague and often wandering abroad, in danger of falling into loose company, of being tempted to incontinence, and, which has sometimes happened, injuring the honour of the family he is admitted into. The advice therefore here is, say Messieurs of Port-Royal, that such, for prevention's sake, should marry, as St. Paul advises those, οἱ οὐκ ἐγκρατεύονται, who *do not contain* (for so

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the words should be rendered), *qui non se continent*, Vulgate; for it is better to enter into that holy state with chaste intentions, than to be exposed to the dangers and criminal liberties which usually attend a wandering and unsettled life. The question here proposed, supposes such, who treacherously attempt by private intrigues to injure the honour of others, to be at least as bad and detestable as thieves, who lie in wait for their prey, and are always ready to seize upon another's property on every occasion that presents itself. And indeed the oriental versions instead of λῃστὴς put *adolescens cœlebs*. It may not be amiss to observe, that in ancient times such as had no wife or family, no fixed dwelling or certain way of life, were looked upon as loose and disorderly persons, as suspicious vagabonds or strollers, not fit to be trusted, lying where or with whom they could, and therefore spoken of in terms of great reproach, especially among the Jews, all of whom married at a proper age, and thought it both to their credit and anvantage to be settled in that state.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Ver. 1. *EVERY friend saith, I am his friend also: but there is a friend which is only a friend in name.*] Aristotle has well defined friendship to be, "Medietas inter assentationem et inimicitiam." The friend, who appears such in all his actions, makes not loud or reiterated profession of his friendship, nor indeed has he any occasion: the loss of such a one, whether by death or some unhappy misunderstanding, is a misfortune that affects a man in the most sensible part: the flatterer attempts to gain your affections by pretending to be your real friend or admirer, though he is only so in appearance, and for his own ends; his favour and continuance are precarious. Adversity shews the cheat. *In adversitate ad mortem usque non persistit;* Arabic. As if the copy which those translators used, read (ver. 2.) οὐκ ἐν λύπῃ μένει ἕως θανάτου. Even an open enemy is preferable to one, who, under the mask of friendship, lies in wait to do hurt, and, while his words are smoother than oil, has mischief and war in his heart.

Ver. 3. *O wicked imagination! whence camest thou in to cover the earth with deceit?*] *i. e.* O dire and wicked hypocrisy! from what cursed origin didst thou spring, from what infernal region camest thou up, to sow discord and mischief among mankind? This exclamation seems forced from this writer either by what he personally suffered from some pretended friend, or was, as some conjecture, occasioned by the persecution of the Jews under Ptolemy Lagi, who was once seemingly their great friend. Or it might arise from a reflection how general the vice of hypocrisy was become, even so general as to cover the earth, and infect all the habitable parts of it.

Ver. 5. *There is a companion which helpeth his friend for the belly.*] Φίλῳ συμπονεῖ. Will labour with or for his friend. Drusius understands it in the sense of grieving, that he will be concerned, or at least seem so, upon any accident which happens to his friend. And so the Vulgate, *Sodalis amico condolet; sympathizes*, or takes part, in his grief or sufferings: but his concern is for himself, and his own interest; his fears and apprehensions are not for his friend, but for his own support and subsistence; it is his table, more than the man himself, that he is really concerned for. Grotius renders, *Collaborat in iis quæ ad ventrem pertinent*,—That the parasite spares no pains to provide for and feed his belly.

And taketh up the buckler against the enemy.] This seems the character of a true friend, and so the Syriac makes it, *Bonus est amicus, qui pugnat contra inimicum, et tenet clypeum;* but as this sense suits not with the former part of the verse, nor with the preceding one, which is the counterpart of this, Grotius prefers a quite contrary one; *viz.* Such a counterfeit will not take the buckler in his friend's behalf, nor stand by or protect him in the time of danger. There is also another sense of this place, That when the enemy is present, which is the marginal reading, he will take up the buckler to fight against him whom he formerly followed for his own convenience and advantage. This is preferred by Drusius, which Camerarius favours in his rendering, *Scutum sumet pro hoste; i. e.* He will take his buckler to assist the enemy.

Ver. 6. *Forget not thy friend in thy mind.*] Drusius thinks the original reading was, Forget not a friend after thine own heart, or one according to thine own mind; and that the grandson probably mistook ב for כ, and so rendered *in thy mind* instead of *according to thy mind.* Or the sense may be, Forget not thy friend in thy prosperity, when things go according to thy mind, *dans la joye de vôtre ame*, says Calmet.

Ver. 7. *Every counsellor extolleth counsel, but there is some that counselleth for himself.* Ver. 8. *Beware of a counsellor, and know before what need he hath . . . lest he cast the lot upon thee.*] A false friend extolleth his own counsel, will boast of his ability and inclination to serve you, whereas his advice aims only at his own interest. Consider what selfish ends he may have in view, and that his forwardness to advise you may not be owing to any sincere regard for you, but to make a prey of you, and to draw you into some mischief. The Syriac rendering is more explicit, *A consiliario iniquo cave tibi, et nosce prius quid requirat, ne dolo malo te circumveniat.* Μήποτε βάλῃ ἐπί σοι κλῆρον. Grotius ingeniously conjectures that the true reading here is σκληρὸν, *durum aliquid*, which Dr. Grabe likewise prefers, and it is confirmed by the Vulgate; *Ne forte mittat sudem in terram: i. e.* Lest he throw some impediment or stumbling-block in the way, and encourage thee to go on in it, in order to entrap thee and then laugh at thy fall and disgrace.

Ver. 10. *Consult not with one that suspecteth thee: and hide thy counsel from such as envy thee.*] *i. e.* Ask not counsel of thy enemy, nor communicate any secret to such as do not wish you well. And thus the Arabic: *Ne consilium petas ab inimico tuo ulla in re, et cela eum arcanum tuum.* One would think this piece of advice was almost needless, and that there could be no occasion to admonish any not to consult with an enemy, or such as do not bear them good-will: but there are persons who are too unwary in this respect, and, because they intend no harm themselves, are not willing to suspect any from other people; and others, who make confidants of all they meet with, without considering whom they trust or what may be the consequence. The caution, therefore, of the wise man here is very necessary, neither to consult with nor open your mind to others, without being assured of their fidelity, and likewise of their respect and regard for you, lest by an im-

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prudent application to improper persons, who, perhaps, through some jealousy inwardly hate you, you put yourself in the power of such as will never promote your interest, and will make an ill-natured use of what you have communicated the first opportunity.

Ver. 11. *Neither consult with a woman, touching her of whom she is jealous.*] See xxvi. 6. *i. e.* with a wife, for so Grotius understands γυνὴ, about her rival, ἀντιζήλου, Lev. xviii. 18. where it means another or second wife (polygamy being customary and allowed among the Jews), who, having a jealousy of the other, will say or advise something to her injury or disadvantage. As was the case of Peninnah and Hannah; the former of whom is expressly called (1 Sam. i. 6.) the other's adversary, and is represented as taking a pleasure in vexing her. This may also be extended to others, not espoused, who are rivals any way, either in trade or science, profession or invention, wit or beauty, between whom, as there usually is a jealousy, if not an open disagreement, so a fair and impartial account is not to be expected, nor a character or judgment formed from thence.—*Nor with a merchant concerning exchange.* Refer not the exchange of your goods, *i. e.* the value to be allowed for them, to the sole judgment of the merchant, who will not tell you honestly the true price of them. The Vulgate seems to understand this of freight, or exportation, the difficulty or danger of which the merchant will enlarge upon, that he may ask the more. Briefly the sense is, In selling be not directed by the buyer, nor in buying by the seller.—*Nor with an envious man, of thankfulness; nor with an unmerciful man, touching kindness.* By βάσκανος is meant the covetous man, who, having no sentiments of honour, generosity, or gratitude, towards benefactors of any sort, will discourage acts of kindness and liberality in others. He is always ready to receive favours, but never disposed to return them: and as the unmerciful man has no tenderness in his nature, nor bowels of pity, he will neither relieve objects in distress himself nor recommend any to the charity of others, and is the last to be consulted about ways and means of doing good.—*Nor with a hireling for a year, of finishing work:* who, being assured of his salary, will not trouble himself about dispatch, nor hasten to finish any piece of work. The advice in general here is, not to consult with persons that are prejudiced, and have some private ends of their own to serve.

Ver. 13. *And let the counsel of thine own heart stand, for there is no man more faithful unto thee than it.*] The sense of this verse, as connected with ver. 12. according to Calmet, is, Endeavour to free and disengage your heart from all passion, prejudice, and self-love, and to conduct yourself according to the rules of piety and justice, and you will want no other director. You will find light enough in yourself to determine you how to act. That which disqualifies us, and renders us incapable of proceeding and judging as we ought, is our excessive self-love; we suffer ourselves to be swayed and influenced by passion or prejudice; and when this is the case, a man is no more in a condition to judge what is true and right, than the eye, when it is obscured with a thick film, can distinguish objects clearly. Or thus, Choose one according to your own mind, and be advised by him, for you will never find any person so faithful to you as a true and disinterested friend. Or, according to others, the sense may be, Though you are acquainted with many, be intimate only with a good and pious person; let him be to thee as your second self, consult freely with him, for you will find none more faithful or more improving. A good man is often more enlightened, and, through the grace afforded him, of an understanding superior to other instructors. Thus the Psalmist, *I have more understanding than the aged, because I keep thy commandments.* (Psal. cxix.)

Ver. 14. *For a man's mind is some time wont to tell him more than seven watchmen that sit above in a high tower.*] The sense of this verse differs not greatly from the former, and is, That a person who is a true and real friend, and thoroughly in your interest, is more capable of assisting you, and of giving you good and proper advice, than the most able and experienced counsellors. As he knows better your wants, your dispositions, the state of your affairs, and has your interest more at heart than a stranger, he will direct you best, and give his advice the most effectually and cordially. The Vulgate inserts *sancti*, understanding it of a good man particularly; and the context, says Calmet, both requires and justifies the addition: for as there is no knowledge or counsel against, so neither is there without, the Most High. He communicates illumination, and makes discoveries to such as faithfully serve and truly love him, sooner than to any others. And therefore, as is advised in the next verse, we must pray to God with faith and perseverance, and address ourselves to him for his direction and assistance, before we apply to our friends for theirs. For men do but imperfectly guess at what is right; but it is God that takes us by the hand, and leads us into the right way, and makes us go on successfully in it, by the light and influence of his grace, as being himself the way, the truth, and the life.

Ver. 17. *The countenance is a sign of changing of the heart.*] Ἴχνος ἀλλοιώσεως καρδίας πρόσωπον. Some copies have, ἴχνος ἀλλοιώσεως χαρᾶς πρόσωπον· *i. e.* One sees upon the countenance whether the heart is gay or sorrowful, content or afflicted. There is also another reading, ἴχνος ἀλλοιώσεως καρδίας τέσσαρα μέρη ἀνατέλλει, ἀγαθὸν, κακὸν, κ. τ. λ. which Grotius prefers, and is countenanced by the Vulgate; *i. e.* There are four things which make such an impression upon the heart, as appeareth in the very countenance; hope and fear, life and death. Bossuet furnishes still another sense; *viz.* That in every action or affair of consequence, the mind is, as it were, in suspense for a time, and cautiously examines four particulars: whether the thing is like to be advantageous or otherwise, good or evil, sinful or allowable, and the occasion of life or death to us.

Ver. 19. *There is one that is wise and teacheth many, and yet is unprofitable to himself.*] This observation holds more in moral than in civil life; for in the latter each endeavours to be most profitable to himself. The truth of it wants not much to be illustrated, and yet is too notorious to be denied. There are too many of this sort of wise men, says Calmet, who are wise only with respect to others, who abound in knowledge, and yet have not the sense to make use of and apply it to their own advantage and happiness; who deliver useful precepts of instruction, and have the satisfaction to please and edify others, and yet themselves continue unfruitful. But to what purpose is learning or

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knowledge, if it terminates only in speculation, and is not accompanied with a good life? What signifies the understanding all mysteries, and all knowledge, or even speaking with the tongues of men and of angels, if, after preaching savingly to others, and being admired for his great accomplishments, the man himself, for his evil conduct, be at length a cast-away? Unhappy, in so abusing the tree of knowledge, as thereby to fall short of the tree of life. Or possibly the author may here condemn those who place learning and knowledge in such things, as are not perfective of their better part, who prefer profane to sacred history, and human to Divine literature.

Ver. 20. *There is one that sheweth wisdom in words, and is hated; he shall be destitute of all food.* Ver. 21. *For grace is not given him from the Lord, because he is deprived of all wisdom.*] Many copies instead of τροφῆς have σοφίας, as is the marginal reading; but that whole clause seems to be an interpolation from the like words in the next verse. By σοφιζόμενος ἐν λόγοις, all the commentators, with St. Austin, understand a cunning sophister, who deals in subtilties, who makes a vain show and ostentation of knowledge, without the true use and power of it; one who uses captious and ensnaring arguments, true in appearance only, to impose upon men and lead them into error, instead of enlightening and improving them. As the design of such is not to teach true wisdom, or to mend the heart, nor so much to rectify men's passions and wills, as to cheat and bewilder the understanding, their knowledge is vain and trifling, and the study of it contemptible. It is a science falsely so called, devoid of the grace of God, and of his blessing, which he has promised, not to learning, as such, much less to a vain pretence of it, but to regularity and goodness, and a diligent meditation in his law.

Ver. 22. *Another is wise to himself, and the fruits of understanding are commendable in his mouth.* Ver. 23. *A wise man instructeth his people, and the fruits of his understanding fail not.*] In the two foregoing verses our author has described a wise man who is so in appearance only, or in outward discourse, whose wisdom not being rightly employed, and for want of other recommendations to go along with it, is useless and unprofitable. Here he describes a truly wise man, who is inwardly such, and wise to the best purposes: who makes use of the parts God has blessed him with, as well to edify himself, as to instruct others, and is, as the Vulgate excellently expresses it, *Animæ suæ sapiens.* True wisdom is in order either to our own or others' happiness; and to be truly wise, is to be wise unto the great purposes of salvation. Whatever knowledge contributes not to this, is beside the mark that ought principally to be aimed at. "The careful and good pastor furnishes himself with knowledge for his own use and direction, and communicates it liberally and painfully for the benefit of others. As he rightly divides the word of truth, he feeds his charge with sound doctrine, and has the pleasure to see his labours succeed, and the work of the Lord prosper in his hands. And if he wants sciences humanly acquired, his affectionate and real concern for the welfare of souls will abundantly compensate that; he will yet know more than human wisdom can teach him, because he has that Master within him that teaches man knowledge." (Bona de via compend. ad Deum, p. 172.) As he has laid the foundation of religion deep in the hearts of his hearers, and the seed has had the fortune to fall into good ground, it withereth not as soon as it is sprung up, but bringeth forth fruit to perfection, some a hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. By καρποὶ πιστοὶ, *fructus fideles*, Vulgate, we may also understand, that his instructions are hearty and sincere, and such as may be depended upon; that he is not as many that corrupt the word of God, or handle it deceitfully, *but in sincerity, and by the manifestation of the truth, commending himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* (2 Cor. iv. 2.)

Ver. 25. *The days of the life of man may be numbered, but the days of Israel are innumerable.*] The days of man are ordinarily short, and the reputation acquired in life passes away with it; but the true Israelites live for evermore, and their name shall not be blotted out. According to Calmet the sense is, That though the life of a wise man is short and limited, and consists only of a certain number of days, like that of other men, yet the remembrance of him shall not die, it shall continue as long as Israel itself; as is expressed more clearly in the following verse. Or it may mean, according to the Jewish conceit, that God will never cast off the seed of Israel, but they shall always be his peculiar people, and their law never fail or pass away; which the Jews assured themselves, especially with regard to the moral precepts of it, would be perpetual. Philo has expressed their sentiments very strongly on this head, τὰ τούτου μόνου βέβαια, ἀσάλευτα, ἀκράδαντα, κ. τ. λ. *Hujus unius [Mosis] firmæ, immotæ, inconcussæ perstiterunt leges, tanquam sigillis ipsius naturæ obsignatæ, jam inde usque ab illo die, quo primum scriptæ sunt, ad hanc memoriam, ac porro mansuras in posterum spes est, et inveteraturas omnibus sæculis, dum sol, luna, cœlum ipsum, mundus denique universus exstabit.* (De Mose, lib. ii. Joseph. Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 8. Matt. v. 8. Luke xvi. 17.)

Ver. 27. *My son, prove thy soul in thy life, and see what is evil for it, and give not that unto it.* Ver. 28. *For all things are not profitable for all men; neither hath every soul pleasure in every thing.*] According to Calmet the sense is, Learn and know your own power, and what you are capable of doing; but undertake nothing before you have made trial of your own strength, according to that of the poet, "Versate diu quid ferre recusent, quid valeant humeri:" or, as others understand, In every action or affair of consequence, examine principally whether the thing is like to be advantageous or otherwise to you, whether it be good or evil in itself, forbidden or allowable, and so may either be the occasion of life or death, happiness or misery, to you. Or perhaps the meaning may be, which seems countenanced by what follows, Consider what agrees best with your own health, and indulge not in any thing which you have reason to think will be injurious to it: regard not so much what may please your goût or palate, as what may contribute most to the continuance or improvement of health. Messieurs of Port-Royal understand this of men's different natures and dispositions; that it is not sufficient to give good advice in general, without great skill and circumspection to apply it properly, according to their different capacities, and respective qualities of body and mind, of nature and grace. That there is in each man, as in the several sorts of earth, a different soil or nature, and partaking of different qualities: one has his gift after this

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manner, and another after that. And as allowance must be made for the different sorts of grounds which are not equally susceptible of the same culture and improvement; so advice or instruction must be diversified, and suited according to the nature and wants of those to whom we give it.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Ver. 1. *HONOUR a physician with the honour due unto him, for the uses which you may have of him; for the Lord hath created him.*] The precept of honouring all men, 1 Pet. ii. 17. varies according to the several degrees whereby persons are more or less beneficial; but more is here intended than civil honour, it includes reward; reward the physician with a handsome and proper gratuity, because of the very great use he is of in life, in healing the many distempers incident to it, and that God has appointed him for a general good. And so τιμὴ is often used in the New Testament, and by the best Greek writers; Tully too applies *honos* to a physician in this sense. (Epist. Fam.) The goodness of God cannot be sufficiently admired, which displays itself in proportion to that multiplicity of evils and infirmities to which we are subject, all of which come from the sin of man, but the remedies to cure them from God; and therefore we ought to respect and honour a profession whose original is so exalted and noble, and which contributes so much to the preservation and health of human life.

Ver. 2. *For of the Most High cometh healing.*] As it was a prevailing opinion among the ancients, that the gods were the authors of all diseases incident to mankind, in some of which the hand of God was more particularly discernible, so they looked upon physic as a gift from heaven, and ranked their first physicians in the number of their gods. Hence the heathens ascribed the original of it to Apollo, and erected statues and temples to Æsculapius. The Hebrews attribute to God himself, or however to Adam, as taught by him, the invention of physic, and make Moses, either by inspiration, or by what he learned among the Egyptians, to have excelled in this art. Healing may also be said to come of the Most High, as he created medicines (ver. 4.) out of the earth, and is the author of all their sanative virtues; for though God cursed the earth, and made it produce thorns and briers, yet he as greatly blessed it too, by giving a restorative power, a medicinal virtue and efficacy to roots and plants, for the health of mankind, and for the healing of the nations. Physic may also in this farther sense be ascribed to the Deity, as a natural sagacity is required in such as arrive at a great perfection in it. And thus the oriental versions, *Dono Dei sapit medicus.* Virgil intimates, that application and industry, however necessary in this profession, are not alone sufficient, without a happy natural genius, which peculiarly fits men to shine in this art, and is derived immediately from the Deity. It was by the favour of Apollo that Iapis so excelled; if he had not been *Phœbo ante alios dilectus,* he had never arrived to such a perfection in that faculty.

He shall receive honour of the king. Ver. 3. *The skill of the physician shall lift up his head, and in the sight of great men he shall be in admiration.*] Some copies have λήψεται δόμα, He shall receive a gift from the king; and so the marginal reading is, which is confirmed by the Vulgate and oriental versions. That physicians of note and eminence anciently had large salaries fixed upon them by great men and princes, appears from Budæus: "Sex millia ducentos quinquaginta aureos annua mercede celebres multos medicos Romæ a principibus habuisse." (De Asse.) And our author here seems to speak of what he saw or heard was done in his time at court by the kings of Egypt; and however they might be less esteemed elsewhere, yet among the Jews they were in high reputation; and the dignity of their profession was such among the Athenians, that, by an express law, none of servile condition might undertake it. (Cujac. Observ. lib. xvii. cap. 27. Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xxix. cap. 1.) There are some passages of Scripture too which seem to prove, that formerly, among the Hebrews as well as Greeks, persons of the highest rank practised physic, and that it was thought an accomplishment not even beneath a prince. (Isa. iii. 6, 7. Hos. v. 13. Pliny, lib. xxiv. cap. 1.)

Ver. 4. *The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth, and he that is wise will not abhor them.*] As God has given to medicines their healing qualities, which, applied by a skilful physician, are of sovereign use, and even in common hands have been often found serviceable, a man of wisdom or modesty should not decry the benefit of them, nor in sickness decline the use of them. There are two reasons assignable for the commendation here given to the art of physic, and for the wise man's dwelling upon the power and virtue of medicine: First, To beget an abhorrence of magical and superstitious remedies or charms, as they are called, sought after and confided in by the vulgar, though God has forbidden the use of them in his law. Secondly, To oppose the mistake of those who, on false grounds, and without any good reason, reject the use of all kinds of medicines, a sort of fatalists, who think if a man's predestinated time is come, as their expression is, all applications will be useless; and, if it is not come, he will assuredly do well without them. Both these extremes are to be condemned. As God has blessed the earth with medicinal plants and vegetables, and has imparted light and skill to the physician to apply them occasionally, recourse must not be had to remedies neither permitted nor natural; nor must the use of what is really serviceable for the recovery and preservation of health be rashly rejected, under the pretext of its being abused by ignorant pretenders to the science. To which I must add, that, though great things are deservedly spoken of physic, and of the surprising cures wrought by it, yet must we not wholly rely upon or put too much confidence in medicines, as king Asa did, who sought not unto God, but to the physicians only; but should expect our cure from God's blessing upon the use of known and approved means.

Ver. 5. *Was not the water made sweet with wood, that the virtue thereof might be known?*] The author of this book seems to have been of opinion, that Moses sweetened the waters of Marah by the natural virtue of a certain wood; and indeed it seems necessary to understand him in this sense, because he brings this instance to prove the power and efficacy of natural remedies. A very learned writer disapproves of this opinion for the following reasons: 1. That we cannot suppose that even the largest tree, steeped in a lake, should immediately communicate a

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sufficient quantity of its natural sweetness to correct the bitter taste of the waters enough for the occasions of so many hundred thousand people. 2. That there is great reason to believe that there was no tree in those parts of that virtue. Had there been such a one, after the virtue of it was thus known and recorded, it would certainly have been much used by others, and inquired after, particularly by the naturalists; but though Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny, have all remarked, that there were bitter waters in these parts of the world, yet they knew of no trees of such a medicinal quality to correct the taste of them. 3. Had this been a received opinion of the Jewish writers, Josephus would certainly have had it; but he has a particular fancy of his own, that these waters were made sweet by dashing them about at the bottom of a well, which purified them from its mineral taste. (Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 1.) But this seems to be a reason rather why the taste should be stronger. Philo, who was well acquainted with the opinion of our author, doubts the truth of it, and queries whether the wood here used had naturally such a quality, or whether God was not pleased to give it such a virtue for this particular occasion. (De Vit. Mos. lib. i.) For these reasons it seems probable, that God, who is the author of nature, either then gave such a medicinal virtue to the wood, or that he then first revealed to Moses the virtue of such a tree, before quite unknown, and undiscovered ever since; and that the true rendering of the Greek, εἰς τὸ γνωσθῆναι τὴν ἰσχὺν αὐτοῦ, is, that his power, *i. e.* the power of God, might hereby be known. And so the oriental versions understand it, which have, *ut nosceretur potentia Dei.* (See 2 Esd. i. 22, 23.) This sense the words will very well bear, and the objections against the other interpretation are thereby removed. (Shuckford's Connex. vol. iii.)

Ver. 7. *With such doth he heal men, and take away their pains.* Ver. 8. *Of such doth the apothecary make a confection: and of his works there is no end, and from him is peace over all the earth.*] *i. e.* The physician, by the virtue of simples and other medicines, performs great cures; for so I understand ver. 7. rather than of God; and to this agree all the versions. Thus the Vulgate, *In his curans mitigabit dolorem;* and the Syriac, *Per ea medicus recreat a doloribus;* and the Arabic, more explicitly, *Per ea medicus quoque homines curat a morbis, annuente Deo.* The following verse we may understand either of God, or of the μυρεψός. As applied to God, the sense is, That the works of God are infinite, and the virtues and wonderful effects of them cannot be sufficiently admired; his goodness is displayed in, and his mercy and blessing are over all his works; and so the Vulgate, with the old English versions, understand it. As applied to the apothecary, who, from the knowledge he has of plants, minerals, fruits, spices, &c. can make of them a most agreeable and refreshing composition, μίγμα, (see John x. 39.) diffusing health and comfort, the sense is, That a person that has traversed the vegetable kingdom, and is well skilled in the nature of simples, can from thence compose a safe and easy remedy against many dangerous diseases, the very odour of which shall, by its grateful and refreshing smell, in some measure relieve the sick, and contribute to the cure; for so εἰρήνη may be understood here, as equivalent to ἀνάπαυσις, ver. 14. Or instead of it we may read with Grotius, εὐαερία, i. e. *Neque absolverit opus suum, quin inde late se diffundat dulcis aura.*

Ver. 9. *My son, in thy sickness be not negligent: but pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole.* Ver. 10. *Leave off from sin, and order thy hands aright, and cleanse thy heart from all wickedness.*] One sees from several passages in this chapter the notion and persuasion which prevailed in the times of this writer, that all sickness was a punishment for some sin committed. And indeed our common mortality, or that unavoidable necessity of dying, to which the whole species is condemned, and our passage to it by an infinity of accidents and diseases, is a consequence of the sin of our first parents: but the ancient Jews believed, besides this hereditary fate, that every evil that happened to us was a chastisement sent from God for some particular fault or crime; hence that question of the disciples, *Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?* (John ix. 2.) As it was a received opinion therefore that sin was the occasion of sickness, the wise man here well advises to leave off from sin, to avoid the punishment of it, and to be in such a frame and disposition as to hope for and expect pardon. St. Austin's reflection on this passage is fine and apposite: In the time of sickness, when the punishment of sin lies upon us, we should retire into our breasts, and consider with ourselves, what sin or defilement has probably drawn down such affliction upon us; should humble ourselves under the hand of an avenging God, and acknowledge, that we suffer less than we deserve; that he has dealt with us, not as a severe judge, who would condemn us, but as a merciful father who would reclaim us.

Ver. 11. *Give a sweet savour and a memorial of fine flour, and make a fat offering, as not being.*] Ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχων, *as a dead man,* according to the margin. Grotius reads ὡς μὴ ὑπάρξων. Badwell and some others make the sense to be, Give your offerings to God, as not being yourself the original proprietor of them; but having received them at first from him, return them to him by way of acknowledgment. But this sense seems too general, and is not countenanced by the context. Calmet's interpretation is preferable; *viz.* In thy sickness offer readily unto the Lord, as one that is leaving the world, and has but little hopes of life, and endeavour to make your peace with him by sacrifices and devout oblations to him in prayer; but think not yourself altogether in so desperate a condition, as to hinder you from making use of proper medicines towards your recovery. Trust in God does not supersede or exclude all application of medicines, which God has created and appointed for man's help and use; nor, on the other hand, ought the opinion which one has of a physician to weaken the sick man's reliance on God, or hinder his pious breathings to the Fountain of health and life, and the great Physician of souls.

Ver. 12. *Then give place to the physician, for the Lord hath created him.*] As disease and sickness is often sent for the punishment of sin, and is a merciful call to reformation and amendment, so nothing can more contribute to the removal of the affliction, than to take away the cause of it: to pray therefore unto God in time of sickness, and make hearty and sincere resolutions against sin, is the way to regain his favour, and the most probable means to qualify the patient, through the blessing of God, to receive benefit from the skilful applications of the physician. We are not here advised first to send for the physician, and when we despair of his help and are breathing our last, then to

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send for the priest, when our weakness perhaps has made him useless; but first to make our peace with God by the ghostly offices of the priest, and then give place to the physician. Which method our Saviour has also taught us by his method of cure, who, when any came to him for bodily cures, first healed the soul of sin before he removed the bodily infirmity, (Matt. ix. 2.) teaching us, that sin is the occasion of sickness, and that the cure and removal thereof is first to be looked after. This order the holy Psalmist intimates, when, speaking of God, Psal. ciii. 3. he says, *Who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities.* There is an excellent canon to this purpose: (Decretal. lib. v. Tit. 38. cap. 13.) "By this present decree we strictly charge and command all physicians, that, when they shall be called to sick persons, they first of all admonish, and persuade them to send for the physician of souls; that after provision hath been made for the spiritual health of the soul, they may the more hopefully proceed to the use of corporal medicines: for when the cause is taken away, the effect may be expected the sooner to follow."

Let him not go from thee, for thou hast need of him. Ver. 13. *There is a time when in their hands there is good success.*] Grotius points the Greek thus, καὶ γὰρ αὐτοῦ χρεία ἐστὶν ὅτε καιρὸς· καὶ ἐν χερσὶν αὐτῶν εὐοδία, *quia opera ejus sunt necessaria, quando in manus illorum incurras: et sæpe adest operi ejus successus,* εὐοδία, not εὐωδία, as the common editions have. (See Prov. xxv. 15.) Though medicines are uncertain in their operation, and do not always reach the case, and effect a cure, and though our lives are undoubtedly in the hands of God, who can take us out of the world when and in what manner he pleases, notwithstanding any precautions or remedies we may use to preserve or prolong life, yet are not these reasons sufficient to make us reject the use and application of medicines, which God himself has created out of the earth, to be used with thanksgiving, and has appointed as the ordinary and stated means to restore health, under the direction and in the hands of an able physician.

Ver. 14. *For they also shall pray unto the Lord, that he would prosper that which they give for ease, and remedy to prolong life.*] A good physician will not depend only upon the greatness of his skill, the secrets of his art, and the efficacy of his medicines, but will occasionally invoke the assistance of Heaven, to prosper him in his profession: he will live in a constant sense of his own dependance upon God, and recommend himself and others often to his favour and mercy. He will add piety to his knowledge, and when intent upon doing good may be considered as a guardian angel to all around him. The Vulgate which renders, χάριν βιώσεως, *propter conversationem illorum,* (see Acts xxvi. 4.) seems to intimate, that God will prosper the prescriptions of a skilful physician, who is himself also a good man, sooner than of any other, as he aims chiefly to please God, both by his own conduct and his endeavours to lessen or remove the misery and infirmities of his creatures, referring the success of them to the blessing of Heaven. This notion, that success in physic depended upon application to the Deity, was common among the heathens, and may without violence be inferred from the story of Iapis: it is plain he relied not on his own skill only, but had secretly invoked the god of medicine while he was busied in the cure. The words, *nihil auctor Apollo subvenit,* sufficiently imply this. He altogether disclaims all pretences to personal merit in the cure, and denies that art in general, or his own in particular, did or could perform it.

"Non hæc humanis opibus, non arte magistra
Proveniunt; neque te, Ænea, mea dextera servat."
(Æn. lib. xii.)

He acknowledges, that it was the interposition of a Divine power that had effected the cure, without which all his application and skill had been fruitless. Nor is this the only place where Virgil joins these two qualifications together, the skill of remedies and medicines, and a dependance upon the gods for success; particularly, where he mentions Hippolytus as brought to life by the favour of Diana, and the skill of Æsculapius.—*Pæoniis revocatum herbis, et amore Dianæ.* (Lib. vii.) According to Messieurs of Port-Royal, the wise man here and in the context points out the spiritual physicians of the soul, who, sensible of its many infirmities and diseases, should apply often to the throne of grace in behalf of others, that they may be healed and saved, that God would crown their labours, and bless the engrafted word, with all joy and comfort in believing, and with the power of an endless life; and particularly in times of public calamity, or epidemical sickness, should, by the powerful ministry of prayers and holy intercessions, stand between the dead and the living, and stop the progress of the destroying angel.

Ver. 15. *He that sinneth before his Maker, let him fall into the hand of the physician.*] The intention of the author here is not to undervalue physicians, or cast a reflection upon them, as if it was a misfortune, and, as it were, a sort of curse, to fall into their hands, of whom such honourable mention has been made in the preceding verses; but to intimate, that God will bring upon the sinner sickness and diseases, and reduce him to such a low and helpless condition, as to make necessary the help of a physician, on purpose to convince him of his weakness and folly. The common reading indeed is ἐμπέσοι in the optative mood, but ἐμπεσεῖ seems preferable, as the Vulgate has it, *Qui deliquit coram eo qui fecit eum, incidet in manus medici;* and the Syriac, *Qui peccat coram Deo, traditur in manus medici.* It means only, that the sinner shall be visited with sickness, and that without the help of art, or even with it, he shall with difficulty recover, and shall be given over unto death and perdition, if he shew no signs of contrition upon his bed of languishing. One sees by this passage, that this author thought that sickness was a punishment sent by God for past sins. And so it appears from our Saviour's charge to the impotent man, *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* (John v. 14.)

Ver. 16. *My son, let tears fall down over the dead, and begin to lament, as if thou hadst suffered great harm thyself, and then cover his body according to the custom, and neglect not his burial.*] Humanity and religion equally require, that we should shed tears and pay our last debt to friends and relations deceased; these are the only instances in which we can give proofs of our tenderness and respect for them. Besides the ordinary tribute of tears, the wise man probably means by θρῆνοι, public and solemn mourning and lamentation in memory of the deceased, in which his good deeds and praise were rehearsed or sang; *Cane*

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lamentum (Syriac); and by *περίστειλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ*, the *linteа sepulcralia*, or the wrapping the dead body in linen, according to the custom of the Jewish and other nations; (John xi. 44. xix. 40.) *κατὰ τὴν κρίσιν αὐτοῦ*, *secundum dignitatem ejus*, as Bossuet renders, which I should prefer, but that it follows in the next verse. Our translators omit *αὐτοῦ*; it would probably be better rendered, According to his right, or the rule and custom in his case. For משפט, as Grotius observes here, often signifies custom, and is commonly translated by *κρίμα* or *κρίσις*. So *κατὰ τὸ κρίμα αὐτῶν*, 1 Kings xviii. 28.; *ἐπὶ τῷ κρίματι αὐτῶν*, 2 Kings xvii. 33, 34. 40.; *κατὰ τὴν σύγκρισιν αὐτῶν*, Numb. xxix. 6. 33.; *κατὰ τὴν κρίσιν αὐτῶν*, 1 Chron. vi. 32. xxiv. 19. and so the Syriac translates here, *prout eum decet; i. e.* as is due to him.

Ver. 17. *Weep bitterly and make great moan, and use lamentation, as he is worthy, and that a day or two, lest thou be evil spoken of: and then comfort thyself for thy heaviness.*] Though the usual term for mourning was seven days, the rabbins themselves allowed and approved of divers degrees of mourning; the three first days they allotted to grief and tears, and in the following ones the sorrow might be somewhat abated. As man is apt to go into extremes, the author on this occasion advises a prudent moderation; he approves that the love which one had for persons when alive, should extend unto them even after they are dead, that care should be taken of burying them, and paying the last offices to them: he allows that great mourning should be made for those who were dear to us as friends, or related by the closer ties of blood; and that we should lament more or less for persons, according to their respective merit, lest we give offence by our indifference and insensibility, and should be reproached for want of affection and humanity. But at the same time he sets bounds to our grief, and would not have us inconsolable, or give ourselves up, in the bitterness of soul, to such an immoderate degree of sorrow, as can do the dead no good, and may do us much hurt. He here condemns those, who, during the interval of mourning, so passionately indulged grief, as to refuse all comfort, and his advice briefly is to this effect,—Let nature prevail for a day or two, a concern for the dead is no ways unbecoming a wise or good man: though you cannot suppress the sentiments of grief at first, yet endeavour to moderate your sorrow, and call in reason and religion to your aid. Πένθος probably, as *κοπετὸς* and *κλαυθμὸς* are mentioned before, relates here to funeral preparations in general, or the *epulum funebre* in particular, both of which were according to the dignity and circumstances of the party deceased.

Ver. 19. *In affliction also sorrow remaineth; and the life of the poor is the curse of the heart.*] Some copies have *παραβαίνει λύπη*, that *grief passeth away* or weareth off by degrees; but the reading which our translators follow seems preferable,—that in affliction, *ἐπαγωγῇ*, or any grievous tribulation, such as the loss of friends and relations, grief sits heavy, and is with difficulty removed. The Vulgate seems to have followed a copy which had *ἀπαγωγῇ*, *abductio; i. e.* that, after the body was carried out and buried, grief continueth. The sense of the whole verse, I conceive, is, That sorrow, when it is deeply rooted, from whatever cause it arises, whether our own sickness or the death of others, makes even life itself a burden, as a sense of poverty often induces the necessitous person rashly to curse his fate and condition. The other reading, *βίος πτωχοῦ κατὰ καρδίας*, *vita pauperis est ex animi sententia*, is neither agreeable to the context, nor confirmed by experience.

Ver. 20. *Take no heaviness to heart, drive it away, and remember the last end.* Ver. 21. *Forget it not, for there is no turning again; thou shalt not do him good, but hurt thyself.*] *i. e.* Remember death, which, by over-much grief, thou mayest hasten and bring upon thee. Or, according to Calmet, When you see others dying or lying dead before you, give not up yourself to sadness; remember that you are mortal as well as they, and that by afflicting yourself you can neither bring the dead back nor exempt yourself from following them. As the thoughts of death naturally present themselves when we are in the house of mourning, we may draw this advantage from attending the obsequies and paying the last duty to our friends, *viz.* to reflect upon our own mortality; that we perhaps may be the next to follow, and should therefore prepare ourselves in time against our great change. This advice is of so much consequence, that the wise man repeats it a second time. But though he would have us provide for, he would not have us hasten, our latter end, by excessive grief for any beloved object, when our tears can neither help him nor bring him back. In a religious view, the deceased person must be considered, upon his death, in an unalterable and fixed state, either of happiness or misery; if in the former, and he experiences in himself a pleasing anticipation and foretaste of happiness, we are in the wrong to make ourselves uneasy when he is at peace and happy; if in the latter state, and his conscience speaks nothing but horror and misery to him, he is indeed to be pitied; but neither ours, nor even his own tears, will be available to him in that sad and wretched condition.

Ver. 22. *Remember my judgment: for thine also shall be so: yesterday for me, and to-day for thee.*] The wise man here, to make the stronger impression upon his readers or pupils, makes the dead or dying person address the living in these affecting terms: *Remember my judgment*, &c. *i. e.* my doom, the sentence of death that is passed upon me. Κρίμα is used in this sense, chap. xli. in several places upon the like occasion. Or the sense may be, When you attend at a funeral, think that the dead person speaks thus to you in dumb show or in a low voice: Remember the sentence of mortality passed upon me; as my present state is, the same will be your condition soon. To-day was my turn, to-morrow will be your visitation; what has happened to me is thine and every man's lot. What a fine memento is this to the living! how much better would this plain, short, instructive sentence adorn a monumental stone, than the tedious, fulsome, and often false inscriptions of modern epitaphs?

Ver. 23. *When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance rest, and be comforted for him, when his spirit is departed from him.*] *i. e.* Dwell not upon his memory, so as to give yourself fresh occasion of grief continually; if nature upon such accidents calls forth your tears, faith ought soon to stop them and wash them away. If we have a true value for our friend, we ought rather to rejoice than grieve that he is released from a sinful and troublesome world, and is passing from the miseries of life to a state of rest and peace. The rest which the dead is entered upon, ought to assuage and moderate that afflicting sense and regret which we have of his loss. And we ought to consider, that, if it seems

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hard and disagreeable to us to be parted and separated from him, it is however a gain and advantage to him, that his soul, being freed from the body, is disengaged from the many crosses and accidents which are inseparable to life. The very sight and remembrance of one deceased so dear to us, should make us reflect upon our own death, and bring it present to us; that our friend, who is gone before us, being now all pure spirit, and whose concern for us now can only be for our good, says to us silently, Consider my condition, which will as certainly be yours soon. I have been, and am no more; you now are, but shall shortly cease to be; yesterday took me away, and this day may be your last: let your concern for the dead lead you to the thoughts of your own death, which likewise is inevitable, and so to provide in time for your future state, that your death may be only a short passage to life eternal.

Ver. 24. *The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure: and he that hath little business shall become wise.*] Γραμματεὺς here signifies one learned in explaining the law, and answering the difficulties arising concerning the true sense of it; one who, being bred up in the knowledge of the law of God and the tradition of the elders concerning it, taught it in the schools and synagogues of the Jews, and judged according to it in the Sanhedrin. Such a one, says this writer, arrived to his perfection of knowledge by a right employment of his vacant time. Or the sense may be, That the study of wisdom requires retirement and solitude; a man should divest himself of all other business and avocations, who would excel in those sciences or callings which require meditation and deep attention. The wise man's leisure hours, if they may be so called, are the best and most useful of his time, and generally produce better works than the more public and active life of others. This may also be considered in a religious view, *viz.* He that endeavours after heavenly wisdom, and would gain the knowledge and love of God, is fond of retirement; he banishes from his heart all earthly thoughts and all secular concerns; his chief employ and wish are, to be disentangled from all worldly encumbrances, that he may be filled with God only: he avoids all, even the most necessary offices, which may disturb his holy meditations, and if he is called to a public function, he accepts it only that he may thereby impart to others some of that light, which God, by sweet and secret communications, has imparted to him.

Ver. 25. *How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad; that driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labours, and whose talk is of bullocks?*] Καυχώμενος ἐν δόρατι κέντρου, is the reading in all the editions except Grabe's; but that critic prefers κέντρῳ, and undoubtedly the true reading of the passage is, ὁ κρατῶν ἀρότρου, καὶ καυχώμενος ἐν δόρατι; κέντρῳ βόας ἐλαύνων, which Bochart likewise prefers, and is natural and easy. Δόρυ κέντρου, *hastile stimuli*, is an unusual expression, nor is there any instance of a goad being so called. This alteration too is confirmed by the Vulgate, which has, *Qui gloriatur in jaculo, stimulo boves agitat*, &c. which in the main is right, only it is mistaken in rendering δόρυ by *jaculum*, which in this place has the same sense of ἐχέτλη, *stiva aratri*, or the plough-tail. The original reading in the Hebrew probably was חרב אן, which signifies *Gladius, culter, hastile latæ cuspidis*, &c. either of the two latter is applicable to this place. With respect to *culter*, it is certain the Romans called the ploughshare by that name, to which agrees Pliny's etymology of it, "Culter, quasi a colendo, quòd cum eo terra culta sit." Hence we have adopted the *coulter* in our language for the same thing, and in the French it is likewise styled *coultre*. It may also with propriety enough be called *hastile*, from the resemblance which the ploughshare, inserted in the wood, bears to a spear of a very broad point. Καυχώμενος ἐν δόρατι is undoubtedly therefore the true pointing, and answers to ὁ κρατῶν ἀρότρου in the former sentence, and is a phrase equivalent to it. Κέντρῳ βόας ἐλάυνων, is a farther natural description of the same kind of people.

Whose talk is of bullocks.] i. e. *Of the breed of bullocks*, according to the margin. The Syriac furnishes another and no less natural sense, *Cujus confabulationes sunt cum taurorum progenie*, and the Arabic is to the same purpose; *i. e.* that the talk of such as hold the plough and drive oxen is with the bullucks themselves. Bochart, who prefers this interpretation, produces very many passages out of the Greek and Latin poets, of shepherds, ploughmen, &c. talking to their flocks and herds in the manner referred to. (Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 39.) Perhaps the true reading here was, ἡ διήγησις αὐτοῦ σὺν υἱοῖς ταύρων. See Virg. Eclog. i. 75. vii. 44. Theocr. Idyll. iv. 46. xxvii. 47. from whence many more instances might be produced of such discourse.

Ver. 27. *So every carpenter and workmaster, that laboureth night and day: and they that cut and grave seals, and are diligent to make great variety, and give themselves to counterfeit imagery, and watch to finish a work.*] According to Calmet, this is not to be understood of every carpenter and workmaster in that way, as our version has it, nor indeed of any of that trade: by τέκτων he understands one that cuts figures and devices upon seals, precious stones, or metals, him that labours at and executes the work, called properly the engraver, and by ἀρχιτέκτων, the designer, inventor, or finisher. But probably the words πᾶς τέκτων καὶ ἀρχιτέκτων relate to all the artificers aftermentioned, not only those in this verse, but χαλκεὺς ver. 28. and κεραμεὺς, ver. 29. And as the author says, πᾶς τέκτων, *every artificer*, even the chief of them, the master-workmen, I presume he intends, in what follows, to include them all under three denominations: First, The whole tribe of the workers in imagery and picture, which takes in statuaries, painters, artists in needle-work, in weaving, inlaying, &c. Secondly, The workers at the forge and anvil, comprehending the whole class of smiths, &c. Thirdly, The plastic tribe, potters, turners of clay, and all kinds of earthenware. Having mentioned, among the artificers of the first rank or class, seal-cutters by name, as exercising, perhaps, the most profitable and curious trade, he proceeds in general to every artist that worketh, as they do, by imitation. For I understand the passage thus, They who cut the engravings of seals, and he whose diligence is in variety of imagery, will give his mind wholly to finish the resemblance, and watch for the perfecting of his work; ἡ ὑπομονὴ αὐτοῦ is the same, by a Hebraism, with οὗ ἡ ὑπομονὴ, or rather, ἐπιμονὴ, *viz.* He who attends to the varying of imagery, whose assiduity, *cujus perseverantia*, is ἀλλοιῶσαι ποικιλίαν, to diversify art and ingenuity in these kinds of works, called Ποικιλτικὴ ἐπιστήμη, *variegativa scientia*, Job xxxviii. 36. And if the rendering be, as it ought without the Hebraism, *Et ille, cujus assiduitas variat picturam*, the sense will be more easy, and the construction of the Greek just, without seeking out

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for a particular verb to answer the nominatives, πᾶς τέκτων and οἱ γλύφοντες: and the sense of the whole is to the following effect; As the countryman abovementioned gives his mind to his proper business, in like manner every artist, who labours night and day, superintends his. Thus the cutters of seals, and he who attends to the varying of imagery, who gives his mind to the finishing the similitude, and who watches for the perfecting his work: thus the smith sitting, &c. &c.

Ver. 28. *The smith also sitting by the anvil, and considering the iron-work, the vapour of the fire wasteth his flesh,* &c.] Smiths anciently, says Calmet, did not work in the posture and manner they do now, standing upright near the forge or anvil, nor was their bellows fixed in the forge, which must occasion them more labour and trouble. Thus Homer describes Vulcan all in a sweat, and on leaving off his work, laying aside his bellows, and shutting up his tools in a silver chest. (Il. lib. xviii.) Mr. Pope, in his translation of it, does not reach the force of the original. In the eastern countries, according to a writer of good credit, smiths at this day work in the same posture that tailors do; and if they go abroad to work, they carry with them proper tools, and even an occasional forge and bellows; for all these were portable, and one man could easily carry the whole budget. (Chardin's Travels into Persia, tom. ii.) In the next sentence, the smith is described as καταμανθάνων ἔργον σιδήρου, as the Alexandrian MS. and the Complut. copy have it, which our translators follow; *i. e.* according to a strong metaphor, gazing earnestly upon, and, as it were, studying his work, forming it according to the pattern before him. There is also another reading, καταμανθάνων ἀργῷ σιδήρῳ, which the Vatican has, and Drusius follows; *i. e.* labouring at the rude, stubborn, and unpolished iron, to bring it to the desired shape. But the former, which obtains in most copies, seems preferable, and is confirmed by the Latin versions. The whole description of this artificer, his diligence, intenseness, fighting with the fire, and the gradual and insensible decay of his flesh through the violence of it, and the continual noise about him, are beautifully here described, and can only be equalled by the inspired passage, Isa. xliv. 12.

The noise of the hammer and the anvil is ever in his ears.] Καινιεῖ τὸ οὖς αὐτοῦ, *Innovat aurem ejus* (Vulgate); which affords no determinate sense, or none but what is forced. Some copies have κενιεῖ, *movet aurem*, which is too weak and soft, as κρούει may seem too strong and violent, and the alteration too great. One would think, from the English version, that the copy which our translators used had ἀεὶ in it, and perhaps the copy used by more ancient ones had some other word besides; for, agreeably to some old Latin versions, the King's Bible 1541, and that of Coverdale, have, *soundeth ever in his ears.* Among other conjectures, καναχεῖ (if there is any authority for its being used actively) is not to be despised, as being expressive of a tinkling kind of sound: Κανάχησε δὲ χάλκος, (Od. τ. 469.) which, though applied to the sound of a caldron, does not always mean a hollow sound. Dr. Grabe condemns the present reading καινιεῖ, and hath given a very ingenious emendation of it, Prol. cap. 4. sec. 6. with a just censure of Beza's κενοῖ, which indeed has nothing to recommend it. But I think he treats Grotius's interpretation of the word, as it now stands, which is not an unnatural one, *viz. delectat,* too contemptuously; for one may suppose such a man's ears recreated with what he gets money by, though it be not harmonious. He thinks κναίει the better reading, which I would not understand in the sense of *rado, to grate,* as the noise, being familiar to the smith, cannot be thought grating or unpleasant to him; but in its other sense of *titillo,* or *pruritum moveo,* and is more agreeable to a word often applied in Hebrew to the ears, *viz.* לעע *tinnire, palpitare,* from whence are derived the Hebrew of *cymbalum* and *tintinnabulum.* There is something musical thought to be in the sounds of the hammer and anvil; and it is said of one of the old Greek philosophers, that he got his first ideas of the several fixed tones of music from the different sounds expressed by the smith's anvil and hammer. And so the meaning here may be, that the sound or reverberation of them chinketh or chimes in his ears.

Ver. 29. *So doth the potter sitting at his work, and turning the wheel about with his feet, who is always carefully set at his work; and maketh all his work by number.*] As the third differs very little from the first sentence, I would understand it of the mechanic's great care and concern to make his work perfect or without flaw. Grotius accordingly thinks the true reading of the Greek to be, ὃς ἐν μερίμνῃ κεῖται διαπαντὸς ἐπὶ ἔργον αὐτοῦ, εἰ ἐναρίθμιος πᾶσα ἡ ἐργασία αὐτοῦ, *Ob opus suum in perpetua versatur sollicitudine, an scilicet numerus constat omni labori suo.* He is in continual uneasiness, lest any of his work should be broken or spoiled, or be incomplete; and the Vulgate seems to confirm this, *Qui in sollicitudine positus est semper propter opus suum.* The manner in which potters labour and work was different in different countries; Jeremiah represents them sitting in his time as this writer does, *Behold, he wrought a work upon the wheels;* the margin has *seats,* and the LXX. ἐπὶ τῶν λίθων, *i. e.* sitting *upon the stones,* xviii. 3. with which Isaiah's description agrees. Homer makes the potter turn the wheel with his hands, Ὡς δ' ὅτε τὶς κεραμεὺς τροφὸν ἅρμενον ἐν παλάμῃσι. κ. τ. λ.

Ver. 30. *He fashioneth the clay with his arm, and boweth down his strength before his feet.*] Calmet thinks the author alludes to the custom of the Egyptians, who, according to Herodotus, (lib. ii.) trod the clay, and kneaded it, as it were dough, with their hands and feet, to prepare and make it fit for the wheel; and thus some understand ἰσχὺν αὐτοῦ in the following sentence, as relating to the stubbornness of the clay, which the potter subdues, or, as the margin well expresses it, *tempers with his feet;* and so the Tigurine version very explicitly, *Nunc pedibus vim ipsius luti prosubigit.* Others apply the words to the man himself, and his posture, that the nature of the work obliges him to stoop. Calmet therefore conjectures the true reading to be, πρὸ ποδῶν κάμψει ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ, *lumbos ejus,* that, to reach up the clay, he is forced to bend his loins or body. The oriental versions understand it, not of an occasional stooping to work, but of a fixed infirmity of the potter himself, stooping in his old age, through his past hard labour, *Antequam moriatur, curvus est et inflexus.*

Ver. 32. *Without these cannot a city be inhabited; and they shall not dwell where they will, nor go up and down.*] The translation in our version is very indeterminate, and that of the Greek is more so, and perhaps the original Hebrew was not clearer. If we interpret it, as we may, thus, They are fixed by their crafts to their abodes; they cannot

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stir abroad where they will (which our translators add pretty arbitrarily), and saunter about as others do, but must attend their business at home, the thing is very true, but it makes very little to the point the writer is here speaking to, which is the usefulness of such artificers. The King's Bible, 1541, gives a more apposite sense than this; *viz.* without these may not the city be maintained, inhabited, or occupied. And the Vulgate, from some Greek copies that have οἰκισθήσεται, *Non civitas ædificabitur, non* [*homines*] *inhabitabunt nec inambulabunt; i. e.* Without these a city could neither be built, inhabited, nor frequented. But if οἰκήσεται be the word, as the Alexandrian MS. and some correct copies have it, then παροικήσουσιν must not be rendered by inhabiting, or dwelling, but *sojourning*, like the Hebrew גור *diversatus fuit*, from whence גר *peregrinus*, πάροικος. (See Buxtorf.) And περιπατήσουσιν, if rendered, as most likely, from הלך, *obambulavit, to walk up and down*, will signify also to travel, whence הלך, *viator*. The sense then of the verse in this construction will be, That, without these inferior artists, there would be no dwelling in societies, no sojourning, or travelling; men could neither live at home nor abroad, in their own country, nor among strangers; handicrafts and occupations of this sort being necessary to accommodate persons wherever they are.

Ver. 34. *But they will maintain the state of the world.*] Κτίσμα αἰῶνος στηρίσουσι. This is inaccurately rendered; undoubtedly κτίσμα or κτῆμα αἰῶνος signifies here *handicraft work*, or worldly furniture. Αἰὼν seems to be the present state or form of living; and κτίσμα αἰῶνος is a *creature of time* literally, but means rather a work of art according to the times, or, in a word, a piece of furniture in fashion. The whole context points to this sense; *viz.* That as to the administration of government, (ver. 33.) or the laws and policy of the city, these labourers and mechanics are of no use: they are not to be expected, nor will be found במשלים *amongst parables*, or, which seems the most natural rendering here, amongst the makers of parables: but as to inferior conveniences, the common provisions and ordinary instruments of life, they are owing to the labour of this sort of men, who support and carry on the mechanic business of the world, and in their sphere are very useful to society, as their whole employ and study are to furnish the many implements necessary for the use of it. And it is for this reason that, without these men, there could be no accommodations for habitations in cities, for sojourning in them, or travelling through them, as in ver. 32. From the examples here proposed of persons labouring so industriously at their secular employments, which this writer has described to the life, Messieurs of Port-Royal draw the following useful reflections:—1. That if such as are employed in manual arts, which concern only the convenience of life, take so much pains about them, and attend upon them day and night, they who follow a more noble calling, and whose study is heavenly wisdom, ought not to engage in their charge with negligence and indifference, nor embarrass themselves with a multiplicity of cares, which are not only incompatible with, but even contrary to, so sacred a profession. 2. If each of the artists here proposed is thoroughly skilled in the mysteries of his trade, it is an instance of great rashness and presumption to undertake the holy calling without the proper qualifications for it; to aspire on a sudden, without considering the importance of the office, or the necessary rules of conduct, to so high and tremendous a ministry as the care of souls, which is a science the most Divine, and at the same time the most difficult of all others. 3. If they who apply themselves to works merely human, aim at doing good in their respective ways, it is a reflection upon religion to make the study of it merely an art or accomplishment, a matter of curiosity or amusement, without influencing men's lives or regulating their conduct.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Ver. 1. *BUT he that giveth his mind to the law of the Most High, and is occupied in the meditation thereof, will seek out the wisdom of all the ancient,* &c.] Πλὴν τοῦ ἐπιδόντος τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, κ. τ. λ. which words afford no easy sense, if they are made part of the former chapter, as in many editions; nor good grammar, if they are made the beginning of another verse and chapter, as in the Vatican, Alexandrian MS., and the copy followed by our translators. Flam. Nob. helps out the construction by supposing an ellipsis, *it belongs not to any,* πλὴν τοῦ, κ. τ. λ. Or, *not so he that gives his mind,* &c. οὐχ οὕτως, οὐχ οὕτως, as Psal. i. 4. And Grotius adds, *all are such,* πλὴν, κ. τ. λ. Either ellipsis is harsh. The best way probably to account for the difficulty about the exordium of this chapter with πλὴν τοῦ ἐπιδόντος, κ. τ. λ. is, that it refers to δέησις just going before, which word our translators have rendered by *desire*, as some of the older versions have by *studium*, which seems the undoubted sense, and was, I believe, the true sense of the original word, whatever that was. Now admitting this, the construction may be, All the desire [*viz.* of these craftsmen] is in the work of their craft; πλὴν τοῦ ἐπιδόντος, κ. τ. λ. but [the desire] of him who giveth his mind to the law of the Most High, and is occupied [therein, or makes that his study, is] in the meditation thereof. They who divided the chapters so as to make the thirty-ninth begin with σοφίαν πάντων ἀρχαίων ἐκζητήσει, seem to have tacked the former word to δέησις, or *studium*, and to have allotted to the next chapter the effects of this desire upon the person there described, as a separate subject of discourse. But if πλὴν τοῦ ἐπιδόντος, κ. τ. λ. may be taken nominatively to all that follows (and indeed the Syriac and Arabic translate as if they understood the original word, to which ἐπιδόντος answers, to have been a nominative, in the sense of our version), it may then stand as it does at the head of the chapter, though I confess it appears harsh to me, except πλὴν be taken in the sense of ἄλλη, or perhaps made from it. I shall only observe, that it is probable that the beginning of this chapter is a continuation of ver. 24. of the last, and a comparison instituted between the ὁ γραμματεὺς, and mechanic occupations; that the pursuit of each is different, and different their prayer: the one aims at and asks for perfection in mean arts comparatively, the other seeks after heavenly wisdom; and his δέησις is, δός μοι τὴν τῶν σῶν θρόνων πάρεδρον σοφίαν.

Will seek out the wisdom of all the ancient.] *i. e.* He will not content himself to hear only the masters of his own times, but will consult the works of the ancients, and form a system of knowledge from all that antiquity has most bright and improving. Josephus, speaking of the Essenes, and Philo of the Therapeutæ, remark their assiduity and

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attention to the study of the sacred books, and of the ancient authors of their own nation. (De Bell. Jud. lib. i. cap. 7. Philo de Vit. Contempl.) The ancient Hebrews in the general were not very curious to inquire into the learning or affairs of other people, and still they retain a dislike and contempt of the learning of strangers; but under the monarchy of the Greeks, and the Macedonian empire in particular, they applied themselves to reading the poets and philosophers, as is very visible in the style of those Jewish authors that wrote after that time; as appears likewise from the author of the book of Wisdom, and the translators of Job and the Proverbs; the like may be observed of Josephus, and more especially of Philo.

And be occupied in prophecies.] *i. e.* He will be very diligent in searching out their true and latent meaning; and no wonder that this writer should press the necessity of studying the prophets, and endeavouring to attain the right sense of them, as both particular persons and whole nations have sometimes miscarried from their ignorance of, or non-attendance to, the voices and predictions of the inspired men of God, and for want of comparing the predictions with the events. To have an insight into, and form some judgment of, their recondite meaning, was the chief and principal employ of the holy and great men of old. It was thus Daniel studied the prophecy of Jeremiah, which foretold the time of the captivity, and the return from it, and the restoration of Jerusalem, Dan. ix. 2.; and before the coming of Christ, the greater part of the prophecies were in such obscurity and darkness, and yet of so near and great importance, especially to know when the great and magnificent promises of the kingdom of the Messiah would be accomplished, that they both called for and deserved the serious application of the most learned men, to understand and form a judgment about them. The excellence and usefulness of reading the prophets, almost all the fathers acknowledge, who spent much of their time and labour about them, and from thence composed elaborate homilies for the good and edification of their hearers. We cannot have a fuller instance of the surprising effect of studying the prophets, than in Justin Martyr. He acquaints us himself, that in his gentile state he was confounded and bewildered in the uncertainty of human philosophy, and after many painful searches, and shifting from sect to sect, like a doubtful and benighted traveller, he happily at length was directed to the Scriptures, and from thence was led into the way of truth, and received that solid instruction and satisfaction which he had in vain sought for from the peripatetics, stoics, Pythagoreans, and even the beloved Plato himself. Οὐδὲν ἐμοὶ μέλει Πλάτωνος, οὐδὲ Πυθαγόρου was from thenceforward his conclusion. (Dial. cum Tryph.)

Ver. 2. *Where subtle parables are, he will be also.* Ver. 3. *He will seek out the secrets of grave sentences, and be conversant in dark parables.*] To speak sententiously, to pronounce apophthegms, to propose enigmas, and to be able to resolve and explain them, was a piece of knowledge much in vogue among the Hebrews. Under the reign of Solomon, kings and princes, and even queens, as appears from the visit of the queen of Sheba for that purpose, delighted themselves in proposing questions (1 Kings x. 1.) of difficulty, and receiving ready and ingenious answers. Mechanics, and persons of ordinary education, attempted not such enigmas, either to invent or resolve them, (xx. 20. xxxviii. 33. Prov. xxvi. 7.) they were the province of the learned and more refined. *To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings,* is the description which Solomon himself gives of wisdom, Prov. i. 6. This sort of knowledge was in ancient times the accomplishment as well as entertainment of courts, and thought the properest way, as being the most inoffensive, of address to kings. Nathan the prophet, and the woman of Tekoah, came each to David with a parable, 2 Sam. xii. 1. xiv. 4. And Jehoash, king of Israel, sent a message, couched in a parable, to Amaziah king of Judah, 2 Kings xiv. 9. And Cyrus answers the petitions of two nations at once to him in a short parable, Herod. lib. i. cap. 141. By *seeking out the secrets of dark parables,* we are to understand the propounding and explaining of riddles, which part of mythology was as old as Samson's time. (Judg. xiv. 12.) Solomon and Hiram are related by Josephus, (Ant. lib. viii. and cont. Appion. lib. i.) to have propounded riddles and problems to each other, upon condition of a forfeiture to be paid by him who could not explain the riddle sent him. This was that ἄμιλλα σοφίας, or *prize of wisdom,* between Amasis king of Egypt, and the king of Ethiopia; and it obtained likewise among the Greeks. It was the custom anciently at their feasts to propose and resolve questions, which might whet the wit, and form men's manners, or open the secrets of natures, and at the same time both refresh and instruct the mind; such were the sentences propounded at Darius's feast, 1 Esd. iii. There are many such learned questions resolved in Plutarch's Symposiacs; and Athenæus hath collected the flowers of almost all authors, poets, philosophers, and historians, (lib. x.) that afford any entertainment this way.

Ver. 4. *He shall serve among great men, and appear before princes: he will travel through strange countries, for he hath tried the good and the evil among men.*] Wisdom will gain a man admittance and acceptance at court, and recommend him to the notice and favour of the great. It was this introduced Daniel and his companions to the service of Nabuchodonosor; and it was by the same accomplishments that Ezra and Nehemiah arrived at so high honours, and that Joseph acquired such authority at the court of Pharaoh. One of the most likely means to make a proficiency in the study of wisdom, and to improve in the knowledge of arts and sciences, is, to travel; by this a man will gain experience, and make proper observation upon what passes before him, both good and bad. And thus Calmet, *Il passera dans les terres des nations étrangeres, pour eprouver parmi les hommes le bien et le mal.* The Vulgate likewise takes it in the future. Homer describing an accomplished person says, that he knew all things both good and bad—αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ θυμῷ νοέω, καὶ οἶδα ἕκαστα· Εὖ δὲ κακά τε καὶ τὰ χέρεια. (Od. xviii.) Instances of wickedness, in the sight or hearing of a good man, do not tempt him to the like commission, but serve rather to excite an abhorrence in him of evil, and his knowledge of what is amiss in others teaches him to shun it. Nor are the examples, which we meet with in history, of lust, drunkenness, cruelty, or other enormous vices, without their use, as the bad effects of them there described beget an abhorrence in the reader, and form him to the contrary virtues.

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Ver. 6. *When the great Lord will, he shall be filled with the spirit of understanding.*] In the former verse it is observed of the wise man, that he will rise up early to offer unto God his prayers, and the fruits and labours of the growing day, will beg his direction, and implore his blessing: here it is said, that God will answer his request, and fill him with the spirit of knowledge and understanding in his own good time, and in the manner and proportion he thinks proper; and that when God has so blessed him, wisdom shall flow from him like a torrent: he shall perceive his heart enlarged, disposed, and as it were transported, to shew forth the praises of God, and to publish his greatness in the most solemn manner. And thus it often happens to his saints, in consequence of their prayers, they feel themselves ravished with a holy ecstacy and devout enthusiasm, they are lifted up above themselves, are for a time out of the body, and with St. Paul caught up to the third heavens; and their heart glows and burns within them, to celebrate the wonders of the Lord in terms more than human. What the author here and in the context mentions, as necessary requisites to his wise man, *viz.* a serious meditation in the law of God, an unwearied application to the study of the prophets, and a thorough search and insight into the learning of the ancients, Messieurs of Port-Royal, from the authority of St. Basil, St. Austin, and other fathers, apply to all Christian pastors. He that is called to so holy a ministry, say they, must himself be a disciple of those whom God has chosen to instruct and enlighten his church in all ages; he must employ himself diligently to study, and understand the wisdom of those inspired persons whom God made the first dispensers of his holy word, and as it were the tongues of his Holy Spirit; and particularly be well versed in the sacred books of the evangelists and apostles, who are as the prophets of the new law. It is from these pure sources of heavenly wisdom, that he must derive that light which he wants to penetrate into and unravel those types, figures, and prophecies, which are the veils and shadows in which God has thought fit to conceal the depths of his holy mysteries and truths. As he converses often with God in prayer, the Lord enlightens him in all the counsels which he gives, and the answers which he makes to others; he teaches only what he has learned from him and his most enlightened servants, and glories in not speaking from himself, but in being the faithful interpreter of the law of God, and the constant doer of his will.

Ver. 9. *Many shall commend his understanding, and so long as the world endureth, it shall not be blotted out; his memorial shall not depart away.* Ver. 11. *If he die, he shall leave a greater name than a thousand; and if he live, he shall increase it.*] Grotius very justly observes, that οὐκ ἀποστήσεται was a gloss put into the margin by some scholiast, to explain the foregoing verb, and crept afterward into the text, and that the true reading is, οὐκ ἐξαλειφθήσεται μνημόσυνον αὐτοῦ. See Exod. xvii. where the phrase is used in this sense, and is harsh if applied to σύνεσις foregoing. The sentences are transposed in some editions of ver. 11. but it does not much affect the sense. It may be more material to observe, that instead of ἐμποιεῖ αὐτῷ, which is the reading of all the Greek copies, the Vulgate seems to have followed one which had εὐποιεῖ αὐτῷ, *proderit illi*, which furnishes a more determinate, and, I think, a better sense; *viz.* that the wise man, who acts up to his character in all respects, *does well to himself*, with respect to another and better state, or to his family and children whom he leaves behind, who will be the more valued on his account, as Grotius understands the passage. According to Calmet the sense is, If he lives long, he has established a reputation far more glorious than a thousand others; and if he dies young, he dies happy, in full and assured hope of a better life after this. It may also be understood in this farther sense; *viz.* If he continues in life, he enjoys a reputation which gives him more pleasure and will continue his name longer than a numerous posterity; his wisdom supplies the place to him of every thing else, fortune, family, or descendants. It gives him a name more illustrious and durable than what springs from a numerous offspring; and when God calls him out of the world, he will be more happy than a thousand others which are gone before, or left behind him. Whether the wise man therefore lives or dies, his reputation is fixed or established, and in either state he will be remembered to his honour. And in this sense we may understand those words of the prophet, *Thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house a place, a name, better than of sons and daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.* (Isa. lvi. 4, 5.)

Ver. 17. *And none may say, What is this? Wherefore is that? for at time convenient they shall all be sought out.*] Why was *this* made, or why in *this* manner? what good doth *this* thing, or what use is there of *that?* would it not have been better if this had never been made *at all*, or had been made *otherways?* Such censures, though not innocent, would be more pardonable, if employed upon the works of men only; but to charge the good creatures of God either with manifest ill, or however with unprofitableness, betrays a distrust either of his wisdom or goodness. If no other answer could be given to such bold inquiries, it might suffice to say,—that in the creation God must be supposed to act by his own Divine prerogative, and according to his will and power; but the apostle assures us farther, that God created all things κατὰ τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ, Ephes. i. 11. not merely by his own will, but *according to the counsel of his own will.* They who search for hidden knowledge out of a spirit of contradiction, or from a criminal curiosity, rather than for improvement or edification, are like the men of Beth-shemesh, 1 Sam. vi. 19. who, looking into the ark of God unwarrantably, will be more like to meet with their own destruction, than to find out the truth. Job well observes of God, *He giveth not account of any of his matters, wherefore dost thou strive against him?* (xxxiii. 13.) *i. e.* Why do we presume to dispute with God, or call him to account for his actions, who will not reveal to us all the secrets of creation and providence; neither, indeed, would our present capacities admit of such a discovery; *such knowledge is too wonderful for us, we cannot attain unto it.* Excellent, therefore, is the counsel of St. Cyril, "Firmam fidem mysteriis adhibentes, nunquam in tam sublimibus rebus illud *quomodo* aut cogitemus, aut proferamus." (Lib. iv. cap. 13. in Joh.) For, as another father observes, it is an argument of infidelity, ἔλεγχος ἀπιστίας τὸ πῶς περὶ θεοῦ λέγειν. (Just. Mar.) Our author, ver. 16. lays down this

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thesis, That all the works of the Lord are excellent; and he proves it in the following verses by an enumeration of particulars. To stop this captious disposition was the very end, according to St. Chrysostom, of God's pronouncing the whole creation completely good; God, says he, as if foreseeing this dangerous curiosity of man, to silence at once all cavils, pronounces, upon a particular survey of all his works, that they were very good; that none, after the declaration of infinite wisdom in their favour, should hereafter presume to censure or find fault with them. (Tom. v. de iis qui scandal. &c.) Would men but consider the infinite distance between God's immensity and their own nothingness, his unerring wisdom and their notorious ignorance, they would be more modest in their decisions. It is excellently observed by Seneca, "Nunquam nos verecundiores esse debere, quam cum de Diis agitur." And by Cicero, "Timidè de potestate Deorum, et pauca dicenda sunt." (De Nat. Deor.) And the apostle, in admiration of the stupendous mystery, cries out, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* (Rom. xi. 33.) The author has well determined the case himself, when he says, ver. 21. πάντα εἰς χρείας αὐτῶν ἔκτισται· *i. e. all things are created for their proper and peculiar uses;* and though we cannot now discover what use there may be of some of the creatures, or good in them, yet time may discover much benefit and excellency which we see not. Later times have found out the profitable use of many creatures whereof former ages were ignorant; and why may not after-times find advantage in those things which are of no service to us, because perhaps their virtues are unknown to us at present? "Multa venientis ævi populus ignota nobis sciet." (Senec. Nat. Quæst.)

At his commandment the waters stood as a heap, and at the words of his mouth the receptacles of waters.] This relates to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea and river Jordan, on both which occasions the waters collected themselves so as to become a heap, and opened a way for the Hebrews to pass over; afterward they returned to their primitive state and form, and took possession of their former reservoirs. Others explain it of the state of the waters in the beginning; at first God created the mass of waters as one huge immense chaos; afterward he separated them, and placed them by his word in their proper receptacles, some above the firmament, and some in the great abyss, or bottom of the sea: agreeably to the Psalmist's description, *He gathereth the waters of the sea together, as it were upon a heap, and layeth up the deep as in a treasure-house.* (Psal. xxxiii. 7.) And to this Psalm the author seems to allude in some other passages.

Ver. 20. *He seeth from everlasting to everlasting, and there is nothing wonderful before him.* Ver. 22. *His blessing covered the dry land as a river, and watered it as a flood.* Ver. 23. *As he hath turned the waters into saltness, so shall the heathen inherit his wrath.*] As God at once comprehends all times and all things, and their very possibilities, nothing which happens is new or wonderful to him; and as all things and persons are beneath his majesty, and subject to his power, nothing can appear great to him, or give him any surprise. Or the sense may be, That nothing is secret or unknown to him; for so the Hebrew word, as Junius observes, here rendered *wonderful*, sometimes signifies. Having enlarged upon God's knowledge and power, in answer to the unreasonable cavils of the disputers of this world, the wise man now proceeds to shew the effects both of God's goodness and of his displeasure; that when he bestows his blessing upon any nation or people, he pours it out in abundance, and scatters his mercies with profusion: when Israel pleased him by walking in his ways, what a number of blessings did he heap upon them, and what a variety of miracles did he work in their favour, and for their safety and protection! On the contrary, when he is angry, he is mighty to punish: was he displeased at the wickedness of the old world? he destroyed it by a flood. Was he offended at the inhabitants of the five cities? he burnt up their land, and turned it into a filthy lake.

Ver. 24. *As his ways are plain unto the holy, so are they stumbling-blocks unto the wicked.*] Some apply this verse to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea; that as the way was made plain and safe for them, so to their enemies it was a stumbling-block, or their ruin and destruction. Or the sense may be, That the holy or the true believers do not raise objections against God's works or proceedings, nor quarrel with his law, as difficult, mysterious, and obscure; they confess, that the *word of the Lord is true, and all his works are faithful; that it is a lantern unto their feet, and a light unto their paths;* and being desirous to know and to do God's will, they neither dispute the reasonableness of his laws, nor the methods of his providence, but readily comply with the directions of both. Whereas men of perverse and disobedient tempers pretend that the way of the Lord is not equal, they repine at his commands as grievous, and what is both easy and equitable shall be matter of offence to them. A writer of profound erudition illustrates this by the instance of the Israelites, to whom anciently the Mosaical writings were a most plain and perfect rule; but the later ones, in excuse for their swerving from this law, pretended it was too obscure and too difficult to be understood. This hypocrisy Moses foresaw would be the cause of their apostacy, and the beginning of all their miseries, and therefore he laboured most earnestly to prevent it; (Deut. xxx. 14.) but through perverseness they departed from this plain and straight rule, and thereby their ways became crooked and their actions unjust. The like may be observed of their obstinacy with respect to the gospel; had they done God's will revealed unto them in Moses's law, they would have known Christ's doctrine to have been of God; but, as St. Peter observes, *Christ is become a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence to the disobedient.* (1 Pet. ii. 8. Jackson's Works, tom. i. b. ii.)

Ver. 28. *There be spirits that are created for vengeance, which in their fury lay on sore strokes; in the time of destruction they pour out their force, and appease the wrath of him that made them.*] I cannot agree with those interpreters who understand here by πνεύματα, *winds* or *tempests*, because fire, hail, famine, and the like instruments of vengeance, immediately follow; it means rather spirits properly so called, who can indeed occasionally bring fire from heaven, and raise storms and tempests, as appears from the history of Job. The angels are God's ministers, as well to execute his wrath as to declare his favour; and as some are employed, εἰς σωτηρίαν, *for* men's good and *preservation*, so others are appointed *for vengeance*, ἔκτισται εἰς ἐκδίκησιν. It was the commission of the two angels, Gen.

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xix. to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, as well as to save Lot and his family; and the angel of the covenant that so wonderfully preserved the Israelites, was the very destroying angel that cut off all the first-born of the Egyptians. There is an angel of the bottomless pit, expressly called Apollyon, from the destruction which he makes. (Rev. ix. 11.) The expression of *laying on sore strokes in their fury*, seems to determine the sense of the passage to devils, or evil spirits, who, ἐν καιρῷ συντελείας, when the determined time of vengeance is come against persons or nations, or at the great day of judgment, the final consummation of all things, and the time fixed for the destruction of the wicked, are the commissioned instruments to torment them, not so much as they wish to do according to their malice, but as much as God permits them according to the rules of justice.

Ver. 29. *Famine and death.* Ver. 30. *Teeth of wild beasts . . . punishing the wicked to destruction.*] In the oriental languages the plague or pestilence which is here meant goes by the name of death, and the LXX. sometimes translate the Hebrew word by θάνατος, (see Jer. xxi. 7. xxiv. 10.) and the Chaldee paraphrast often puts one for the other. *Mortalitas* is used by St. Cyprian as synonymous to the pestilence. As to the punishment of a wicked people by the teeth of wild beasts, &c. both sacred and profane story confirm it. Not that these beasts, by being made the instruments of Divine vengeance, had any sense of the wickedness of those they were sent to destroy: Josephus, speaking of the lions that devoured Daniel's accusers, has a very fanciful conceit, *viz.* that it was not their anger, but the others' wickedness, that made them so keen; and then adds something very particular, δήλη γὰρ καὶ τοῖς ἀλόγοις, κ. τ. λ. *Nihil impedit quin hominum nequitia etiam irrationalibus animalibus sit manifesta ad pœnam exequendam, Deo ita volente.* (Ant. Jud. lib. x. cap. 11.) In the following verse the author represents all these ministers of vengeance as animated and alive, as listening to and rejoicing in their appointed work; *in mandatis ejus epulabuntur*, Vulg. *They shall feast themselves in doing his will*, and run with readiness and delight where he orders them, εἰς χρείας, for the uses they are designed for. Some copies have εἰς χεῖρας, *i. e.* they shall be ready *at hand*, like troops prepared to march upon the first notice.

Ver. 32. *Therefore from the beginning I was resolved, and thought upon these things, and have left them in writing.*] The wise man, ver. 16. proposed this thesis, That all the works of the Lord are exceeding good, &c.; which having proved by an induction of particulars, he concludes thus: All that I have hitherto remarked confirms me in the principle which I, ἐξ ἀρχῆς, at first maintained. I have weighed and considered the matter thoroughly with myself, and have now committed my thoughts to writing; the sum whereof is, that all the works of God are exceeding good, and every thing will be found useful in its proper season, so that there is no reason to undervalue any creature of God; for the things which seem most exceptionable and mischievous, will in time be acknowledged to serve to good purposes. Even the greatest plagues and scourges have their use, to humble the wicked, and to warn and exercise the faithful: and sinners themselves, by executing sometimes the Divine purposes and decrees, serve to display his justice and almighty power. And therefore the conclusion standeth sure, that God is ever to be adored by men and angels, for the numberless instances of his goodness; and to be praised, as St. Austin finely observes, "for all the wonders which we do perceive and know in his works, and even for those which we do not know or understand; for our life being of so short a continuance, and present to and acquainted with but a very inconsiderable part of time and of the world, it is impossible to comprehend the order and the design of that eternal wisdom which sees through all times at one view, and which, by the innumerable variety of the events of this life, as by so many links fastened together, forms that long chain of providence which extends through the succession of all ages."

CHAP. XL.

Ver. 1. *GREAT travail is created for every man, and a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother's womb till the day that they return to the mother of all things.*] Three particulars are here mentioned of the heavy yoke said to be laid on all the sons of Adam:—1. Its continuance, that it lasts for the term of life, from the day of nativity to that of death. 2. That this yoke is a composition of miseries, made up of cares, fears, deceitful hopes, delusive pleasures, and a continual dread of death, which damps all enjoyments. 3. That it is equally the lot of all men; persons of all conditions, ages, and sexes, groan alike under it. St. Austin has beautifully described it: "Parvulos intuere; quot et quanta mala patiantur, in quibus vanitatibus, cruciatibus, erroribus, terroribus crescant; deinde jam grandes, etiam Deo servientes, tentat error ut decipiat, tentat dolor aut labor ut frangat, tentat mœror ut deprimat, tentat superbia ut extollat; et quis explicet omnia festinanter quibus gravatur jugum super filios Adam? quod jugum non fuisset, nisi delicti originalis meritum præcessisset." (Aug. cont. Jul. iv. 16.) The earth, that common and hospitable parent, is with great propriety here called *the mother of all things:* the particular reasons for that appellation we meet with in Pliny,—"Sequitur terra, cui uni rerum naturæ partium, eximia propter merita, nomen indidimus maternæ venerationis . . . quæ nos nascentes excipit, natosque alit, semelque editos sustinet, novissime complexa gremio, jam a reliqua natura abdicatos, tum maxime ut mater operiens, nullo magis sacra merito, quam quo nos quoque sacros facit." (Lib. ii. cap. 63.)

Ver. 2. *Their imagination of things to come, and the day of death, [trouble] their thoughts, and [cause] fear of heart.*] All the copies have τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν καὶ φόβον καρδίας, ἐπίνοια προσδοκίας, ἡμέρα τελευτῆς. The construction here is perplexed, and chiefly so, for want of a verb to connect the whole, and give it a determinate sense, which our translators have attempted to supply. Bossuet and the Tigurine version insert, *dico, i. e. I mean* their cares, fears, &c. Grotius's conjecture, that ὦ is understood, must be allowed acute; but even had it been expressed, is it ever joined with an accusative and nominative immediately following each other? Dr. Grabe comes the nearest to restore this corrupt passage by an ingenious conjecture; he reads, διὰ λογισμοὺς αὐτῶν (if he had transposed τοὺς would it have been amiss?) καὶ φόβον καρδίας ἐπίνοια προσδοκίας ἡμέρας

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τελευτῆς· *i. e.* Life is made miserable by their surmises and fears, through the thoughts and apprehension of the day of their death. Not much unlike that, Luke xxi. 26. ἀποψυχόντων ἀνθρώπων ἀπὸ φόβου καὶ προσδοκίας τῶν ἐπερχομένων.

Ver. 5. *Wrath and envy . . . and anger and strife, and in the time of rest upon his bed, his night sleep doth change his knowledge.*] There is a great variety of reading here in the Greek copies. Complut. has μίμημα καὶ ἔρις, which Junius follows. Roman and Ald. μηνίαμα, espoused by the Vulgate: others μανία, or μήνιμα, which Grabe prefers, and is, I conceive, the best, as it gives a distinct sense from θυμὸς, mentioned just before. Each of these plagues alternately in the daytime affect and distract the mind of man, and even in the time of rest (for I so understand καὶ) troubles and unquiet dreams create new whims and imaginations, and disturb his thought, γνῶσιν αὐτοῦ, his reasoning faculty. The Tigurine version renders not improperly, *Ingenium cujusque variè efficiunt.* Messieurs of Port-Royal observe here, that the author, by styling men the children of Adam, points out the original of sin, the cause of all their evils and misfortunes. He does not only mention the outward plagues with which it pleases God to visit men, and to which the frail condition of mortality exposes them, but dwells chiefly upon the wounds of the spirit, the passions and weaknesses of the soul. Such who are great or rich may keep themselves from many accidents and inconveniences in their outward state which attend others, but uneasiness of mind, concern for the present, fears for the future, (especially the remembrance of death, xli. 1.) and remorse, perhaps for what is past, together with the other passions here mentioned, often seize upon those most who are of a more superior rank and fortune than others. Cares and troubles attend all; from him who is clothed in purple, to him who wears a coarse linen frock, *Vestem paupertatis,* as the Syriac well expresses it: but those who fancy themselves the most happy on account of their state or riches, have often less content; and that sweet season of rest and repose, which nature seems to have given to the rest of the world for their refreshment, is to them frequently a time of disquiet and uneasiness.

Ver. 6. *A little or nothing is his rest; and afterward he is in his sleep, as in a day of keeping watch, troubled in the vision of his heart, as if he were escaped out of a battle.*] Ὀλίγον ὡς οὐδέν, see Acts xxvii. 33. μηδὲν προσλαβόμενοι, where μηδὲν signifies, *Fere nihil quidquam:* and Matt. xxv. 29. Here are two very beautiful comparisons of a distracted imagination; either the unhappy person gets no rest, and then he is like to a sentinel at his post, or to one set on a watch-tower to observe the motion of the enemy, and is continually looking about him, and alarmed with every vision and appearance; or he wakes out of sleep through some frightful dream in a hurry and confusion, and with such impressions of horror, as if an enemy was pursuing him, and he was flying from the face of him, ἀπὸ προσώπου πολεμίου, for so I would read, and not πολέμου, as the present reading is. And thus the Arabic: *Similis est fugienti a conspectu inimici.* And when he is recovered from his fright, and finds himself safe and out of danger, he is surprised at his vain fear, εἰς οὐδένα φόβον, *ad nullum timorem,* Vulgate; *i. e.* at his fear which had no foundation.

Ver. 8. [*Such things happen*] *unto all flesh, both man and beast, and that is sevenfold more upon sinners.*] That men are subject to all the passions abovementioned, *viz.* to fear, anger, revenge, jealousy, and uneasiness, is agreed on all hands; how far beasts are influenced by some of them is a question, especially if we deny them the use of reason and reflection: for how can one impute to them passions which arise from reflex acts, from reasoning on what is past, or what is future? They are manifestly afraid of death, are enraged at each other, treasure up revenge, and give evident tokens of jealousy, and are not without symptoms of uneasiness, and yet have no claim or pretence to reason; what they do is ascribed to instinct and mere natural inclination. Grotius, as if sensible of this objection, applies to this verse the particulars mentioned in the following ones; but this solution I think is attended with as great a difficulty. For what relation has ῥομφαία, or *the sword,* to the brute creation, or was it for their sakes too that the universal deluge happened? Hœschelius observes, that some copies change the order of these calamitous particulars, and place αἷμα next ῥομφαία· (Ezek. v. 17. xxviii. 23. xxxviii. 21, 22.) but as θάνατος probably here means the pestilence, as in xxxix. 29. and is frequently joined with αἷμα, (see Ezek. v. 17. xxviii. 23. xxxviii. 22.) there is no need of any alteration.

Ver. 11. *All things that are of the earth shall turn to the earth again; and that which is of the waters doth return into the sea.*] This is a consequence of the sentence of mortality pronounced on all mankind in Adam; and the very name of Adam signifies one that was taken out of the earth, and therefore naturally mortal. It is observed of man, Job xx. 7. *That he shall perish for ever like his own dung; i. e.* by returning to earth again; and Eccles. xii. 7. that the dust shall return to the earth again as it was. Hence by a very apt expression the grave is called man's *long home,* ver. 5. *Domus sæculi sui,* his old house, out of which he first came forth; or *domus sæculi* may mean the house of generations, or of the whole world in general, the abode from whence they all came, and whither they must all return. The metaphor in the next clause is manifestly taken from Eccles. i. 7. The connexion of this with the foregoing verses, though not very discernible, seems to be this, That the only remedy against all the evils before enumerated, is often to think of death, and provide for our last hour; to consider that all things and persons naturally tend and shall return to their primitive dust, when all pains and uneasiness shall cease, and the reflection only of having behaved well in life will give real comfort.

Ver. 13. *The goods of the unjust shall be dried up like a river, and shall vanish with a noise like a great thunder in rain.* Ver. 14. *While he openeth his hand, he shall rejoice: so shall transgressors come to nought.*] The first part is not accurately expressed; for rivers, properly so called, are not usually dried up. Ποταμὸς is here used in the sense of χείμαῤῥος, see Job vi. 15. to which probably this refers. The meaning is, that the goods of the unjust shall be dried up like a sudden land flood, *quasi torrens,* Syriac; and so ποταμὸς is used, Luke vi. 49. Or, the author may here perhaps allude to Prov. x. 25. The second is obscurely expressed, for it does not appear who is meant in ver. 14. whether the unjust or the charitable person. As applied to the former, mentioned in the foregoing verse, the sense

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is, according to all the interpreters almost, that an unjust magistrate or judge that opens his hands to receive gifts, and delights to enrich himself by acts of injustice, shall be destroyed in the end; but I must observe, that this phrase is used for *giving*, Deut. xv. 8. Psal. civ. 28. cxlv. 16. And therefore Bossuet and Junius suppose the charitable or merciful man to be understood, who delights in acts of kindness and beneficence, and takes a pleasure while he opens his hand to do good. But in this sense it agrees not with the latter part: if the sentences were transposed, and that which is now the first subjoined with an adversative particle to connect them, the meaning I conceive would be altered for the better.

Ver. 16. *The weed growing upon every water and bank of a river, shall be pulled up before all grass.*] The term ἄχει is purely of Egyptian extraction, and signifies, in that language, the *juncus* or sedge which grows in marshy grounds, and on the banks of the Nile. (Hody de Vers. Græc. Aut. lib. ii.) It is used in Egypt chiefly for fuel, and is probably what the evangelist means by χόρτος τοῦ ἀγροῦ, *which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven*, Matt. vi. 30. It is called βούτομον, Job viii. 11—13. from whence this passage was undoubtedly taken, and the comparison both there and here is applied to the destruction of the wicked. The LXX. by mistake make ἄχει a proper name, Gen. xli. 2. where it means only a meadow. The Vulgate takes it for a verb, and renders it by *sonat*, mistaking it for ἠχεῖ, as Junius does for ἄχνη, translating it *spuma*. The Syriac renders it much better, *Similis (impius) algæ, quæ ante omnem herbam arescit;* i. e. *which withers before all grass*, either as coming soon to maturity, and so decaying apace afterward, which agrees with what the Scripture says of the short-lived prosperity of the wicked; or, as fuel cut down, dried up, and withered, which agrees yet better. Or the sense may be, That the weeds by the water-side and within its banks are soon cut down, as, where water is precious, sucking it up, or however stopping its course. Thus do rapacious persons, mentioned ver. 12. and such shall be their fate; whereas liberal ones are represented as watering the ground round them. The sense of the context from ver. 12. to ver. 18. is briefly this, That wickedness appears happy and successful for a little while, but it soon vanishes and disappears; all the gains of the wicked are like a hasty rain which is soon dried up, or the thunder which is gone as soon as it is perceived and heard. They please themselves indeed with the spoils of injustice, but they shall do them no good, and their end shall be to perish. And even those they leave behind them shall not continue long, or take deep root, they shall be like trees that grow upon the top of a barren rock, exposed to the assault of every wind: or like some worthless weed on the bank-side, which is plucked up and cast away, sooner than any other that has some use or value in it. Works of mercy, on the contrary, are like a fruitful garden, which God has blessed, and whose fruits shall be as lasting as they are inviting and lovely.

Ver. 18. *To labour, and to be content with that a man hath, is a sweet life; but he that findeth a treasure is above them both.*] The Greek literally is, The life of a contented labourer is sweet; but then to what does *both* relate? Something seems here wanting; for there must be at least two particulars to which a third is compared. Grotius thinks καὶ is wanting here, which, indeed, the Tigurine version inserts; and our translators seem to have followed a copy which had such a connective particle. The Vulgate renders without it, and makes no comparison: *Vita sibi sufficientis operarii condulcabitur, et in ea invenies thesaurum.* Messieurs of Port-Royal, to form the comparison, insert *or*, The life of the labourer, *or* of him who is content with what he has, is sweet; but he that hath both together, is as one that findeth a treasure; and instance in the primitive hermits, who took pleasure in labouring with their hands, and were not only contented to satisfy their own necessities by painful travail, but contributed to relieve those of others; hereby gaining a double treasure, that of humility, so contrary to the spirit of the world, and of charity, which delights to do good to others at its own expense. Vatablus explains it, He that findeth a treasure, *i. e.* that hath a competency or fortune left him, or, as Calmet farther explains it, who comes suddenly to be rich without any fatigue to himself or injustice to others, is happier than a labouring man, or any one that is content with what is of his own getting. Bossuet thinks all these senses low, and by *a treasure*, to which the preference is here given, he understands the treasure of righteousness, Prov. xxi. 20. or of wisdom, Wisd. vii. 14. as Junius does by it that of mercifulness, mentioned in the former verse. The oriental versions give still a different but agreeable sense: That bountifulness being as a fruitful garden, he that shews himself charitable by repeated acts of kindness, shall enrich himself thereby, shall be as one that findeth a treasure.

Ver. 19. *Children and the building of a city continue a man's name; but a blameless wife is counted above them both.*] *i. e.* Posterity called by the name of their ancestors, or a people by that of their founder, as the Persidæ, Romani, &c. and cities called by the names of their conquerors, or first establishers, as Alexandria, Seleucia, Antiochia, continue the glory of such to late generations; but a woman of great accomplishments, and who in the conjugal state shines, as well as in other parts of her character, is as excellent in her way: *her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land:* (Prov. xxxi.) such were Esther, Judith, Deborah, Jael, Artemisia, Zenobia, &c. who were as well the glory of their times as the comfort of their husbands. The wise man's meaning here, says Calmet, is not that a blameless wife is more capable of immortalizing her spouse, than a series of descendants from a noble stock, or the founding of a kingdom or a city, but that she is a blessing preferable to either. In the following verse he gives wisdom the preference (which in the sapiential books is described as a lovely and beautiful female) to all outward satisfactions, as piety, or the study of it, gives more pleasure to the soul, than wine and music at an entertainment to the senses. The pleasures of the understanding are always superior to those of the body: by the former we approach to and resemble the Deity; by the latter, especially the abuse of them, we degenerate into and act like the beasts. St. Austin has the like sentiment: "Delectatio cordis humani de lumine veritatis, de affluentia sapientiæ; non invenitur voluptas cui possit aliqua ex parte comparari." (Serm. 139.)

Ver. 22. *Thine eye desireth favour and beauty; but more than both, corn when it is green.*] Χάριν καὶ κάλλος. For some copies omit σοῦ. The eye is pleased in beholding

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artificial symmetry and proportion (for so I would render χάριν, rather than *favour*, according to the common acceptation of it), whether of building, statues, pictures, &c. but more so in contemplating the beauty of nature even in minute things, whose colour and simplicity it is beyond the power of art to come up to or imitate; such as is observable in green corn, a blade of grass, or the lilies of the field, of which Wisdom itself pronounced, that even Solomon in all his glory was not so beautifully arrayed. (Luke xii. 27.) Amongst the natural entertainments of sight, the wise man says, that the eye is most delighted with what is green, as it refreshes the sight, and assists its weakness, according to Pliny's observation on this colour: "Nullius coloris aspectus est jucundior; ideo herbas virentes, frondesque avide spectamus." (Lib. xxxvii. cap. 1.) In this Grotius acquiesces. Bossuet makes the reason of the preference to be,—that the green leaves of trees, &c. are successively renewing, whereas the perfection of art is impaired by time. Junius thinks that corn was particularly instanced in, because it contains *utile dulci*, what is serviceable to the necessities of life, as well as agreeable in outward appearance.

Ver. 28. *My son, lead not a beggar's life, for better is it to die than to beg.*] The author here speaks of begging, according to the notion which the Jews had of it, by whom it was regarded as a curse of God for some offence given to him. And, indeed, God does threaten the extremity of want to the transgressors of his commandments. Nor could the Psalmist think of a greater curse upon the wicked, than when he says, *Let their children be vagabonds, and beg their bread; let them seek it also out of desolate places.* (Psal. cix. 9.) When a state of poverty is decried or discommended in the Scripture, it is to be understood generally of such poverty as men have brought upon themselves by idleness, or evil conduct, than which death is more eligible. The Scripture throughout expresses an abhorrence of idleness, and consequently must condemn a vagabond or begging life, which proceeds generally from laziness. We may understand our author here, as if one who followed this trade was not worthy or fit to live; according to that of St. Paul, *If any will not labour, neither let him eat*, 2 Thess. iii. 10. for every one should be made sensible, and acknowledge, that he ought to work in the manner and way that he is most capable of, and that it is the lot and penance which God has imposed upon all mankind since the entrance of sin: that St. Paul laboured with his own hands, as well as enjoined it to others. Nor is the receiving carnal things, which he thinks both equitable and reasonable, by such as impart spiritual things, to be looked upon as begging, which is only the discharge of a debt, a proper return for the other's labour. It is observable our Saviour condemns a wandering begging life, when he orders his disciples not to go from house to house, but to continue in the same they first entered into, and there to refresh themselves, adding this reason, that *the labourer is worthy of his hire*, Luke x. 7.

Ver. 29. *The life of him that dependeth on another man's table is not to be counted for a life: for he polluteth himself with other men's meat; but a wise man, well nurtured, will beware thereof.*] Ἀνὴρ βλέπων εἰς ἀλλοτρίαν τράπεζαν, οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ ὁ βίος ἐν λογισμῷ ζωῆς· ἀλισγήσει τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐδέσμασιν ἀλλοτρίοις. As βλέπω is here used in the sense of ἐλπίζω, as the Syriac and our version rightly take it, so ἐλπίζω is in Scripture taken in the sense of βλέπω, Psal. cxlv. 15. οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ πάντων εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζουσι, where the marginal reading is, The eyes of all *look upon* thee. The description here belongs to the parasite, who lives at the pleasure, and is a slave to the table, of another; and only so long lives, or rather subsists, as that other shall please to give him room or refreshment. His life is not to be reckoned life, in the true estimate of living, ἐν λογισμῷ ζωῆς. His subsistence is precarious, as it depends upon the will and humour of another; he renders himself contemptible by his obsequiousness and fawning, and is forced to submit to a thousand meannesses to accomplish his end, and gain admittance and sustenance. Ἀλισγήσει ψυχὴν ἐν ἐδέσμασιν ἀλλοτρίοις, the Vulgate badly renders, *alit animam suam cibis alienis;* the sense is much stronger, and our translators give it more truly. It is a metaphor taken from eating forbidden meats, and particularly the εἰδωλόθυτα, or things offered to idols, whereby legal pollution was contracted. It does not imply pollution only in general, but that species in particular, which arises from unlawful eating and drinking. (See Dan. i. 8. Mal. i. 7.) Not to offend in this respect, or subject himself to the danger of it, will be the endeavour of every man who is well bred, or well instructed, or well disposed, for ἀνὴρ πεπαιδευμένος may signify any or all of these.

Ver. 30. *Begging is sweet in the mouth of the shameless, but in his belly shall burn a fire.*] Ἐν στόματι ἀναιδοῦς. Ἀναιδὴς means here a beggar, who is *impudently importunate*, and will take no denial, and is here used in its proper and original sense. It is not want merely, but a bold and clamorous expression of it, which is here condemned. The sense is, That the professed beggar loses all shame, he makes a mere trade of it, and will not resolve nor be persuaded to work, to get his living, and ease his necessity. This experience abundantly confirms in all those vagrants, who infest cities and countries; they will not quit that course of life, however enticed by good offers, or threatened with hard usage. Nay, will sometimes even threaten others themselves, if not relieved at the time, or in the manner, they expect. They love better to live in shameful loitering idleness, though exposed to a thousand inconveniences and wants, than to alter their way of life, and gain a livelihood by honest means and labour. Plato, in the ordering of his republic, expressly enjoins the magistrates to drive them out of all towns, that the country might be altogether free from such cattle. (Lib. xi. de Leg.) Grotius understands by πῦρ here great voraciousness and greediness, and Bossuet the extremity of hunger. This metaphor is not unusual in the poets. Thus Ovid in his fine description of *fames*, or hunger,

——— "Furit ardor edendi,
Perque avidas fauces, immensaque viscera regnat.
.
Utque rapax ignis non unquam alimenta recusat,
Innumerasque faces cremat, et quo copia major
Est data, plura cupit." (Metamorph.)

Junius understands it of the curse of God, and the fire of his wrath, that shall consume gluttons; and others expound it of bodily diseases, which are usually the consequence of intemperance.

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CHAP. XLI.

Ver. 1. *O DEATH, how bitter is the remembrance of thee, to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him!* Ver. 2. *O death, acceptable is thy sentence to the needy, and unto him whose strength faileth, that is now in the last age, and is vexed with all things!*] How beautiful is this contrast of the wise man's! Death, says he, is considered as a most sovereign evil, as the greatest of misfortunes, by one in flourishing circumstances, and in the bloom of years, and vigour of constitution. A state of affluence is so engaging, and has so many charms and endearments, that it steals men's affections, and binds those chains more strongly which fasten them to the earth, and their mortal prisons; and when death approaches to break and dissolve them, the ungrateful prospect gives horror and uneasiness, and the faster the earthly knot was tied, the greater will be the pain and unwillingness at the separation. Diogenes rallies Alexander the Great in the shades, and asks how he could patiently bear the thoughts of being there, when he remembered the happiness, glory, and state he was possessed of on the earth, the quitting his σωματοφύλακας, ὑπασπιστὰς, σατράπας, τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν. (Luc. Dial.) And indeed that mighty conqueror himself, that so often despised death in the field, when he was struck with a mortal disease in Babylon, and had death in his view, betrayed an inglorious panic; his palace was filled with priests and diviners, and no superstition, says Plutarch, was so sottish, but he used it to preserve himself. And the exit of this conqueror of the world shews the impartiality of death in making no distinction. Some critics observe, that in those words of St. Luke xvi. 22. ἀπέθανε δὲ καὶ ὁ πλούσιος, there is a particular beautiful emphasis in καὶ, intimating, that as rich as he was his riches could not keep him from the power of the grave. On the contrary, to one in poverty, sunk with misfortunes, and overwhelmed with grief, or to the person stooping under the burden of decrepit old age, death is esteemed as the end of all pain and misery, and as a seasonable relief and good. As nothing ties him to the earth, he looks upon death, especially the good man that is departing, with a composed countenance, and his approach to it is attended with hope and pleasure; he considers it as the haven of his shattered bark, as the final period of all his vexations, and the agreeable passage to a better and more welcome life, and he rightly estimates the exchange, when it shall happen to be, as it really is to those that die in the Lord, a substantial gain. How much nobler is a contempt of life, proceeding from such a principle, than that of the conceited stoic, who, either from an affected insensibility under the evils of life, or the mere want of its good things, defies and laughs at death? The conclusion we should draw, and the use we should make of the remembrance of death, which will unavoidably intrude itself into all breasts, is, not to shrink from it abjectly, but to reconcile ourselves to it, to familiarize the thoughts of it by meditation and reflection, and to prepare for it by dying daily to the world.

Ver. 3. *Fear not the sentence of death, remember them that have been before thee, and that come after, for this is the sentence of the Lord over all flesh.* Ver. 4. *And why art thou against the pleasure of the Most High? There is no inquisition in the grave, whether thou have lived ten, or a hundred, or a thousand years.*] Κρίμα would be as properly rendered *condemnation;* this is the condemnation from the Lord upon all the descendants of Adam, who received their sentence of mortality in his: and this may be one reason, that, though the first fathers of the world lived so long, yet it is noted of those that lived the longest, that at length they died, to shew that this sentence of God is infallible and irreversible, and that he will be found true in whatsoever he decrees. The law of the Most High, in this respect, admits of no exception; we are not better than so many others that have gone before us, or than those that will follow after us, why should we therefore expect an exemption, or be so alarmed at what must necessarily happen? The great number that suffer alike, and undergo the same fate with us, should diminish and take off the horror, and the insignificancy and unserviceableness of the fear ought to encourage us against the danger; as in a battle, where there is only a probability of death, despair drives away all fear, and turns it into bravery and courage. Seneca has a pertinent observation on the occasion, "Stultum est timere quod vitare non possis. Stultum est dolere in ejusmodi conditione te esse, in qua nemo non est; solatium est grande cum universo unà rapi." (De Provid. cap. 5.) Another motive to reconcile us to the thoughts of death is, that long life is far from being always desirable; it may perhaps occasion our sharing in more misfortunes, or only serve to increase the number of our sins. The inquiry in the other world will not be how long, or how little, persons have lived here; none will then envy or reproach others about the number of years, or the state and condition they lived in upon earth; but the grand inquisition will be, which no age or quality can escape, how they behaved themselves here, how their stewardship was managed, and their time improved; how the account stood at the very instant of death; for after that there will not be any possibility of altering, changing, or correcting what is past.

Ver. 5. *The children of sinners are abominable children, and they that are conversant in the dwelling of the ungodly.*] The evil example and bad principles of parents have an influence upon the conduct and sentiments of their children; and as vice spreads and grows worse in every generation, the son of a wicked father is generally more abandoned and corrupt. The last clause is but indifferently rendered; the sense according to the Greek is, That the children of sinners, as being born corrupt and with evil dispositions, seek out for loose companions like themselves, and are chiefly conversant with the wicked, and in such places of infamy as they resort to.

Ver. 7. *The children will complain of an ungodly father, because they shall be reproached for his sake.*] A parent who bestows nothing better upon his children than the sad lot of a spurious birth, and the ignominy and contempt which generally attend it, is to be looked upon rather as an enemy than a father; and he that gives his lawful issue no better inheritance than the poison of a bad example, and makes them the children of wrath by the loose maxims which he instils into them, and his evil communication before them, or, by giving them too much liberty, permits them knowingly to follow evil courses without restraint, is he not rather a murderer than a father? But such parents as encourage their children in vice or lewdness, that are themselves the

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seducers and betrayers of their innocence, that teach them to sin, and perhaps sin together with them; are not such unnatural tempers very fiends? We read with astonishment of those merciless parents that offered with their own hands *souls destitute of help* in sacrifice to Moloch; (Wisd. xii. 9.) and are such as initiate their own children into impure or Bacchanalian rites, less wicked and barbarous? Will not such unhappy ones rise in judgment against and accuse their parents, at the great tribunal, of cruelty and inhumanity, and be *loud witnesses of wickedness against them in the day of their trial?* (Wisd. iv. 6.)

Ver. 8. *Woe be unto you, ungodly men. . . . for if you increase, it shall be to your destruction.* Ver. 9. *And if you be born, you shall be born to a curse: and if you die, a curse shall be your portion.*] The wise man here addresses himself to the wicked, whose birth at first, as it was thought a curse, so their death will end with one. It had been better for persons with such evil dispositions never to have been born, than to be born and live in continual sin, and be eternally miserable. Was it not to be wished that such men as Cain, Jeroboam, Antiochus Epiphanes, Judas, Simon Magus, Maxentius, &c. and other wicked and notorious sinners, had never seen light? The author of the book of Wisdom describes the Canaanites, in like manner, as a naughty generation, or *accursed seed from the beginning,* (xii. 10.) Grotius finds fault with the present reading of the Greek, and restores it thus, Ἐὰν γὰρ πληθυνθῆτε, εἰς ἀπώλειαν γενήσετε, καὶ ἐὰν ἀποθάνητε, εἰς κατάραν μερισθήσετε· *i. e.* If ye increase by a multitude of children, ye shall beget them to their destruction; and when ye die, ye shall be ranked among the cursed. In the following verse, many copies omit ἀπὸ κατάρας, and the sense indeed seems better without it; that as earth returns to earth, so evil as naturally to the evil.

Ver. 16. *Therefore be shamefaced according to my word; for it is not good to retain all shamefacedness, neither is it altogether approved in every thing.*] Οὐ γάρ ἐστι πᾶσαν αἰσχύνην διαφυλάξαι καλὸν, καὶ οὐ πάντα πᾶσιν ἐν πίστει εὐδοκιμεῖται. Various are the senses of this last clause. Bossuet renders with the Vulgate: All things are not to be approved of in all, or by all, or are not equally profitable or delightful to all. The Geneva version has, *Neither are all things allowed as faithful in all men.* Grotius has still a different sense, Nor is it commendable to be altogether incredulous, or to *disbelieve* every thing, and reads ἀπιστεῖν instead of ἐν πίστει. But I conceive, as the author proceeds in the remainder of the chapter to lay down divers rules, not only to distinguish that which is shameful from that which is not so, but also to set down the degrees and circumstances which enhance the turpitude of any action; that this verse should be considered as the entrance upon that subject, and the sense to be, That there are some instances when we should not be ashamed, and some when we should, for it is not good διαφυλάττειν *to avoid* all shame [so Grotius understands the word, and so it is used, Prov. vi. 24. and elsewhere]; for that there is a commendable shame this author has determined, iv. 21. which seems indeed to be a better rendering, than that of our version, and makes the whole clearer and more consistent; *viz.* That it is neither good to avoid all shame, because there is a shame which is a glory and grace, nor is shame to be approved of in every person, or on every occasion, because there is a faulty and a criminal shame. This is confirmed by what follows in this and the next chapter, where the wise man instances in several particulars, and shews when and of what things we ought or ought not to be ashamed.

Ver. 17. *Be ashamed of whoredom before father and mother, and of a lie before a prince or a great man.*] Αἰσχύνεσθε ἀπὸ πατρὸς περὶ πορνείας. Ἀπὸ is here used in the sense of *coram,* denoting the person, before whom the offence is committed, (see 1 John ii. 28.) and so answers to מִפְּנֵי among the Hebrews, *a facie, in conspectu,* as περὶ, which follows here, denotes the matter of the sin. Some Latin copies have *propter,* i. e. *upon account of* the relation or dignity of such persons. As fornication or any indecent act or word in the presence of parents, or in such an open manner or place as may come to their knowledge, for so far it may be extended, betrays a contempt of them, and must occasion great concern to them; so, with respect to truth, as great a regard should be had to princes, who may be considered as fathers too in their public capacity, and as their persons and office are sacred, they have a right not to be imposed upon by any falsehood. What Terence says of private parents may include also civil ones; "Qui mentiri aut fallere instituit patrem aut matrem, tanto magis audebit cæteros." Here is a great hiatus in the oriental versions; scarce one of the particulars from this place to ver. 9. of the next chapter is taken any notice of, which, according to Jansenius, are no less than fourteen subjects of real shame, very different from each other. Some are crimes, others only faults, more or less considerable, according to the circumstances of them. There are others, which are rather instances of inadvertence and incivility, than sins, properly speaking, against God.

Ver. 18. *Of an offence before a judge and ruler, of iniquity before a congregation and people.*] Πλημμέλεια means here some open misbehaviour or crime before persons in office, whose authority and dignity, as they demand a respectful obedience, so will they be sure to punish what gives any offence in their presence, and make an immediate example of such as seem to disrespect and slight them. Crimes done covertly, not being known, have often the good fortune to escape punishment; but such as are done perhaps in the court of justice, or in the very verge of it, in a bold and daring manner, or contemptuous and profane words spoken in the hearing of the public magistrate, being so many instances of defiance, as well as folly, are sure to be punished, as such an insult deserves. By συναγωγὴ some understand the great Sanhedrin, and by ἀνομία, sedition. Others think any public injury against the good of the state to be here meant, in which may be included evil counsels and designs, threats, conspiracies, and attempts upon the laws, privileges, and liberties of a people, which occasion jealousy and clamour, and often bring down public punishment upon such as have been suspected of a design to infringe them. History abounds with examples of impeachments and proscriptions of bad patriots, and sometimes the people have been so exasperated against the supposed enemies of their country, as to assassinate, stone, or otherwise destroy them. One sees by the example of Rehoboam, king of Judah, how dangerous it is to provoke the people by any imprudent answer or threatening language. (1 Kings xii. 14.) The advice seems nearly the same with that vii. 7. (See note on it.) Ἀδικία, which follows, is not to be used even towards a stranger, but the relations we may be en-

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gaged in will claim even beyond strict justice. Something is due to our acquaintance, more to our friends, but most to a partner, who may be considered as our other self.

Ver. 19. *And of theft in regard of the place where thou sojournest, and in regard of the truth of God and his covenant.*] Ἀπὸ τόπου οὗ παροικεῖς περὶ κλοπῆς, καὶ ἀπὸ ἀληθείας θεοῦ καὶ διαθήκης. Some, and our translators in particular, seem to unite these sentences, as if they related to the same thing; *viz.* Be ashamed of any cheating or fraud in a strange place or country, for thereby you shew your forgetfulness of the law of God: or, Above all be ashamed of unfaithfulness in transgressing the law and the covenant of the Lord, by any instance of falsehood or theft. Others make them distinct, and to relate to different things, and refer the second clause to what follows; thus, Be ashamed of violating the truth and covenant of the Lord, by mixing with idolaters, and eating meat offered to idols at a profane table. Jansenius thinks it an interpolation, and that it crept in here from xlii. 2. because no sin is mentioned here, as in the other sentences, of which a man should be ashamed. Grotius's emendation seems to set all right, and contains the particular supposed wanting here, *viz.* forgetfulness of God; for with great probability he conjectures the true reading to be, ἀπὸ λήθης θεοῦ, κ. τ. λ. i. e. *Be ashamed of forgetfulness of God, his law, and covenant.* Dr. Grabe accordingly adopts this as most preferable. (Prolegom. cap. 4. tom. iii.) It may be proper to observe, that ἀπὸ in most of the following passages takes the sense in which περὶ hath been used.

And of scorning to give and take.] *i. e.* Be ashamed to use any deceit with respect to what you pay or receive. One may cheat either by paying in bad coin, or by paying too little, or by refusing to do it but by compulsion: and in receiving, the same fault is committed by taking more than is due, or by demanding it too soon or unseasonably, or by oppressive methods. This may also be extended to accounts which are not fairly and honestly kept, when one enters more than he has paid, or less than he has received. Or a wrong may be done to creditors by refusing to pay at all, or by deferring payment unreasonably, or by a fraudulent bankruptcy. The sense briefly is,—that in matters of commerce, for so the phrase is used xlii. 7. and by the rabbins, we should be ashamed to be dishonest, and both pay and receive with honour and justice. Σκορακισμὸς, here rendered *scorning*, means *cheating*, and is equivalent, according to Hesychius, to ἀπάτη; if we take the phrase in the sense of charity and generosity, as it is used Phil. iv. 15. the meaning then is, That we should be ashamed to alienate to a private use public money, and particularly to abuse or mispend what is given for the relief of the poor, or to other pious uses; but this caution is mentioned ver. 21. and is better so understood there than of detaining a private gift or legacy.

Ver. 20. *And of silence before them that salute thee.*] The wise man having instanced in the former verse in a species of rudeness, *viz.* lolling on the table, instead of resting with the elbow upon the *triclinium*, as was the custom in this writer's time, proceeds to mention another instance of unpoliteness; *viz.* the not receiving civilities kindly, and returning them obligingly; which distant behaviour proceeds from pride, and a contempt of others. To return a salutation is one species of debt due to those that are so obliging to us; and we should even prevent those that are approaching us in a respectful manner, however, not be behind hand in returning their civility. Politeness and good manners demand this, especially towards our friends, who are cordial and sincere in their affections and professions towards us. They differ widely from such flatterers as address, and would insinuate themselves by fulsome language, whose carriage is affected, and their visits insidious. Such officious designing persons Solomon means, when he says, *He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.* (Prov. xxvii. 14.) How much better and clearer is the rendering of the LXX. ὃς ἂν εὐλογῇ φίλον τὸ πρωὶ μεγάλῃ τῇ φωνῇ, καταρωμένου οὐδὲν διαφέρειν δόξει. *Non differt ab eo qui maledicit*, Syriac; to which agrees the Vulgate. After these the author proceeds to mention some suspicious instances of over-civilities, as too great admiration of and regard for another man's wife, or too much intimacy and familiarity with his maid: next he instances in an over-fondness for a man's self, whereby he becomes tiresome by a tedious repetition of his own actions and words; for so Grotius understands δευτέρωσις, ver. 23. and, which may be resolved into the same cause, the spreading reports, λόγος ἀκοῆς, publishing all one hears to the detriment and disparagement of others. To be careful not to offend in any of these particulars, will be to a man's honour.

CHAP. XLII.

Ver. 2. *AND of judgment to justify the ungodly.*] This carries a very bad sense, as it stands in our version, as if the advice was, not to be ashamed of a judgment or sentence to justify the ungodly; except δικαιῶσαι means here, as it does sometimes in Greek writers, to condemn or punish. The sense is, Be not ashamed to oppose any judgment or sentence in which a wicked man is intended to be favoured or acquitted; be so far from concurring in a wrong sentence, as to resolve to oppose all wickedness, as soon as it is discovered and known to you: let neither fear, nor friendship, nor interest, nor any human regard, stop you in the prosecution of justice, according to the direction, Deut. i. 16, 17.

Ver. 3. *Of reckoning with thy partners and travellers.*] Περὶ λόγου κοινωνῶν καὶ ὁδοιπόρων. Grotius understands this of not being ashamed to entertain companions and fellow-travellers, συνοδοιπόρους, with agreeable discourse, to shew civility to those we travel with or meet on the way, to take in good part what they say, and to contribute by friendly intercourse to make the time and journey pass agreeably. Others, more justly, of doing business uprightly, as an agent for other people, whether neighbours or strangers, and keeping a fair account. Badwell explains it, which seems the best sense, of a judicial hearing between an acquaintance and a stranger, and of not being influenced by prejudice in favour of the former, but to judge equally and impartially between friends and those that are unknown, between domestics and foreigners. That ὁδοιπόρος is sometimes used in the sense of ξένος, see Montfauc. Hexapl. 2 Kings xii. 4.

Or of the gift of the heritage of friends.] Περὶ δόσεως κληρονομίας ἑταίρων. I do not greatly approve Grotius's exposition, Be not ashamed to declare your friends for your heirs, or to give legacies to your acquaintance, though your

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relations be discontented, and take it amiss. The sense may either be, Take great care not to be partial in the dividing an inheritance, where your friends are concerned and have an interest, *Dans le partage d'un heritage où vos amis sont interessez,* according to Calmet. For where a man has several ἑταῖροι, and they have, as they naturally will have, different degrees of interest and influence with him, he may be in great danger of accepting persons, in making a division between them. Or, the advice here may be, to distribute the estate, inheritance, or effects, of a deceased friend, according to his mind and intention, and conformably to the tenor of his will, without listening to or regarding the solicitations or talk of interested and dissatisfied persons: and, if the trust be vested in you, to divide the inheritance impartially among the several coheirs. According to this sense δόσις is equivalent to διάδοσις.

Ver. 4. *Or of getting much or little.*] Look narrowly to the weights and measures of those with whom you have any dealing, and also to the prices which are set upon their goods, and trouble not yourself about those who blame or laugh at your scrupulous exactness in these particulars; or, adhere strictly to right and equity, even at the expense of your own interest; mind not the getting more or less in any dealing or bargain, but the getting it honestly and fairly. Nor be ashamed in traffic, says Calmet, to be honest and deal fairly, *Dans les petits comme dans les grands gains,* in small as well as large gains, in little matters as well as greater.

Ver. 5. *And of merchants' indifferent selling.*] Περὶ ἀδιαφόρου πράσεως ἐμπόρων. *Ni de corriger le desordre qui regne dans le commerce entre les marchands,* says Calmet, applying it to magistrates, whose business it is to prevent any injustice between buyers and sellers. As referred to selling, the Greek literally may mean, Be not ashamed to look out for a good chapman, to treat with different persons or merchants, and to choose among them him that offers the best price. As referred to buying, Be not ashamed to ask the price of things, to examine and cheapen that which you are about to buy, if you cannot depend on the person's truth and honesty; or, if imposed upon, to complain of a bad commodity, to turn it back, or to insist on an exchange, or an abatement. Most of the versions and commentators understand διαφόρου in the sense of *indifferent,* as our translators do; but διάφορον in this writer more generally signifies *money.* (See vii. 19. xxvii. 1. 2 Macc. i. 35.) According to this acceptation it may mean, Be not ashamed to ask for the money for goods sold and delivered to the merchant; or, when you are about to receive a sum of money, scruple not to look at it, to try and examine it, to tell it, and, if need be, to weigh it.

Ver. 6. *Sure keeping is good where an evil wife is.*] Ἐπὶ γυναικὶ πονηρᾷ καλὸν σφραγίς. Σφραγὶς here signifies *a signet* or *seal,* with which things valuable and precious were sealed, for their better safety and preservation. A wise master of a family, says this writer, denies even to his wife the usual power in his house, if he knows her to be indiscreet, and has reason to question her management. This advice, though well meant, is matter of great tenderness; as one should not distrust, when there is no very pressing occasion, nor raise a commotion and family difference for only trifles missing, or abused, lest resentment should make her throw off all care in general; so neither when there is room enough for distrust and complaint should things be carried to such an extremity, as to exclude the mistress of the house her proper province, and by putting matters out of her reach or cognizance, to make her, as it were, a cipher in it. A generous confidence in a wife, joined with well-timed persuasion, observation on others' thriving and flourishing by means of management, and a sensible experience of domestic uneasiness, and their common loss for want of economy, will at length, it is probable, produce a happy change, and effect that which upbraiding or violent methods must despair of attaining. Some extend this advice farther, and by γυνὴ πονηρὰ understand not merely a careless wife, who gives herself no concern about family affairs, but one who is loose and intriguing; that such a one, if not confined, should at least be kept within doors, and be denied opportunities of gadding abroad, cultivating, or continuing a dangerous acquaintance, and executing any latent scheme of mischief and wickedness.

And shut up where many hands are.] A discreet governor of a family keeps an account of all, and has an eye to things how they go, not so much out of a spirit of distrust or covetousness, as not to give servants an opportunity to injure, or defraud, and to hinder that mischief and waste, which is a sure attendant upon carelessness and negligence. This fine precept of economy is chiefly intended, says Calmet, for the benefit of great and rich families, which can never be so grand and considerable, as to be above the use of prudent management, nor indeed long continue their greatness and state without it. As their number of domestics and dependants is considerably larger, so is the danger of extravagance and waste proportionably greater. As these have no property in what is consumed, and their stay and continuance generally but precarious, and imagine an unnecessary profusion for the credit of the great, they cannot be suspected of any principles of economy, nor to have either inclination or forecast to prevent needless expenses. To stop such inconveniences arising often merely from wantonness, by prudent inspection or provision, will be no reflection, either upon the good sense, or dignity, or character, of the great. This writer has observed upon another occasion, that *he that despiseth little things, shall perish by little and little,* (xix. 1.) which is equally applicable to matters of expense, the small particulars whereof, whether arising from servants' negligence, or other instances of mismanagement, seemingly trifling and insignificant, and as such taken no notice of, will be found at length to compose large sums, and the overlooking of these may be assigned as one probable cause of the decay of estates. On the contrary, a great and well-regulated family, where order and a well-conducted plenty reign, is a sort of microcosm, or the natural world in miniature, where, though the constituent parts are numberless, nothing in the structure of it is idle or superfluous, every thing knows its place, has its use, keeps its course, and the more minute, as well as greater concerns of it, are administered with the most consummate wisdom.

Ver. 8. *Be not ashamed to inform the unwise and foolish, and the extreme aged that contendeth with those that are young.*] It is never shameful to reprove and correct the wicked and unwise, of whatever age or condition they be. If an old man acts beneath himself, betrays a misbecoming

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levity in words or actions; if he falls into crimes, which even the giddiness and fire of youth are no excuse for; scruple not to reprove and admonish him. Remember with what zeal and spirit young Daniel proceeded against the two incontinent elders. The marginal reading is full to this sense, and Hœschelius refers to a copy which had κρινομένου περὶ πορνείας, an old man *accused of fornication.* Grotius understands it in the sense of our version, that it is proper to admonish an old man, differing or quarrelling with young men, or boys, as being unworthy of his character, and a contest unsuitable to his strength and age. According to others, the sense is, Scruple not to take the part of elderly persons insulted by the younger sort; preserve the reverence due to old age, and remind them who play upon them, if occasion be, of the fate of those jeering young men (for so it should be rendered) who insulted the baldness of the prophet Elisha. (2 Kings ii. 23.) This is proper advice literally taken; in a spiritual sense it may be understood as a direction, according to Messieurs of Port-Royal, to stand up for and maintain the truth and purity of the church, so venerable for its antiquity, and recommended by the pious zeal of so many saints and fathers, who have appeared in its defence, when it is attacked by the upstart errors of such, whose proper character is a fondness for novelty.

Ver. 9. *The father waketh for the daughter when no man knoweth, and the care for her taketh away sleep; when she is young, lest she pass the flower of her age, and being married, lest she should be hated.*] The received sense of the former part is, that a daughter is the cause of secret or hidden inquietude to the father, πατρὶ ἀπόκρυφος ἀγρυπνία, which our translation follows; but Grotius and others apply ἀπόκρυφος to θυγάτηρ, and thereby mean a virgin daughter, who has not yet left her father's house and family, but continues *confined* to her apartment, or the *gynæceum.* The Hebrews called such a one before marriage, *Alma, i. e.* one concealed, because, before they were espoused and led in form to their husbands, they remained always shut up, and concealed from the sight and acquaintance of men; and even when a proposal was made for marriage, the whole courtship was transacted by proxies, without either of the parties seeing one another. The following sentence, *When she is young, lest she pass the flower of her age,* the Vulgate renders, *Ne forte in adolescentia sua adulta efficiatur,* which affords no sense, *adulta ætas* being the prime time for espousals; I think the rendering should either be *superadulta,* or, if the Greek would admit, *adultera efficiatur,* as Jerome's Bible has it, and that of Sixtus V. which indeed the Syriac and Arabic greatly confirm. The former has, *In pueritia ipsius ne injuriam patiatur;* the latter, *In adolescentia ipsius ne afficiatur injuria.* But still there seems good reason against admitting this conjecture, as this very sense is expressed in the beginning of the next verse. *Superadulta* therefore seems preferable, and answers better to the Greek; and no wonder the father should be concerned on this head, as, according to the common notion of the Jews, it was esteemed dishonourable to pass the flower of age unmarried; (1 Cor. vii. 36.) and in particular, from the precept to increase and multiply, they thought themselves obliged to marry at twenty, and declared, that whosoever neglected this precept offended against the law, and was guilty of homicide. When married, the parent's care still continued for his daughter, lest she should be disagreeable to her husband by any bodily infirmity, badness of temper, or breach of conjugal chastity, for so the oriental versions understand what our translators render *misbehaviour;* or, lest she should at length prove barren, which was reckoned a great disgrace in Israel, a barren wife being always looked upon with an evil eye in her husband's house; all or any of which cases was a legal cause of divorce, and must occasion fresh concern and new difficulties *to her near relations,* by her being returned with disgrace, τοῖς πατρικοῖς αὐτῆς, an elegant and truly classical expression.

Ver. 12. *Behold not every body's beauty, and sit not in the midst of women.* Ver. 13. *For from garments cometh a moth, and from women wickedness.*] The literal rendering of the Greek is, Look not earnestly on every man for beauty; which Calmet understands of pædorastism or sodomy, and says, this piece of advice was necessary to be directed to those who lived among the Greeks or heathens, among whom this detestable crime, and the most shameful and unnatural actions, were notorious and common. It may be considered also as a direction to young women not to gaze upon or admire men's beauty, as what follows relates to men, and their behaviour with respect to women. The caution is, not to avoid women's company altogether, or not to continue long in it, which is both inoffensive and agreeable; but not to communicate or reveal secrets, or matters of consequence to them, or consult about grand *arcana* in their presence or hearing; so συνεδρεύειν is sometimes taken; and so it seems to be understood here by the Arabic version. The next verse seems to bear harder still upon them, which the Vulgate renders, *A muliere iniquitas viri,* and it makes the sense rather clearer. I cannot persuade myself to think, with many expositors, that the author here, rightly understood, declares against the company and conversation of women in general, as if certain danger and mischief attended it; or that he was such an enemy to the sex as to forbid all intercourse with them, whom God made for man's society and comfort. What is said relates, I conceive, to bad or lewd women, whose acquaintance will kindle the fire of lust, and from such may be expected to come πονηρία, both wickedness and misery. For impure love is as a worm that gnaws the soul, it preys upon and eats insensibly what it fastens upon, and the danger is more to be feared, as it is less perceived, and the temptations to it more engaging; it is the moth which breeds and engenders in clothes, continually fretting the garment without being perceived, till it is too late to prevent and remedy the mischief. Such is the danger, and such the decay, that will ensue from an artful, designing, and wicked woman.

Ver. 14. *Better is the churlishness of a man, than a courteous woman; a woman, I say, which bringeth shame and reproach.*] *i. e.* Better and more to your advantage is the rough admonition of a sincere friend, who means your good, than the pretended kindness of a woman who aims only at mischief. According to Calmet the sense is, It is better to have a man for an enemy, than a woman, *i. e.* a deceitful woman, for a friend; the hatred of the one is less dangerous, than the false tenderness and dissembled caresses of the other. Such was Delilah to Samson, and Judith to Holofernes. By a *courteous woman,* we are not to under-

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stand here, one that is modestly civil and obliging, and ready to do all good and commendable offices, who is truly ἀγαθοποιὸς, but one who is engaging by deceitful arts, and a false fondness, and courteous only to ensnare. It is observable, that this writer himself seems purposely to design to prevent any mistake, by adding more explicitly, that the woman he means is one whose subtle and engaging arts will in the end bring shame, and reproach, and ruin, to such unhappy ones as are drawn in by her. The Romanists object, that Josephus quotes this verse as Scripture, and links it with several precepts and maxims of Moses. (Cont. App. lib. ii.) To this objection it will be sufficent to reply, 1. That he does not quote this passage αὐτολεξεὶ, the sentence which occurs there is different from this. 2. That it was not in the original text of Josephus, appears from hence, that it is not in the ancient version of Ruffin. 3. Supposing him to quote this, it no more proves this book canonical, than his citing something out of Plato de Legibus proves that book to be so. 4. Γραφὴ is often used in a lax sense, to signify any ecclesiastical writing, and not precisely Scripture. (See Du Pin's Hist. of the Can. Cosin's Scholast. Hist. Huet. Demonst. Evang. prop. 4.)

Ver. 15. *I will now remember the works of the Lord, and declare the things that I have seen: in the words of the Lord are his works.*] Ἐν λόγοις Κυρίου τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ. It seems, say Messieurs of Port-Royal, as if the following verses were a sort of song of the wise man, who rises on a sudden, as it were by a holy transport, which animates him through the admiration of the greatness of God's works. From this place to the end of the book, he is wholly taken up, either in praising the Lord, and enlarging upon the excellence of his works, or in publishing the praises of the Jewish worthies. He begins with a fine thought, that his word, or almighty fiat, was a perfect work; (2 Esd. vi. 38.) which greatly resembles that of Moses, Gen. i. 3. so much admired by Longinus, or that comprehensive one of the Psalmist, Psal. xxxiii. 9. Ἐν λόγῳ Κυρίου, I think would have been more lofty, and conveyed a higher idea of God's power. Philo has the same thought, ὁ λόγος ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτῷ, De Mose, lib. i. and Clem. Alexandr. Strom. lib. v. There is the like plural expression, and upon the same occasion, in the very next chapter, (ver. 5. 10.) which our translators have there rightly rendered in the singular. Grotius spoils this beautiful thought by joining ἐν λόγοις to the foregoing sentence, and making (by what authority I know not) Κυρίου τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, to be a gloss crept into the text from the margin.

Ver. 16. *The sun that giveth light looketh upon all things, and the work thereof is full of the glory of the Lord.*] This is not accurately rendered: the author is not here speaking professedly of the sun and its wonderful creation, as may seem at first view (that follows in the next chapter); it is brought in here only by way of comparison. The sense is, The glory of God appears in the whole creation, as the light of the sun is seen upon all the earth. Ἔργον αὐτοῦ is not rightly rendered the work *thereof*, understanding it of the making of the sun, but relates to God,—God's work, or his whole creation, is full of his majesty, or of the majesty of his glory. So Grotius, *Sicut sol omnia perlustrat, ita et opus hoc Dei universum plenum est ipsius majestate.* The oriental versions too take it comparatively, and some MSS. have ὡς ἥλιος φωτίζων.

Ver. 17. *The Lord hath not given power to the saints to declare all his marvellous works, which the Almighty Lord firmly settled, that whatsoever is, might be established for his glory.*] The Vulgate reads with an interrogation, *Nonne Dominus fecit sanctos enarrare omnia mirabilia sua?* understanding probably by *the saints*, either the angels, and blessed in heaven, who know and celebrate his power and greatness, or, in an inferior sense, the Israelites, to whom God made known his laws and wondrous works, while other nations continued in darkness and ignorance. The author wisely premises this, says Calmet, to excuse his own attempt in undertaking so lofty a subject, which the angels themselves do not comprehend, much less can explain perfectly. But the generality of interpreters, with our translators, understand the passage in a quite contrary sense,—that God hath not given such a power or enabled his saints to declare all the wonders which he hath done; and, as Almighty Lord, hath established, beyond all power of alteration or disturbance, in such a perfect manner, that they may continue for ever, in the order and manner he has fixed them, to his glory, and the good of the whole system; which seems confirmed by a parallel passage, xviii. 4. *To whom hath he given power to declare his works? and who shall find out his noble acts? who shall number the strength of his majesty; and who shall also tell out his mercies?* where the interrogation is equivalent to a negative; and the Greek in the first sentence so expresses it, οὐδενὶ ἐξεποίησεν ἐξαγγεῖλαι τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ.

Ver. 18. *He seeketh out the deep and the heart, and considereth their crafty devices: and he beholdeth the signs of the world.*] Something seems here wanting, and is probably dropped from the text; Grotius supposes it to be ἀνθρώπων, which, indeed, the Vulgate has inserted, *Abyssum, et cor hominum investigavit;* but what are we to understand by the *signs of the world*, which God is said here to behold? The learned critic above says, that the least discernible point of time is called σημεῖον, and that God knoweth every portion and instant of time, and what passes in it. According to Calmet, it means, that he sees into and understands all future events, not by inspection of the stars, or the help of any signs natural, but he knows perfectly all the changes that happen in nature, without having any occasion to consult second causes. And how, indeed, should he be ignorant of them, who seeth from everlasting to everlasting, to whom all things, past and future, are present; and the events of all times and ages are known from all eternity, and as it were written in his mind? οὐδὲ εἷς λόγος, *not even one thing*, for so it should be rendered, is hidden from him.

Ver. 22. *O how desirable are all his works, and that a man may see even to a spark.* Ver. 23. *All these things live and remain for ever, for all uses, and they are all obedient.*] Who can refrain from praising God that sees his glory, and how do his works command our wonder, and merit to be extolled and reverenced by all that fear him? for after representing to ourselves, in the best manner we are able, his excellence and beauty, all that we can attain to is, in comparison, but a spark; so small a part of his works do we see, and so imperfect is our knowledge. Or the sense may be, We see the wonders of his works even in a spark; *i. e.* all his creatures proclaim his greatness, and there is none, how small soever it be, in which we do not discern

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marks of his wisdom and power. By this all created nature has subsisted through numberless successive generations, and will subsist to the remainder of time, fulfilling his will, and serving the purposes which he has assigned them. "All things (says a very judicious writer), since the time that God did first proclaim the edicts of his law upon the natural world, have continued their regular course; heaven and earth have hearkened unto his voice, and their labour hath been to do his will. If nature should intermit her course, and leave, though it were but for a little while, the observation of her own laws; if those principal and mother elements, whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities they now have; if the frame of that heavenly arch erected over our heads should loosen and dissolve itself; if the celestial spheres should forget their wonted motions, and by irregular volubility turn themselves any other way; if the prince of the lights of heaven, who now, as a giant, doth run his unwearied course, should, as it were, through a languishing faintness, begin to stand, and to rest himself; if the moon should wander from her beaten way; the times and seasons of the year blend themselves by confused and disordered mixture; the winds breathe out their last gasp; the clouds yield no more rain; the earth be defeated of heavenly influence, and the fruits of it pine away, as children at the withered breasts of their mother, no longer able to yield them relief;—what would become of man himself, whom these things do now all serve? See we not plainly, that the obedience of the creatures unto the law of nature is the stay of the whole world?" (Hooker's Eccles. Pol. p. 37.)

Ver. 24. *All things are double one against another, and he hath made nothing imperfect.*] Each thing has its contrary in nature, and the one is opposed to the other, night to day, evil to good, death to life, cold to heat, dry to wet, &c. Many of the ancient philosophers maintained the like contrariety of qualities in nature; they thought the universe subsisted by a just temperature of these opposites and extremes, none of which predominated over the other, though there was a mutual antipathy betwixt them. Ovid, speaking of the creation of the world, says, That God by his wisdom knew how to reconcile this opposition, and to keep things in a fixed and permanent state, notwithstanding this continual disagreement: (Metamorph. lib. i.) and so we find it; even this diversity, instead of disturbing the order of the universe by any confusion, is, like to that of different voices in an excellent concert of music, accompanied with an order and regularity, connexion and dependance, wonderful in such a variety of bodies, whose harmony, during such a revolution of numberless ages, composes a hymn to the glory of the great Creator. (See note on xxxiii. 14, 15.)

CHAP. XLIII.

Ver. 1. *THE pride of the height, the clear firmament, the beauty of heaven, with his glorious show.*] Dr. Grabe thinks that this chapter ought to begin at ver. 15. of the last, and so indeed the subject and connexion seem to require; and there is the more probability that this begins wrong, as we cannot account for the construction of the Greek, if we do not refer γαυρίαμα, στερέωμα, and εἶδος to ὁρῶν in the preceding verse of the last chapter, and put them in apposition to δόξαν immediately foregoing to the following sense, Who can be satisfied with contemplating his glory; *viz.* the immensity of height, the vast expanse of clearness, *sublime candens*, as Ennius well expresses it, the general face of the heavens, exhibiting to the sight a most glorious show? The obscurity here seems to arise from a string of Hebraisms, for which we have a parallel place, Psal. xxix. 2, 3. where הדרת קדש *beauty of holiness*, means *beautiful holy place;* אל־כבוד *God of glory*, means *the glorious God;* בהדר קול בכח *a voice in might and in glory*, means *a mighty and glorious voice.* So the words here rendered by γαυρίαμα ὕψους, might signify a most exalted altitude, στερέωμα καθαριότητος, a most clear sky, *expansum purum*, as Junius has it; and both these farther represented, as being or exhibiting εἶδος οὐρανοῦ, *the face of heaven*, which is εἶδος ἐν ὁράματι δόξης, *a glorious sight*, or *view of his glory;* which answers in nature to what the prophet saw in revelation, which is called by him, ἡ ὅρασις ὁμοιώματος δόξης Κυρίου. (Ezek. i. 28.) I cannot here conceal from the learned reader an ingenious conjecture, which aims at explaining this, by a simile borrowed from art, and supposes the reading possibly might be, ἓν τόρευμά τι δόξης· *i. e.* That the face of the heavens to appearance is as one entire piece of carved work, one grand sphere, most perfectly turned, and most beautifully engraven, the difficulty of whose workmanship is known to increase, according to the bulk of the thing intended to be perfected. If Phidias then would find it difficult to turn a little sphere *toreuma cæli*, (Mart. lib. iv. 39.) of some few feet in diameter only, what an idea must it raise of the great Creator of the universe, whose sphere is infinite in height and breadth, and yet smoothed to the greatest exactness? And, indeed, considering the philosophy of those times when our author wrote, the description here given of the face of the heavens, taken in this light, carries in it something sublime and noble, and even poetical too, as being the exact picture of nature. If to this we add, that *toreuma* was a term of art frequent in Egypt, when the Greek language was in use there, it may seem not improbable that the translator of this work, who resided there so long, might borrow it from thence.

Ver. 2. *The sun when it appeareth, declaring at his rising a marvellous instrument, the work of the Most High.*] Ἥλιος ἐν ὀπτασίᾳ διαγγέλλων ἐν ἐξόδῳ, σκεῦος θαυμαστὸν ἔργον ὑψίστου. The Geneva version here is much clearer, *The sun also, a marvellous instrument, when it appeareth, declareth at his going out the work of the Most High; i. e.* The very first sight of the sun (so ὀπτασία is used ver. 16.) in the morning, is an evidence of its being the work of God, and a wonderful instrument in his hand, which the sun itself is a farther evidence of at his noonday height, ἐν μεσημβρίᾳ αὐτοῦ, (ver. 3.) by his powerful effects upon the earth. As ὀπτασία hath been thought sufficiently expressive without ἔξοδος, and διαγγέλλων seems to require and usually has something after it, some have been induced to attempt an alteration here. Drusius seems to like ἐνδόξῳ, *sol in aspectu glorioso.* Grotius, ἐν ἐνδόξῳ, *sol in aspectu illum gloriosum*, i. e. *Deum, annuntians*, which affords a good meaning, but does not follow from his reading. It suggests to me, I think, the true one, τὸν ἔνδοξον, *i. e.* The beautiful appearance of the sun proclaimeth *the Glorious One;* which is lofty and

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truly expressive of God. Bossuet, Junius, and Drusius, seem to favour this explication. The allusion in this verse to Psal. xix. is plainly discernible.

Ver. 4. *A man blowing a furnace is in works of heat, but the sun burneth the mountains three times more: breathing out fiery vapours, and sending forth bright beams, it dimmeth the eyes.* Ver. 5. *Great is the Lord that made it, and at his commandment it runneth hastily.*] If we change the point, there may be another sense given of the place besides that in our version; *viz.* That the sun himself bloweth up a furnace, or containeth a heat three times more intense than that in iron works, or other works of metals; meaning, that extreme heat which is in the region or body of the sun itself, from whence issue those fiery vapours here mentioned, as was the prevailing opinion in the early times of science. Hence too proceed those harmless and bright beams which warm and cherish the earth, which contribute to vision, and please and entertain the organ of it, unless poured on it in too great abundance. Of this great body, this globe of fire, the wise man observes, that it is as obsequious to its Maker's will, as the meanest and most inconsiderable of his creatures, and continues his constant daily course, in the manner appointed, with incredible swiftness; for I think κατέσπευσε, which is read by the Syr. Vulg. and the three principal Greek editions, means here no extraordinary acceleration, but the constant speed of the sun. It might be translated, *and by his commandment maketh* his *progress speedy*. Some copies have κατέπαυσε πορείαν, *sedavit iter*, as Junius renders, and as the marginal reading is, alluding probably to the sun's standing still in the time of Joshua. (Josh. x. 13.)

Ver. 6. *He made the moon also to serve in her season, for a declaration of times, and a sign of the world.*] Καὶ σελήνην ἐποίησε εἰς στάσιν, εἰς καιρὸν αὐτῆς, ἀνάδειξιν χρόνων, καὶ σημεῖον αἰῶνος. Thus the Psalmist, *He appointed the moon for certain seasons*, εἰς καιρούς, (Psal. civ. 19.) εἰς στάσιν, may signify to be *in her station*, to be in waiting. Dr. Grabe has ἐν στάσει. The Vulgate renders, *Luna in omnibus in tempore suo*, from some copies which have ἡ σελήνη ἐν πᾶσιν, κ. τ. λ. which reading indeed hath more authority than the present, but affords no good or determinate sense. The great difference that occurs in the first part of the verse I suspect is owing to the astronomical word φάσις, not generally understood, and here most probably made use of; and that the following, which is a reading betwixt the Vatican and Alexandrian MS. and approaching to both, is the true one, καὶ ἡ σελήνη ἐν φάσει εἰς καιρὸν αὐτῆς, and then putting ἀνάδειξις for ἀνάδειξιν, as Grabe has it, the whole will be clear; *viz.* And the moon is in her phase according to her seasons (*i. e.* has a different phase to every different day of her monthly course), a proof of times, and a sign of age, or a perpetual sign. Her change of appearance marking out the lesser portions of time, and her periods or revolutions the greater. It is plain from this place, as likewise from Josephus and Philo, says Calmet, that the Jews made use of the Grecian year, as to religious matters and ceremonies, after the time of Alexander the Great; *i. e.* their year was solar, and their months lunar.

Ver. 7. *From the moon is the sign of feasts, a light that decreaseth in her perfection.*] The first part seems wrongly translated; the Greek is, ἀπὸ σελήνης σημεῖον ἑορτῆς, *from the moon is the sign of the feast*, i. e. the feast of the new moon. The first phasis or appearance of the moon was of great importance in the Jewish religion; as God commanded that the new moon should be a festival, and that they should offer up a particular sacrifice to him on that day. (Numb. xxviii.) It is no wonder that the Jews took such care to discover this new moon at its very first emerging, and that even the great Sanhedrin should be concerned in declaring and fixing it, since both the civil and religious parts of the Jewish calendar depended upon it; and for their better help herein, they had pictures, or similitudes, of the moon in tables, and upon the walls of their upper rooms, from which they judged of the several appearances of the new moon. Nor is the latter part more accurately translated; it should either be *a light that decreaseth upon her perfection*, for so ἐπὶ signifies here; or, *a light lessening till it is out*, or to its end, and so the Geneva version has it: συντέλεια is used thus, Matt. xiii. for when the moon is at the full, and her whole disk luminous, which may be called her perfection, her light after that diminishes, and she returns through the same figures to her first crescent, and then she re-enters the rays of the sun.

Ver. 8. *The month is called after her name, increasing wonderfully in her changing.*] This holds true with respect to the Greek tongue, which to us now is the only original of this work: μὴν, the *month*, seems a contraction from Μήνη, the *moon*, and in our English language, the words *moon* and *month* have as near an affinity. But this was not so to an ancient Israelite; for the respective words for moon and month, in the Hebrew, have no such affinity to each other. Without doubt, the true reading here is, Μήνη κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς ἐστιν; for not the month, but the moon is wonderful, and therefore αὐξανομένη, which the Roman edition hath, is better than αὐξανόμενος, which the Complut. and Alex. have, which Grotius absurdly refers to φωστὴρ, though αὐτῆς comes between. It is the moon, which, according to her name, increases wonderfully in her change; for in what sense can this be said of a month? but the Hebrew word ירח *luna*, agrees with this sense, as being derived probably either from רחב *dilatari*, or ארך *protrahere*; *i. e.* her orb widens, or is drawn forth wonderfully from her birth or appearance, for so the moon appears from the time she is new till she is full, when she may be said to be at her full drawing out, or maturity. And, therefore, what expresses or alludes to her manner of spreading or drawing out to that time of maturity, should be a very proper and most significant name for her, she being after her full in a kind of dying state, shrinking in, or ceasing to be continually, what she was before; from being *immensa orbe pleno*, she becomes *repente nulla*, as Pliny describes her change. (Lib. ii. cap. 9.) Horace seems to confirm this, Epist. 12. lib. i. The astronomical account of this is,—when the moon is before the sun, she is as it were swallowed up in his rays; but as soon as she begins to separate from him, her crescent begins to shew itself, and to increase through its different phases insensibly, till at last her whole disk becomes luminous.

Being an instrument of the armies above, shining in the firmament of heaven.] Σκεῦος παρεμβολῶν ἐν ὕψει· Syriac seems to understand it, An instrument of the camps or armies of the Most High, as if it had been τοῦ ἐν ὑψίστοις. Arabic has, *Lux omnium creaturarum*. Grotius understands it an instrument on high of camps or armies. And, indeed,

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Polybius makes the knowledge of the moon's rising and changes a very considerable skill, and necessary to a general. (Lib. ix. p. 554. ed. Casaub.) But would it not be more intelligible, and agreeable to the nature of the moon, if, as has been ingeniously conjectured, the reading was, σκεῦος παρεμβαλὸν ἐν ὕψει, *an orb encamping up and down in the heavens? i. e.* having more than any of the heavenly bodies, a variable and irregular course, as those that dwell in tents have, and as the children of Israel had in their several encampments in the wilderness. And there is the more reason to fix this idea of irregular wandering to παρεμβάλλω, as, in Numb. xxxiii. where the frequent encampments of the children of Israel are described, it occurs above forty times in this sense; and it is remarkable, that Numb. xxxii. 13. Josh. xiv. 10. Psal. cvii. 40. this vague and unsettled abode is called *wandering;* may not therefore the moon, who is styled *vaga luna,* by Horace, (Sat. viii. lib. i.) be called here σκεῦος παρεμβαλὸν in this respect? The Geneva version seems to glance at this sense.

Ver. 9. *The beauty of heaven, the glory of the stars, an ornament giving light in the highest place of the Lord.*] Κόσμος φωτίζων ἐν ὑψίστοις Κυρίου. This is generally understood of the moon, which is called by Horace, "Lucidum cæli decus," and according to the Vatican, which has κύριος, she is farther the sovereign of the luminaries on high, as the same poet likewise styles her, "siderum regina," and perhaps so termed Jer. vii. 18. But as the moon has been sufficiently described in the three foregoing verses, I rather incline, with Messieurs of Port-Royal, Junius, and others, to understand this verse of the stars,—that their glory is the beauty of heaven. And thus the Geneva version more clearly and explicitly, *The beauty of heaven are the glorious stars, and the ornament that shineth in the high places of the Lord.* Κόσμος φωτίζων is but indifferently rendered *an ornament giving light,* a *world of lights* would be a more lofty expression, or, *which from on high enlighten* κόσμον, *the world,* as the Vulgate renders here. Of these it is observed, in the next verse, that they stand κατὰ κρίμα, *according to appointment,* or *continue in their order,* as the Geneva version has it. *Prout statutum est eis, perseverant, et in cursu suo non mutantur.* (Arab.) As the Hebrew uses the future for what is usual, *will* might be left out there. Baruch, iii. 34. finely expresses this, *The stars shine in their watches, and rejoice; when he calleth them, they say, Here we be, and so with cheerfulness they shew light unto him that made them.*

Ver. 11. *Look upon the rainbow, and praise him that made it, very beautiful it is in the brightness thereof.* Ver. 12. *It compasseth the heavens about with a glorious circle, and the hands of the Most High have bended it.*] The tradition of antiquity concerning the rainbow is very pretty: for Iris, which is the name of the rainbow, is said to be the daughter of Thaumas, *i. e.* the daughter of wonder. (Hes. Theogon.) And very just is this mythology; for how does that glorious phenomenon at once fill our eyes with wonder and our hearts with joyful assurance, not only upon account of the agreeable variety of its mixed colours, but as it is a natural sign that there will not be much rain after it appeareth; and so is an emblem of hope, and a significant assurance against a second deluge, and therefore by some properly styled the sacramental sign of the rainbow. Homer seems to have had the same notion, that the rainbow was at first set in the cloud to be a sign unto men, τέρας μερόπων ἀνθρώπων. (Il. λ.) The wise man here properly observes, that the admirable form and composition of this glorious bow should not only naturally excite curiosity, but carry a man beyond the material or natural cause to the final, and induce him to praise the Maker of it. It may be asked, how God can be said to have made the rainbow, since it is only the effect of certain reflections and refractions of the rays of the sun from a watery cloud. But to this the answer is obvious; for if there was no rainbow till God entered into covenant with Noah, as the learned with great probability think, then, when God first placed this bow in the clouds, and appointed it to be a signal of that covenant, may he very justly be said to have made it, by making it then first to be seen and to be significant. And therefore (Gen. ix. 13.) God expressly calls it *his* bow, not only because he is the author of all things which have natural causes, but because he made or appointed it to a special end, as an assurance of his future mercy to mankind; and on this account it is called by the Psalmist, the *faithful witness in heaven.* (Psal. lxxxix. 36.) Or may not ver. 12. be understood of the outward form of the universe, the whole of which God has included in one vast circumambient circle, though only one half is discernible by us? Corn. a Lapide, with some other interpreters, take it in this sense.

Ver. 13. *And sendeth swiftly the lightnings of his judgment.* Ver. 14. *Through this the treasures are opened, and clouds fly forth as fowls.*] *Fulgetra pro judicio suo concitat, i. e.* according to his will and appointment. Or, it may mean, that he makes the lightning the minister of his vengeance, or the forerunner of his judgments, as against the Sodomites, Egyptians, Philistines, Sisera, Sennacherib, &c. and for this purpose, or for the execution of his judgments, he opens his treasures, (Deut. xxviii. 12.) or prepares the great artillery of heaven, *viz.* either the winds to raise storms and tempests, or he bringeth forth the clouds from the ends of the world, (Psal. cxxxv. 7.) which assemble and come speedily together, like a flight of birds, and descend either in a deluge of rain, or fall in snow, which comes down so thick as to resemble not merely birds in their passage, but rather a cloud of locusts, marching terribly from one country to another; for so the latter part of ver. 17. should be rendered, which relates to the same subject; or, by his power he condenses the clouds, and from thence hailstones break or burst forth like so many shivers of a rock, (see Wisd. v. 22.) as ver. 15. should be rendered and understood; and of these the Psalmist speaks, when he says, that God *casteth forth his ice like morsels,* Psal. cxlvii. (See De Muis, in loc.)

Ver. 16. *At his sight the mountains are shaken.*] The Vulgate renders *in conspectu ejus, i. e.* before him, which conveys a most grand idea. This seems to exceed that much-admired description of Virgil, "Ille flagranti aut Atho aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo dejicit:" (Georg. lib. i.) for what must we think of that omnipotent Being, who looks the mountains into fear and astonishment? Virgil's Jupiter wields his thunderbolt, and he beats down a mountain; Jehovah appears only, and at the sight of him the foundations of the mountains are tossed to and fro, tremble and shake like the joints of an affrighted man; but that sublime description of the Psalmist exceeds even this, *The earth shall tremble at the look of him; if he do but touch the hills, they shall smoke;* (Psal. civ. 32.) not a single rock only or

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mountain trembles before him, but the whole earth is in a panic at his very appearance.

Ver. 17. *The noise of the thunder maketh the earth to tremble,* &c.] The description of his thunder here is no less magnificent and terrible than that of his appearance in the former verse. God sends forth this his glorious voice, the earth echoes, groans, falls in labour, and feels the pangs of one in travail; for so the Greek literally signifies, and the margin well expresses it. We meet something like this in the poet's lofty description of a tempest,

> " Ipse pater, media nimborum in nocte, corusca
> Fulmina molitur dextra, quo maxima motu
> Terra tremit." (Georg. lib. i.)

Here again the majesty of the Scripture language excels, for when the Highest thunders, he does but shew his voice, and the earth melts away. (Psal. xlvi. 6.) It is observable, that our author here ascribes to the north wind and hurricane, the same effect which he does to the thunder itself, whose roar they imitate.

Ver. 19. *The hoar-frost also as salt he poureth on the earth; and being congealed, it lieth on the top of sharp stakes.*] This seems not well translated, the marginal reading is preferable, *It is as the point of sharp stakes, fit similis palorum summitatibus; i. e.* it has the form of sharp points. The hoar-frost, Psal. cxlvii. 16. is compared to ashes, but its resemblance to salt seems more expressive, as it has something sparkling in it, and its whiteness is more conspicuous. Calmet says, not every species of salt, but marle, or the salt of the earth, is here meant, to which our Saviour alludes, Matt. v. 13.

Ver. 20. *When the cold north wind bloweth, and the water is congealed into ice, it abideth upon every gathering together of water, and clotheth the water as with a breast-plate.* Ver. 21. *It devoureth the mountains, and burneth the wilderness, and consumeth the grass, as fire.*] The first part is not well rendered; it should be, The cold north wind bloweth, and ice shall be crusted upon the water, even rivers and large pieces of water shall thereby become solid, and as it were dry land, resisting any impression. The wise man here ascribes the same effects to bleak winds and frost, as, ver. 3, 4. he does to the heat of the sun, which, though contraries, in this respect affect the earth alike. The description here is very poetical. Virgil, speaking of the effect of extreme cold, says, " Boreæ penetrabile frigus adurit;" (Georg. lib. i.) and naturalists and philosophers express themselves in like manner. The sublimity of sentiments in this chapter is truly admirable, and the beauty of the comparisons from ver. 10. inexpressible: we cannot read them without a sort of rapture, nor help thinking that one who in loftiness of thought and expression approaches so near to the inspired writings, and soars to such an uncommon height, must have had a more excellent spirit in him, than is usually allowed to him or the times he wrote in.

Ver. 22. *A present remedy of all is a mist coming speedily: a dew coming after heat refresheth.*] In ver. 19, 20. we have intense frost represented terribly, as an armed man with a spear and shield; the icicles have the appearance of the former, and the solid ice composes the latter: and yet this body so fortified, and secured as it were with a coat of mail, a gentle rain, or a warm mist, or a mild breeze, *Eurus caloris,* as the Chaldee renders Psal. cxlvii. 18. shall effectually vanquish and subdue; a contest seemingly as unequal as that of David with a sling against the Philistine and his shield. Such an agreeable change of weather after a severe season, is as welcome and refreshing as a balmy dew after a scorching heat; it restores the decayed verdure and lost beauty of nature, and renews the face of the earth.

Ver. 23. *By his counsel he appeaseth the deep, and planteth islands therein.*] It would be better rendered, By his word he appeaseth the storm, and maketh the sea calm. And thus Calmet, *Par sa parole la mer s'est calmée.* This was remarkably evidenced under the Old Testament, Jonah i. when the tempestuous sea, which the mariners' cries and prayers to their false deities could not assuage, at the command of the great God of heaven, to whom at length they happily applied, instantly ceased from raging. But the Divine power over that unruly element never appeared more signally, than when our Saviour said to it, *Peace, be still; and immediately there was a great calm.* (Mark iv. 39.) The reading of the next clause in some ancient Greek copies is very surprising, καὶ ἐφύτευσεν αὐτὴν Ιησοῦς, and from thence some Latin ones have, *plantavit eam Dominus Jesus;* and Coverdale renders accordingly. If this reading was true, this author, however late or apocryphal, saw more clearly than all the acknowledged prophets of the Old Testament, for we have here expressly the very name of the Messiah, which none of them were acquainted with or published. But this is a gross mistake, and such as a Jew would make sport with; the true reading undoubtedly is, ἐφύτευσεν ἐν αὐτῇ νήσους, which our translators follow. The sense is, That God has planted large islands in the bosom of the sea, standing, as the antediluvian earth itself is described, 2 Pet. iii. 5. out of the water and in the water; which, notwithstanding the violence of storms and tempests, and the force and impetuosity of the waves, have subsisted numberless ages, and have escaped perishing by being overflowed with water; which in some respects have the advantage of the continent, as by their situation they have the opportunity of a freer commerce, and are less subject to hostile attacks, and to be surprised on a sudden by invasions.

Ver. 26. *By him the end of them hath prosperous success, and by his word all things consist.*] Δι' αὐτὸν εὐοδία τέλος αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν λόγῳ αὐτοῦ σύγκειται πάντα, *i. e.* God by his wisdom and power directs all things to a good or their proper end; so the Geneva version, For all things are subject to and obey his will. Or, Through him such as go to sea have a good voyage, and trade and navigation there are attended with prosperous success. The Alexandrian and some other Greek copies have, which Junius follows, Δι' αὐτὸν εὐοδοῖ ὁ ἄγγελος αὐτοῦ· *i. e.* His angel conducts those that occupy their business in great waters, through the dangers of the deep, and brings them to the haven where they would be. Grotius's explication here seems very forced, That if the sea is calm, and in good temper, the ship, which is the sea's messenger, ἄγγελος αὐτοῦ, sails safely; but if tempestuous, at her command all things are shattered, and go to the bottom. Either of the other senses I think preferable.

Ver. 27. *We may speak much, and yet come short: wherefore in sum he is all.*] Τὸ πᾶν ἐστιν αὐτός. Here the wise man finishes the thesis, which he began xlii. 15. That God made all things by his word, and through him all things consist. And having proved this truth by a long enumeration of particulars, he says, in sum,—that God is all; *i. e.* he

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is the cause and end of all things. *Ipse est in omnibus.* (Vulgate.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* He is the soul of the universe, *l'ame de tout,* as Calmet renders. Or, His is the universe, *αὐτοῦ ἐστιν τὸ πᾶν,* as Grotius conjectures the true reading to be, *and without him was not any thing made that was made;* he gave life, being, motion, power, and perfection, suited to the several ranks of creatures, himself being all in all. The highest perfections that are in men, are so infinitely disproportionate to his, that they may be said not to be in any of his creatures. There is some kind of communicated goodness, and wisdom, and power, and immortality in men, and yet these perfections are in Scripture appropriated to the Divine nature in such a manner, as if no creature did partake of them. Accordingly it is said, that there is none good, or wise, but he; that he is the only potentate, and only hath immortality. All the different kinds of perfections that are to be found any where in his creatures, are but diminutive portions of his fulness, and inconsiderable emanations from the sovereign fountain.

Ver. 30. *When you glorify the Lord, exalt him as much as you can, for even yet he will far exceed.*] The perfections of God are infinite, and beyond the power of description or comparison, for when we have raised our notion of this infinite Being as high as is possible for the mind of man to go, it will fall infinitely short of what he really is, for there is no end of his greatness, as the great poet and philosopher experienced; who, the more he contemplated the nature of the Deity, found that he waded but the more out of his depth, and that he lost himself in the thought, instead of finding an end of it. St. Austin, intent upon celebrating the praises of God in a manner worthy of him, acknowledges his own (and it may serve to express all human) inability for that high work, in a strain peculiarly pious and sublime: "Si omnia membra nostra verterentur in linguas ad rependendum tibi debitas laudes, nequaquam sufficeret exiguitas nostra." (Meditat. cap. 15.) And a more modern light of the church falls not much beneath him, when he says, "the tongues of angels stammer in uttering of God's goodness, and we become dumb the more we endeavour to speak of it. The highest of our praises is, humbly and affectionately to acknowledge that we cannot sufficiently praise him. The farthest we can strain our souls is to long for eternity, wherein it may be our employment to admire and praise him. Call upon the armies of angels, and wish them to praise him, seeing thou canst not do it. Say as the Psalmist does, *Bless the Lord, all ye angels of his, ye servants of his, that do his pleasure.* Call upon all men, and bid them praise him: wish that thou couldest awaken all the world, that all creatures might jointly praise him. And particularly call upon thine own soul, every day to praise him. Psal. ciii." (Patrick's Mens. Myst.) "But though words fail us in speaking of him, who is ineffable (as Messieurs of Port-Royal finely observe on the last verse), yet, as we are capable, so should we be never tired of loving him, as it is the life of the soul, the source of peace and joy. For this reason the wise man concludes this sublime chapter with saying, that to the godly he hath given wisdom; not to those who aim at mere knowledge to understand or comprehend mysteries, but to those who live piously, and whose humble faith operates by love. For this life is not for speculation, but action; and our light should be accompanied with an active fire. It is by the heart that we approach, and by a pure heart that we must hope to see God, and not by an elevated genius or superior understanding in the way of human wisdom."

CHAP. XLIV.

Ver. 1. *LET us now praise famous men and our fathers that begat us.* Ver. 2. *The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through his great power from the beginning.*] The author having finished his precepts of morality and fine reflections for the conduct of life, and the several conditions of it, explained God's works in heaven and earth, and set forth the praises of the great Creator of them, the fountain of wisdom and of all perfection, in a very sublime manner, though the most sublime cannot reach or equal them; his *epilogus* is a hymn to God, containing the praises of his saints, and of such Jewish worthies in particular, as he had blessed their nation with, men famous in their several generations, and instances of those virtues taught and recommended by him; which reaches from hence almost to the end of the fiftieth chapter. Serug, mentioned Gen. xi. 20. was the first, according to Suidas, that began annually to celebrate the memory of famous men deceased, and commanded them to be honoured as benefactors. The heathens had their anniversary festivals to commemorate their wise men and philosophers, to recommend, by their example, wisdom and virtue. The Jews also had their set times wherein they honoured the memories of their progenitors, prophets, and holy men, and recited their praises in the temple and synagogues; and this writer here acquaints us with their *formula,* or manner of doing it. The Christian church after, in imitation of this practice, appointed certain anniversaries, which they called the birthdays of their martyrs, on which, from the public rolls, or diptychs, they rehearsed at the altar their glorious acts, to do justice to departed merit, and to excite an emulation in others of those by whom the Lord *hath gotten,* ἐκτήσατο, as Grotius reads, ver. 2. to himself great renown.

Ver. 5. *Such as found out musical tunes and recited verses in writing.* Ver. 6. *Rich men, furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations.* Ver. 7. *All these were honoured in their generations.*] Such was David, whose harp was strung and breast inspired by the Spirit of God, which dispersed melancholy, and administered comfort to him through the various scenes of affliction he underwent, which he often calls upon to awaken, on solemn occasions, to chant the praises of his mighty Deliverer. Such were the bards and poets of old, who sang in tuneful numbers, and with the voice of melody, whatever philosophy dictated of God, of nature, of the creation of the world, the motion of the stars, and the great and illustrious actions of heroes and benefactors. Such also were the inventors and promoters of useful arts and sciences, and the religious founders of schools and synagogues, whose fortunes and power were employed in public acts of beneficence and to serve the cause of virtue: these were deservedly esteemed, emphatically, *viri nominis,* ἄνδρες ὀνομαστοὶ, (ver. 3.) On the contrary, those who were of no service in life, only merely existed, were *sine nomine turba,—men of no name,* as the Hebrew terms them, Job xxx. 8. As they were of no account, they were overlooked and disregarded; and for this

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reason probably it was, that the Scripture makes no mention of the time that Cain or either of his sons lived, as it does of the godly.

Ver. 8. *There be of them that have left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported.* Ver. 9. *And some there be which have no memorial, who are perished as though they had never been.*] The glory of such was not confined to their single persons; but their posterity, treading in their steps, (see ὄνομα used in this sense, Deut. xxv. 7.) by their actions renewed the memory, and added to the glory, of their fathers. Abraham was not less distinguished by the merit of Isaac and Jacob than by his own: the patriarchs too had a numerous and illustrious posterity: in them their name survived, and their praise flourished with them. But others, as well in early as later times, either being evil themselves, or for want of posterity, or through descendants tainted as it were with hereditary wickedness, have been insensibly forgot, or remembered with disgrace.

Ver. 11. *With their seed shall continually remain a good inheritance, and their children are within the covenant.*] Some copies have διαμένει; and so the Vulgate, *Cum semine eorum permanent bona.* As applied to the Israelites, the sense is, Their posterity enjoy a rich inheritance, they are sons of the covenant, and heirs of the promises made to the fathers, and by virtue thereof have possessed the land of Canaan for numberless ages: this covenant shall be perpetuated to their children, and their seed shall never be extinct, nor their glory be blotted out. It may also be understood in a general sense, that the generation of the righteous shall be blessed, as being ever mindful of God's covenant; riches and plenteousness shall be in his house, and his seed shall be mighty upon earth, and continue long in glory therein. (Psal. cxii.)

Ver. 16. *Enoch pleased the Lord, and was translated, being an example of repentance to all generations.*] When, or to what place he was translated, is not said; but, according to the Vulgate, it was into Paradise. (See note on Wisd. iv. 10.) It is probable he was translated in some such visible extraordinary manner as Elijah afterward was, and that God, besides bestowing a reward on his righteousness, did this to comfort mankind in their state of mortality, with the hopes of a better life, and made him a living testimony of the immortality of souls and bodies. The tradition of Jews and Christians is, that Enoch is still alive, and that he shall come with Elias before the last judgment to encounter antichrist; and in this sense Apoc. xi. 3. is generally understood. Bossuet, accordingly, understands the latter clause of his personal appearance with that prophet in the last times, to turn the hearts of the disobedient, and to give repentance unto the nations, as the Vulgate has it, or ταῖς γενεαῖς, *to the generations then in being;* for *all* is neither in the Greek nor Vulgate. As we meet with no account in Scripture of Enoch's sinning or repentance, it seems better to understand ὑπόδειγμα μετανοίας of his exhorting the people that shall *then* be alive, by his words and example, to a speedy repentance, to prepare for the approaching judgment, and to resist the power of antichrist.

Ver. 17. *Noah was found perfect and righteous in the time of wrath; he was taken in exchange for the world: therefore was he left as a remnant unto the earth, when the flood came.*] He is said to be perfect in his generation, (Gen. vi. 9.) *i. e.* with respect to all others of his time. The first sentence seems wrongly pointed; it should run thus, *Noah was found perfect and righteous, in the time of wrath he was taken in exchange* [*for the world*]. The words in the parentheses are not in the Greek. It looks, according to our version, as if Noah was the sufferer, and the rest of the world excused, as was indeed the case with the holy Jesus, who might properly be said to be *taken in exchange for the world;* but the case was otherwise with Noah. Ἀντάλλαγμα is here to be understood in the sense of ἐξίλασμα, by which the LXX. mean a ransom or propitiation, *pretium redemptionis.* At the time of the deluge, ἐγένετο ἀντάλλαγμα, there was a redemption; Noah and his family were preserved from the general destruction, and he himself was the ἀντάλλαγμα. This seems to be the meaning of the Vulgate, *in tempore iracundiæ factus est reconciliatio.* But how was Noah a propitiation or a reconciliation? His goodness probably was the cause or motive of God's delivering his family, his righteousness was the means, or reason of a remnant being saved, διὰ τοῦτο ἐγενήθη κατάλειμμα τῇ γῇ *i. e.* Upon the score or account of his being accepted, there was a remnant left or preserved to the earth; *viz.* eight souls were saved by water, (1 Pet. iii. 20.) διεσώθησαν δι' ὕδατος, *escaped out of the water,* ὅτε ἐγένετο ὁ κατακλυσμός, for so the Vulgate and Alexandrian copy and MS. mentioned by Drusius have, with which our version agrees, and not διὰ τοῦτο, which perplexes the sense.

Ver. 18. *An everlasting covenant was made with him, that all flesh should perish no more by the flood.*] *By a flood.* To secure mankind from the danger of another deluge, God promised that there should not be any more a like flood to destroy the earth, and the rainbow was the visible token of the covenant between him and all flesh. (Gen. ix. 11.) What our translators render *an everlasting covenant,* in the Greek is, διαθῆκαι αἰῶνος, *testamenta sæculi,* Vulgate; *i. e.* The covenant of the age was given him; for Noah was the father of the age, and had the covenant of the age after the flood, in like manner as Christ was the father, and brought in the new covenant of the succeeding age. (See Bishop Sherlock on Prophecy, disc. 4.) This covenant with Noah and his seed, and with every living creature, was, *That while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease;* and it is expressly called *his covenant of day and night,* Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21. and to this covenant the Psalmist is thought to allude, Psal. xxxvi. 5, 6.

Ver. 19. *Abraham was a great father of many people, in glory was there none like unto him.*] The succession in the house of Abraham was preserved in single persons till Jacob's time; but Abraham then first began to be the father of many nations, when Jacob, being near his end, appointed twelve rulers to govern the house of Israel, whose tribes were called nations, and their heads princes. This was implied in the change of his name from Abram, *i. e.* a high father, to Abraham, which imports the father of a multitude. *In glory there was none like him,* as he had the singular honour, for the excellency of his faith, to be called the friend of God, and of becoming the head of the chosen seed, the spiritual parent of all families, or members of God's church, with whom he entered into an everlasting covenant, in and by him, the father of the Messiah, and a pattern to all believers. And to his personal faith,

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and that of his immediate descendants, God had such a regard, that he is not ashamed to call himself often in Scripture by the name of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. With this patriarch God was pleased to discourse familiarly. (See Gen. xviii.) And all antiquity has believed, that it was the Logos himself, who, appearing under a human shape, did, as it were, give him a specimen of his incarnation. The Word, I say, is generally supposed to be one of the three angels which appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre, and promised him that he would one day be born of his posterity. Abraham worshipped him, and acknowledged him to be the Almighty God, and this discourse transported him with joy. And perhaps it is to this famous appearance of his that Jesus Christ alludes in the gospel, when he says, *your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.* (John viii. 56.)

Ver. 20. *Who kept the law of the Most High, and was in covenant with him: he established the covenant in his flesh, and when he was proved he was found faithful.* Ver. 21. *Therefore he assured him by an oath, that he would bless the nations in his seed, and multiply him as the dust of the earth.*] The covenant on God's part was, that he would multiply his seed, and make it great, and give him the land of Canaan, from the river in Egypt to the great river Euphrates, and that the nations, or all families of the earth, should be blessed in his seed. And the token or seal of this covenant was, the rite of circumcision, the mark of which was to be in the flesh of his family and descendants. This distinguished the Hebrews from other nations, and they gloried in this sign, calling other people *the uncircumcised*, by way of contempt. Covenants, or alliances, were usually engraven on tables of marble or stone; sometimes public monuments were erected in memory of them, or they were transacted before witnesses, who were to transmit them down to posterity. But with respect to the Jews, God was pleased that the mark of his covenant with them should remain for ever, not on brass or stone, but on the body of him with whom the covenant was made, and on those of his descendants; and that no one might be dispensed with in this point, he threatens to cut off the uncircumcised person as a violator of his covenant. It was customary among the eastern nations to mark or stigmatize themselves, as a token of their being devoted to some particular deity; this usage was in practice before Abraham's time, or, which seems more probable, was done in imitation of him. (See Calmet's Dissert. on Circumcision.) Most certain it is, their design in so doing was the same with his; *viz.* as a solemn and indelible mark of their being dedicated to some particular god. Hence they who were consecrated to Bacchus were distinguished by an ivy-leaf wrought in their flesh, 2 Macc. vi. 7. and hence the votaries of the Syrian goddess were burnt, some on the wrists, and others in the neck. (Lucian de Dea Syria.) From this procedure of God with his favourite people, this useful reflection offers itself,—that as our knowledge and obedience to him increase, so do likewise his favour, and the testimonies of that favour. At the beginning of the friendship between God and Abraham, he only made him a promise; (Gen. xii. 1—3.) but in process of time, when love was increased between them, this promise became a covenant, when he and his received the token of circumcision. (Gen. xvii.) But when he had walked longer with God, and had perfected his obedience, by offering up his only son, then God confirmed the covenant by an oath, and sware by himself that he would do what he had promised and sealed. (Gen. xxii.) And thus God deals with his servants now; at their first entrance into his family, he gives them many promises, which depend upon conditions, and afterward he renews the covenant with them, and does farther ascertain them of his favour, but still on terms of perseverance; and at length he swears unalterably, when they have given repeated proof of their obedience to him, that he will not take away his mercies nor his loving-kindness from them.

Ver. 22. *With Isaac did he likewise establish [for Abraham his father's sake] the blessing of all men, and the covenant.*] Isaac was the heir of his father, and of the blessings promised to him; for God renewed the same promise to Isaac, which he had made before to his father Abraham. By *the blessing of all men*, we are to understand the promise made to Abraham, that in his seed, *i. e.* the Messiah, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. (Gen. xii. 3. xvii. 19.) The other part of the blessing, which is here rightly distinguished into two parts, this writer calls *the covenant*, intimating hereby the covenant made with Abraham, to give him the land of Canaan, (Gen. xv. 18.) And both these parts of the blessing were given to Isaac for Abraham's sake. These two promises went inseparably together from the beginning, and were continued in some degree to the end. (See Bishop Sherlock, dissert. 3.) This covenant, or rather God's oath, ὁρκισμὸς, as the LXX. render, with the promises made by successive prophets, was the ground of hope of the blessings expected by the Jews both before and in our Saviour's time.

Ver. 23. *And made it rest upon the head of Jacob. He acknowledged him in his blessing, and gave him a heritage, and divided his portions, among the twelve tribes did he part them.*] As God designed that Jacob should be an inheritor of the promise, and as he had obtained the blessing from his father, through his permission, so God himself confirmed it, and renewed the promise to him which before he had made to his grandfather Abraham, and his father Isaac, and rested the whole blessing entire upon Jacob also, and, as the Greek should be rendered, gave it to him in heritage, ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ἐν κληρονομίᾳ. Thus far the entire blessing and all the parts of it were vested in single persons only; but the next words contain an alteration, for God divided Jacob's portions among the twelve tribes, διέστειλε μερίδας αὐτοῦ, *i. e.* he *separated*, as it should be rendered, the parts of the blessing. When the blessing came to descend to Jacob's children, it did not go entire according to birthright, nor to any one person who had deserved it better than the rest; but as God at first made the promise and covenant to Abraham, not to Lot, and gave the title to it afterward to Isaac, not to Ishmael; then to Jacob, not to Esau; so, in the next generation, he conveyed it entire to no one single person, but divided it, and gave the blessing of all men to Judah, who was Jacob's fourth son, and parted the covenant about Canaan amongst all of them, giving to Joseph, in his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, two parts of it. (See Shuckford's Connex. vol. ii.) A very learned writer observes on this passage, that it undoubtedly relates to the settlement and the bless-

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ing of the tribes of Jacob, in the forty-eighth and forty-ninth chapters of Genesis; and it shews us, that the several blessings given to the several tribes, are but parts or portions of the blessing which Jacob received from Isaac, Isaac from Abraham, and Abraham immediately from God. And in this view the several blessings mentioned Gen. xlix. and limited to the several tribes, may be considered as an exposition of the original blessing given to Abraham. And indeed Gen. xlix. which is commonly called Jacob's blessing of his sons, might as well be called Jacob's appointment of twelve rulers or princes to govern the house of Israel. (See Bishop Sherlock, dissert. 3.)

CHAP. XLV.

Ver. 1. *MOSES, beloved of God and men, whose memorial is blessed.*] The Jews, when they make mention of any of their deceased worthies, do it with this encomium, *Let his memory be blessed!* or, *Be his memory blessed to eternity!* (See xlvi. 11. 1 Macc. iii. 7.) Ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτοῦ εἰς εὐλογίαν. *Let his* [Judas Maccabeus] *memorial be blessed for ever.* But what is the meaning of this form? In what sense is the memory of the righteous εἰς εὐλογίαν, or *with blessing?* The LXX. translation of Prov. x. 7. from whence this form of honourable remembrance seems to be taken, will explain it, for they, instead of the words, *The memory of the righteous is blessed,* or *with blessing,* have μνήμη δικαίων μετ' ἐγκωμίων, *The memory of the righteous is with praises.* To make mention, therefore, of the righteous by way of benediction, or with blessing, is to praise them. (See Mede's Works, lib. i. disc. 22.) Instances of this sort of blessing, are the anniversary remembrances of the martyrs and saints departed, in the primitive times; the appointing of festival-days for their memorial; the assembling at their sepulchres, and making panegyric orations in honour of them; and, above all, that ancient and so long continued custom, to commemorate at the holy table, when the eucharist was celebrated, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors; all which commemorations tended to this, that the memory of the righteous might be with blessing.

Ver. 2. *He made him like to the glorious saints, and magnified him; so that his enemies stood in fear of him.*] The whole of what is said of Moses in this and the following verses is to this effect,—that he was eminent by the wonderful appearance of God to him in the bush, and by that singular privilege of seeing the glory of God pass before him, (Exod. xxxiii.) and the revelation which God made of himself then to him; by his immediate conversation with God apparently, and without dark speeches, and the largeness as well as intimacy of the Divine communications, without the medium of dreams and visions; and by being called up to him into the dark cloud, and hearing his voice in a more particular manner, on the top of the mount, at the delivery of the law, and constituted by him legislator to his people, and made the type of the great Prophet that should come. (Deut. xviii. 15.) He was farther eminent for his own personal conduct, for his faithfulness and meekness; by the former, acquainting God's people with all his will, delivering to them laws, both religious and civil, and executing punctually all his commands; by the latter, gently leading a stubborn and refractory people through a barren wilderness forty years, and conducting them happily out of Egypt; and for the extraordinary success of his arms, warring without money, according to Philo de Præm.; and, lastly, for the power of his miracles, and the number and strangeness of them, controlling thereby the wonders, *i. e.* the false miracles, of the magicians before Pharaoh and his nobles. These are the characters by which Moses stands distinguished among the Jewish prophets; and was any that succeeded him like unto him, in all or any of these respects? The prophets that sealed the canon of the Old Testament, and probably Esdras at the head of them, in their additions, which close the book of Deuteronomy, have acknowledged, that none to their days, soon after which prophecy itself ceased, had come up to him in the above-named particulars. (Deut. xxxiv. 10.) Some have exalted Moses, not only above the patriarchs, but even above all creatures in heaven and earth, placing the very angels at the feet of this prophet. St. Cyril mentions Μωσῆν τὸν καλούμενον θεόν; (Cont. Jul. lib. i.) and Eusebius, that he was honoured among the Egyptians, τιμῆς ἰσοθέου. (Præp. Evang. lib. ix.)

Ver. 7. *An everlasting covenant he made with him, and gave him the priesthood among the people: he beautified him with comely ornaments, and clothed him with a robe of glory,* &c.] The Lord established Aaron to be his high-priest in Israel, and appointed the same dignity to his children in succession for a perpetuity, preferring his family above all the rest of the tribe of Levi: he endowed him for his inheritance with the tithes and first-fruits of holy things and with choice portions of the sacrifices, which were offered to him in the tabernacle and temple, besides other privileges and prerogatives among his people. This was God's part of the covenant in their favour. Aaron and his family on their part engaged to serve the Lord faithfully and to observe his laws and statutes, as well those given in common to his people as those which concerned them in particular, and delivered by Moses for the right discharge of their holy office. The principal obligations upon Aaron and his successors are set down ver. 15—17. following. God clothed or *blessed,* as the margin has it, his high-priest, to procure the greater reverence to him, with all the decorations and ornaments which the priests of other religions wore only single or in part; but *his* habit at once contained all their beauties. (See Spencer, de Leg. Hebr. p. 987. Lamy, App. Bibl. vol. i. cap. 8.) Hence they are called comely ornaments, the robe of honour, the perfection of glory, &c. by this writer. The beauty of holiness, displayed in the garments of the high-priest, struck even heathen princes with reverence and awe; and if the high-priest and his company had met Alexander, when he came with full purpose to destroy Jerusalem, in common attire, he would probably have been far from that respect and reverence which he shewed to them when adorned with their priestly robes and glorious garments. A very judicious writer observes, "That the wise son of Sirach, who feared God from his heart, and honoured the service that was done unto him, could not mention so much as the garment of holiness but in terms of most singular reverence and esteem; and infers, that the love which men bear to God should make the least things which are employed in his service amiable, rather than that the over-scrupulous dislike of so mean a thing as a vestment, should withdraw

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men's hearts and affections from the service of God." (Hooker's Eccles. Pol. b. v.) And in another place he adds this farther reason why this writer here, speaking of Aaron, dwells so much upon the circumstance of his priestly attire, and urges it as an argument of much dignity and greatness in him; *viz.* "That the good government either of the church or commonwealth dependeth scarcely on any one external thing so much, as on those public marks and honourable tokens whereby the estimation that governors are in is made manifest to the eyes of men. Hence princes and judges are distinguished by external honours and marks of their excellency; the former by the ornaments of sovereignty, the latter by garments of judicial authority, though the robes of either do not add to their virtue, whose chiefest ornament is justice. Hence likewise bishops, through their very attire, are marked and manifested to be such as God hath poured his blessing upon, by advancing them above others and placing them where they may do him principal service; but are more distinguished by holiness and purity of conversation than by the peculiar form of clothing which adorns them." (Ibid. b. vii.)

Ver. 10. *With a breast-plate of judgment, and with urim and thummim.*] These two words signify *light* and *perfection*, but what this *urim* and *thummim* were, is not determined; all agree, that they were something in the high-priest's breast-plate, whereby God was pleased to reveal himself when he was consulted in difficult and weighty cases that concerned the public, and were therefore a sort of oracle; but all differ about the matter of them and the manner of God's giving answer by them: nor does the Scripture any where acquaint us what this *urim* and *thummim* were, neither is there any mention of them, Exod. xxxix. where the making of all Aaron's garments is related. Most writers seem to mistake in confounding them together, and making them one and the same thing, whereas in reality they were two different oracles. Some think by *urim* and *thummim* is meant only that Divine power and virtue, given to the breast-plate of judgment in its consecration, of obtaining an oracular answer from God; and that δήλωσις καὶ ἀλήθεια, by which the LXX. translate these, or *the light and the truth*, are said to be in the ephod, because the high-priest, having this ornament on him, received from God the light and the truth which he declared to men. (See Pocock on Hos. iii. 4. Du Pin's Hist. of the Can. lib. i.) Whatever they were, God was pleased to signify his will thereby to his people when they consulted him. But how this was done is uncertain; whether by an extraordinary shining of the stones, or by inspiring the high-priest, being arrayed with the ephod, to give an answer to what was desired, or by a voice, or some other way unknown. There are some passages of holy writ, wherein, when counsel was asked by the priest, having his ephod on him and standing with his face towards the ark, the answer is introduced with *And the Lord said*, which seems to confirm the opinion of those who suppose the answer was given by an audible voice from the mercy-seat. (See Judg. i. 1, 2. xx. 18. xxiii. 18. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2. 11, 12. 2 Sam. ii. 1.)

Ver. 12. *He set a crown of gold upon the mitre, wherein was engraven* HOLINESS. Ver. 13. *Before him there were none such, neither did ever any stranger put them on, but only his children, and his children's children perpetually.*] Upon Aaron's triple crown, which like a sovereign he wore, was an inscription of the sacred name of God, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD being engraved in the golden plate upon the forehead, to intimate the high and most honourable service he was employed in, and to remind him and his successors of that superlative degree of holiness, which is the duty and lustre of the sacred function. The ornaments of the high-priest above described, which he wore on the solemn day of expiation, and other great festivals, when he officiated himself in person, were peculiar to him and his successors in that supreme dignity; no other Jew, not even their king, nor any priest of an inferior order, presumed to be so arrayed. The high-priest himself never put them on but in the temple, and that only on very extraordinary and solemn occasions. Herein was intimated, that such as officiate in holy things should be distinguished by a solemn and peculiar habit, as likewise that none should take this honour to himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Ver. 15. *Moses consecrated him and anointed him with holy oil: this was appointed unto him by an everlasting covenant, and to his seed, so long as the heavens should remain.*] Ἐπλήρωσε Μωσῆς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ. To fill the hands of the priest, in Scripture, signifies to consecrate, as it is here rightly rendered. (See Exod. xxviii. 41. Numb. iii. 3. Judg. xvii. 5.) It is a periphrasis, expressing the manner of Moses consecrating him and his sons, which he did by the following ceremonies:—1. By clothing them with a proper and particular garb and habit. (Lev. viii. 6, 7. 13.) 2. By putting into their hands parts of the victims and offerings which belonged to them, (Exod. xxix. 24. Lev. viii. 27.) and thereby giving them possession as it were of their rights. 3. By anointing them upon the head with the holy oil, and with the blood of the ram of consecration, tinging particular parts of their bodies with it, (ver. 23, 24.) This consecration and anointing of Aaron, was as a mark or seal of the alliance or covenant which God made with him and his sons, and by which he assured them of the priesthood for ever. But the priesthood of Aaron must be considered rather as a type of that of Jesus Christ, in whom, what is here said of a perpetual priesthood, was literally accomplished, (Heb. vii. 11—13.) but it is not true of the legal priesthood, which is abrogated and long since ceased.

Ver. 23. *The third in glory is Phinees the son of Eleazar, because he had zeal in the fear of the Lord. . . .* Ver. 24. *Therefore was there a covenant of peace with him.*] The meaning may either be, that Phinees was the third in glory after Moses and Aaron, or, as Bossuet understands it, the third in pontifical glory after his father Eleazar, and his grandfather Aaron. God commendeth him for his great forwardness and heat of zeal, Numb. xxv. 11. for whereas Moses and all the congregation sat weeping, or lay groveling upon the earth, sorrowing for their sin and the plague, to whose grief, especially the righteous among them, the bold lewdness of Zimri must greatly add, only Phinehas, burning with a holy indignation, thought it was no longer time to sit still and weep; but rousing himself with a very fervent zeal, made haste to execute immediate judgment upon the daring offenders: as a reward for this instance of justice and courage, a covenant of peace was made with him, which does not contain any promise to him or his family in particular, to make them prosperous, but rather extends to and includes the people: and the meaning is, that God made Phinehas the instrument of obtaining par-

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don for the sin, upon account of which the people were under his displeasure. (See Shuckford's Connex. vol. iii. p. 340.) From whence it appears, that this covenant of peace and of the priesthood, which is mentioned in the next sentence, were two distinct things; and so Philo understands it—God, says he, crowned his piety, δίτταις δωρεαῖς, εἰρήνῃ καὶ ἱερωσύνῃ.

That he should be the chief of the sanctuary, and of his people, and that he and his posterity should have the dignity of the priesthood for ever.] Dr. Grabe with great probability conjectures, that the true reading of the Greek is, προστατεῖν ἁγίων καὶ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ. (Proleg. tom. iii. cap. 4.) The Jews, before and about our Saviour's time, had a notion that Phinehas had, by God's appointment, a grant of an everlasting priesthood to him and his posterity; the author of this book seems to be of the same opinion, and so do Philo (de Vit. Mos. lib. i.) and the compiler of the first book of Maccabees, (ii. 54.) but in fact there was not such a perpetuity of the possession of the priesthood in this family. The notion of such a promise seems founded on Numb. xxv. 13. which runs thus, *He shall have it and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood.* The term *everlasting*, here joined to the priesthood, has been generally thought to express a design of a perpetual continuance of it to Phinehas's descendants, without being at any time translated into any other branch of Aaron's family, which is not true, particularly with respect to Eli, who was high-priest in the days of Samuel, for he was of the family of Ithamar, the brother of Eleazar; and therefore the priesthood went out of the hands of the descendants of Phinehas, when it came to Eli, and did not return again to them, until, after some successions, it came to Zadoc, in the days of David. The term *everlasting* is rather to be annexed to the priesthood, in its limitation to the family of Aaron, and suggests no more than that the priesthood of Aaron should descend to them. God made to Phinehas and to his seed after him, not an *everlasting grant* of the priesthood, as some have explained it, nor a grant of an *everlasting priesthood*, as our version renders it; but rather a grant of *the everlasting priesthood;* of the priesthood limited to Aaron and his descendants by that appellation. (See Shuckford's Connex. vol. iii. p. 342—344.)

Ver. 25. *According to the covenant made with David, son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah, that the inheritance of the king should be to his posterity alone; so the inheritance of Aaron should also be unto his seed.*] It is certain from Maimonides, and other Jewish writers, that, upon the demise of the king, the high-priest, or any other superior dignitary, whose function was perpetuated, the son, or the person that was next in an hereditary line, was substituted in his place; for whoever could make out a priority of blood was acknowledged thereby to have the best title to the office, rights, and privileges of the deceased, provided he could discharge his trust with wisdom, at least with a just sense and fear of God, if his wisdom was not altogether equal to his station. This they observed in pursuance of what is written, Deut. xvii. 20. *To the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.* From hence they inferred a successive right in that family, to which God chose to give the kingdom, if they continued in a constant observance of his laws. The same hereditary right likewise held in all high dignities which were in the midst of Israel, so that whoever was promoted to any such dignity, enjoyed it not only for his life natural, but also for the lives of his posterity. Selden confirms this with respect to the immediate hereditary succession of the priesthood, and that this, like the other posts of honour which were continued among them, observed the same rule of descent. Josephus remarks, that the first who broke in upon the successive right in the priesthood was Antiochus Epiphanes, who removed Jason to make way for his brother Onias. Aristobulus was the second, who supplanted Hyrcanus; and Herod was the third, who deposed Ananel to make room for a boy high-priest. (Antiq. lib. xv. cap. 3.) We have in this verse a manifest comparison between the *regale* and *pontificat;* the regal and sacerdotal family agreed both in this point, that the inheritance was fixed in the male line, and went according to proximity, or rather priority of blood, and in both the succession was endangered by disobedience to God's commands. The reading of the Greek here is perplexed and obscure in all the editions, nor do the versions give much light to it: Καὶ διαθήκην τῷ Δαυὶδ υἱῷ ἐκ φυλῆς Ἰούδα· κληρονομία βασιλέως υἱοῦ ἐξ υἱοῦ μόνου· κληρονομία Ἀαρὼν καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ. I would rather read with Dr. Grabe, Κατὰ διαθήκην τῷ Δαυὶδ, υἱῷ Ἰεσσαὶ ἐκ φυλῆς Ἰούδα, κληρονομίας βασιλέως, υἱοῦ ἐξ υἱοῦ μόνου, κ. τ. λ. Or rather thus, as many copies omit Ἰεσσαὶ, Κατὰ διαθήκην τῷ Δαυὶδ, υἱῷ ἐκ φυλῆς Ἰούδα κληρονομία βασιλέως, υἱῷ ἐξ υἱοῦ μόνῳ κληρονομία Ἀαρὼν, καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ· *i. e.* According to the covenant made with David, that as the inheritance of the kingdom (in the LXX. βασιλέως is very frequently put for βασιλείας) should remain to his son of the tribe of Judah, so the inheritance of Aaron should be to the only son of his son, *i. e.* Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, and to his seed for ever. This last sense a very judicious writer prefers; (see Jackson's Works, tom. i. p. 455.) and indeed it is more agreeable to this author's opinion of Phinehas's everlasting priesthood in the foregoing verse.

Ver. 26. *God give you wisdom in your heart to judge his people in righteousness, that their good things be not abolished, and that their glory may endure for ever.*] Δῴη ὑμῖν σοφίαν ἐν καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν, κρίνειν τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἵνα μὴ ἀφανισθῇ τὰ ἀγαθὰ, καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν. The wise man concludes this chapter with a pious wish or prayer, the sense of which seems to be, May God give to all who are the seed and successors of Aaron wisdom to instruct and guide his people in righteousness, and to preserve them in prosperity and peace; and may they so conscientiously discharge their high calling, that their good deeds may still be remembered, and their glory perpetuated through all generations. Grotius points the Greek thus, Δῴη ὑμῖν σοφίαν ἐν καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν κρίνειν τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἵνα μὴ ἀφανισθῇ τὰ ἀγαθὰ αὐτῶν, καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν· *i. e.* May God give to you, the present sons and successors of Aaron, wisdom to conduct and judge his people, that they may be happy and prosperous; and continue to such as succeed you the inheritance and glory of their predecessors, to the latest generations.

CHAP. XLVI.

Ver. 1. *JESUS the son of Nave . . . was the successor of Moses in prophecies.*] The Jews distinguish Moses as having immediate communication with God from all other prophets, and the highest degree of inspiration is styled by

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them, *gradus Mosaicus.* He could prophesy at all times, whereas others prophesied only on particular occasions, when the word of God came to them. Immediately from the death of Moses they had a succession of prophets, of whom Joshua was the first. (See Bishop Sherlock on Prophecy, disc. 6.) God commanded Moses before his death to lay his hands upon him, and to put some of his honour upon him, (Numb. xxvii. 20.) whereby he committed to him the supreme authority after his departure. And as upon this ceremony usually followed a more abundant measure of the spirit, so Deut. xxxiv. 9. it is said of Joshua, that he was full of the spirit of wisdom; *i. e.* of all the gifts necessary in an excellent governor, and the successor of Moses, among which was reckoned the spirit of prophecy. And perhaps the reason why little or no mention is made throughout the whole book of Joshua, of his consulting the Lord after the judgment of *urim,* may be, as some have concluded from Judg. i. 1. because the spirit of prophecy rested upon him, and conducted him without this oracle. Or these words, *the successor of Moses in prophecy,* may refer to i. 1. of the book of Joshua, or to his being the author of that book, as most modern writers conclude, from the twenty-sixth verse of the last chapter, and some learned men have inferred it from this place. (See Du Pin's Prelim. Dissert.) And then the sense is, That Joshua was the next writer of inspired Scripture after Moses; though others, it must be confessed, have concluded from Acts iii. 24. that Samuel was the first after Moses that wrote his prophecy. (See Lightfoot, in loc.)

Who according to his name was made great for the saving of the elect of God, and taking vengeance of the enemies that rose up against them.] Ἐγένετο μέγας ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ ἐκλεκτῶν αὐτοῦ. Probably the true rendering is, *Who, according to his name, was or became great upon account of his saving the elect, or God's people.* The Geneva version is much clearer, *Who according to his name was a great saviour of the elect of God.* Joshua or Jesus signifies a saviour or deliverer, and in such places of the Old Testament where saviours are mentioned, as Obad. 21. we are to understand such as were sent or raised up by God, to fight the battles of God's people against their enemies. In this sense the word saviour is taken, Judg. iii. 9. Isa. xix. 20. and upon these two respects, of avenging them on or delivering them from their enemies, the titles of saviours and judges were at first bestowed.

Ver. 3. *For the Lord himself brought his enemies unto him.*] Various are the readings of this place. Some copies have, τοὺς γὰρ πολέμους Κυρίου αὐτὸς ἐπήγαγεν, *for he fought the Lord's battles;* which Grotius and Badwell prefer, and is the reading of the Syriac and Geneva versions. In others it is, τοὺς γὰρ πολεμίους Κύριος αὐτὸς ἐπήγαγεν, *for the Lord himself afflicted his enemies.* Drusius has, τοὺς γὰρ πολεμίους Κυρίου αὐτὸς ἐπήγαγεν, *for he afflicted or destroyed the enemies of the Lord.* Camerarius conjectures the true reading might be, τοὺς γὰρ πολεμίους Κύριος αὐτὸς ἐπάταξεν. The Vulgate only agrees with our version here, the sense of which, it must be confessed, is low and obscure.

Ver. 4. *Did not the sun go back by his means?*] A very learned writer observes how pertinent this miracle was to the circumstances of the persons concerned: as the sun, moon, and lights of heaven, were the deities worshipped at this time by the inhabitants of Canaan, a greater demonstration could not be given of the power of the true God, to support the Israelites his servants, or of the inability of the false deities of the Canaanites, to assist their worshippers, than to see that the God of Israel could control the course of the sun, and cause these their deities to contribute to instead of preventing the ruin that was coming upon those that served them. (Shuckford's Connex. vol. iii. p. 451.) Some have been so idle, to say no worse of their attempt, as to invent solutions of this miracle; they pretend, either that God placed in the heavens some extraordinary light body representing the sun, or that he kept up the light thereof only by refraction: in some such manner Mr. Le Clerc endeavours to naturalize and explain away this miracle; to depreciate it, he says, "Quod fieri potuit insolitis refractionibus, quibus, ut notum est, sol nobis supra horizontem esse videtur, cum nondum ortus sit, et jam occiderit." (Annot. in Josh. x. 12.) It is usual, indeed, for refraction to make the sun appear higher than it is, but this will not make such an object as the sun, in a very swift and oblique motion, to appear to the eye as quiescent, or to stand still for one moment, much less to make a winter's day as long or longer than a summer's. See Reeve's Prelim. Disc. to Vincent. Lirin. p. 177. where this is fully and ingeniously discussed. Even the great Grotius, in this instance, shews no more of the philosopher than believer, when he says on this occasion, "Forte post occasum sol diutius lucere visus est, repercussu nubis existentis supra horizontem." (See also Annot. in Josh. x. 12.) The Scripture, it is certain, mentions it as a miracle, and in particular the prophet Habakkuk represents it as such, (iii. 11.) Our author so esteemed it, and such was the concurrent sense of the Jewish rabbins. Such as disbelieve this history, or would receive satisfaction in the point, would do well to consult Huetius, Quæst. Alnet. lib. ii. cap. 12. (See note on xlviii. 23.)

Ver. 6. *And with hailstones of mighty power he made the battle to fall violently upon the nations that the nations might know all their strength, because he fought in the sight of the Lord.*] Ἐν λίθοις χαλάζης δυνάμεως κραταιᾶς. Most of the Greek copies, with Coverdale's and the Geneva versions, join this sentence to the foregoing verse, and all of them make the full-point at κραταιᾶς, as if the sense was, The Lord heard, *i. e.* answered him with or by hailstones of mighty power. But the connexion of our translators seems better, and the sense rather is, That God was pleased by a storm of mighty hailstones to destroy more of the enemy than fell by the sword of the Israelites, (Josh. x. 11.) that the nations might know παυοπλίαν αὐτοῦ, *Potentiam ejus,* Vulgate, *all his* [Joshua's] *strength; i. e.* might be convinced from these hailstones, that the Lord was his helper and strength, and that this war of Joshua was with God's approbation, and under his direction, *Deo favente;* for so ἐναντίον Κυρίου, ἐνώπιον Κυρίου, and לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, signify. The Geneva version does not render it amiss, *The Lord favoured his battle.* Some copies read, ἐναντίον Κυρίου ὁ πόλεμος αὐτῶν, *contra Dominum bellum ipsorum;* which furnishes a reason for God's assisting Joshua.

Ver. 11. *And concerning the judges, every one by name, whose heart went not a whoring, nor departed from the Lord, let their memory be blessed.* Ver. 12. *Let their bones flourish out of their place.*] Honourable mention should likewise be made of the judges of Israel, the last of which was Samuel; who prostituted or defiled not themselves by idol-

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atrous worship, among which Abimelech, the natural son of Gideon, is not worthy to be mentioned, whose name is justly odious for his crimes, particularly his cruelty in slaying his threescore and ten brethren, that he might obtain the power. But of such as subdued kingdoms, and wrought righteousness, let their bones flourish out of their place. This is a form of well-wishing to the dead, or blessing the bodies of those that departed in peace and honour. The phrase occurs again, xlix. 10. and means, Let their memory flourish, or may their bodies, like some hopeful and blessed seed, put forth and germinate from the bottom of their tombs, and their virtue revive and flourish on the earth, and those that are alive revere their ashes. It is an allusion to the custom of placing sepulchres in gardens, and such other verdant places, (2 Kings xxi. 18. 26. John xix. 41.) which were probably chosen to intimate, as well the freshness and perpetuity of their memory, as the hope and expectation of good men of a joyful resurrection; for their bones then seemed to flourish out of their place, or to revive and live again from their sepulchres, when these cemeteries were in their greatest beauty and verdure, as if they partook of the richness of the soil, and germinated by its fruitfulness. As this phrase shews the Jews' firm assurance of a future resurrection, so the prophets represent the return of that people from the Babylonish captivity by a like expression, *viz.* that their bones shall flourish like an herb. (Isa. lxvi. 14. Ezek. xxxvii. 3.)

Ver. 18. *He destroyed the rulers of the Tyrians, and all the princes of the Philistines.*] The ancients frequently confound the Phœnicians with the Philistines, but the sacred writers, as well as our author, plainly distinguish one from the other. The Phœnicians oppressed the Israelites in the time of the judges: (Judg. x. 11.) and in the beginning of the government of Samuel they entered into alliance with the Philistines against the people of the Lord; but the Philistines being worsted, the Phœnicians after that never undertook any thing against the Hebrews.

Ver. 19. *And before his long sleep he made protestations in the sight of the Lord and his anointed, I have not taken any man's goods.*] Πρὸ καιροῦ κοιμήσεως αἰῶνος. In the next verse death is expressed by ὕπνος, and in Scripture it is often called *a sleep.* The Old Testament phrase, for such as are departed, is, that they *slept with their fathers.* St. Stephen is said, after stoning, to fall asleep. (Acts vii. 60.) Hence burying-places are called κοιμητήρια. Homer has the same metaphor, τοὺς δ' αὖ τε καὶ ὑπνώοντας ἐγείρει. The solemn protestation here made by Samuel of his integrity, was not out of ostentation, but partly for his own vindication, that they might not reproach his government, and partly that being publicly acquitted from all faults in it, he might more freely reprove the sins of the people, and particularly that of desiring a king, despising thereby the theocracy they were honoured with.

Ver. 20. *After his death he prophesied.*] Learned men are of very different opinions in relation to the reality of Samuel's appearance, some imagining that it was an evil spirit in his form that appeared unto Saul, and others that it was Samuel himself, who, on this occasion, foretells his impending death. A late very learned writer says, "The opinion that it was really Samuel is very ancient, the most ancient of any, and seems to have been the persuasion of the Jewish church long before the coming of Christ. Not only the author of this book, who lived within a hundred years or less of the prophet Malachi, supposes that it was Samuel himself that appeared in person (he was a considerable man in his time, and likely to know the true sense of Scripture, and to give the general sentiments of the Jewish church, as any man of that age); but the Greek translators of the Old Testament, who lived not long after that time, were in the same persuasion, as appears by an additional note which they inserted 1 Chron. x. 13. where the LXX. read very expressly, that Samuel the prophet gave the answer to king Saul, when he inquired of the sorceress, ἀπεκρίνατο αὐτῷ Σαμουὴλ ὁ προφήτης, which it is strange that our version should wholly omit. In the same sentiment was Josephus, the Jewish historian, who lived in the apostles' time; and thus thought many of the Christian fathers. This interpretation is plain and natural, and least forced of any, agreeing with the words of the text; for the story is there told in such a way, as one would expect to find upon supposition that it really was Samuel. It is said that the woman saw Samuel, (1 Sam. xxviii. 12.) and that Saul perceived that it was Samuel, (ver. 14.) The words in the LXX. seem stronger, ἔγνω Σαοὺλ ὅτι οὗτος Σαμουὴλ, i. e. *that this was Samuel himself.* How could he know this if it was not so, or why is it said that he perceived and knew it, rather than that he imagined or supposed it so? In the sequel of the narrative it is added, *Samuel said unto Saul,* ver. 15. and again, *Then said Samuel,* ver. 16. which would not be true if it was only a personated Samuel, a familiar in Samuel's shape; and it is strange that the text should thus word it, if Samuel was not really there. It is plainly said that Samuel appeared and talked, as it is elsewhere said that Moses and Elias appeared and talked with our blessed Saviour. (Matt. xvii. 3.) And good reason was there that it should be the real Samuel, because God thereby was pleased to disappoint both the sorceress and him, by sending Samuel himself with a true and faithful presage, quite contrary to what the woman or Saul expected. Add to this, that Samuel was the same prophet that predicted this event, and God now raised him up from the dead to confirm the sentence. For it is to be observed, that before the Pythoness, to whom Saul, anxious about the great event, applies to assist him by her incantations, and to call up the spirit of Samuel, begins one word of her spells, or makes any attempt by her charms, the prophet interposes, frightens her, and pronounces, or rather repeats, Saul's doom, and she herself witnesseth the truth of his appearance." (Waterland's Posth. Serm. vol. ii.) It seems probable from this account, that the Jews at least did believe that this was the true soul of Samuel, which is recorded thus to have spoken to Saul; and from this supposition we may infer, 1. That the Jews did believe a separate existence of human souls; and perhaps the establishing this truth upon the foot of sensible evidence, was not the lowest end of Samuel's appearance upon this occasion. 2. This is a pregnant instance of the evocation of the dead and the antiquity of necromancy; this opinion prevailed among the Jews, for Isaiah alludes to it, xxix. 4. and it is evident likewise from lxv. 4. that they were wont to go to the sepulchres of the dead, there to consult them. Æschylus has a tragedy entitled Persæ, in which the shade of Darius is called up, like that of Samuel, and foretells queen Atossa all her misfortunes. And to that book of Homer's (*viz.* Odyss. xi.) containing the interview between Ulysses

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and the shades of the dead, the ancients have given the name of νεκυομαντεία; but this notion was not of Homer's invention, it prevailed long before his days among the Chaldeans, and spread over all the oriental world.

And lift up his voice from the earth in prophecy.] It has been objected by some learned men, that if it had been real Samuel himself that appeared, he should rather have been represented as coming down from heaven, instead of bringing him up as it were out of the ground, or lifting up his voice from thence. But this objection is no more against the supposition of its being Samuel's ghost, than against the supposing it to be any other spirit whatsoever; for we have reason to believe, that even evil spirits have not their dwelling under ground, but in the air rather; hence the devil is styled in the New Testament, the *prince of the power of the air*. But the true reason why Samuel is represented as being *brought up*, as the expression is in the book of Samuel, and here said to *lift up his voice from the earth*, is, because his body was under ground, to which the soul was still conceived to bear a relation; and it was upon this chiefly, that the popular prevailing notion of all separate souls being in the heart of the earth was founded; which popular notion, as it obtained among the Jews, and is often alluded to in the language of Scripture, and, adapting itself to vulgar capacities, it is no wonder that the relation of this apparition of Samuel should be accommodated thereto; so that nothing can be concluded in this case, merely from the manner in which Samuel is said to come. (See Waterland's Sermon, ibid.) In the last sentence we have a farther reason of his appearing at this time, besides shewing the king his end; *viz.* that Israel might be admonished, and moved to a speedy repentance by such a warning, or, as others understand it, to acquaint the people, that they also should be delivered into the hands of the Philistines, and be destroyed with him: or, as the Geneva version has it, more agreeably to the Greek, *That the wickedness of the people should perish.*

CHAP. XLVII.

Ver. 1. *AND after him rose up Nathan to prophesy in the time of David.*] Nothing is here said of Nathan, but that he prophesied in the time of David, which may seem strange, as, in all other instances, the author expatiates on the praises of the Jewish worthies, which he produces, and his design in this hymn is to bestow a panegyric on each. But this single circumstance is itself a sufficient commendation of him, as he contributed so much by his fine artifice and address to that prince's repentance and conversion. The oriental versions seem to glance at this, making him to prophesy *coram Davide*, in his hearing or presence, or, which will come nearer to the case, to his face. Nathan was not the only prophet in David's time, but he chose to instance in him, as being most eminent in other respects likewise, as being appointed to assure David of the continuance of the kingdom to his posterity, and that his son should build the house or temple of the Lord, and at length he anointed Solomon to be king over Israel and Judah.

Ver. 2. *As is the fat taken away from the peace-offering, so was David chosen out of the children of Israel.*] The meaning briefly is, that David was preferred before others for his great and extraordinary merit, and was separated to his high office and dignity, as the fat of the peace-offering was set apart for the altar. That the cauls and the choicest fat of the victim were selected, as the best part of it, to be offered to the gods, see Il. lib. i. This comparison is so far from being mean and despicable, as it may seem, that it has been used and applauded by the best writers, and looked upon with veneration by antiquity. The same allusion which is here used to display the worth and excellence of David, we find applied by Homer to Ulysses, (Odyss. xx.) the justness of which M. Dacier defends, and even extols.

Ver. 3. *He played with lions as with kids, and with bears as with lambs.*] The ingenious writer of king David's life, (p. 42.) takes notice of his modesty. As the account is recorded in Scripture, he describes his combat with the lion in the simplest and shortest narration that ever was made of such a combat, *I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him:* and to avoid dwelling upon his own exploits, he says no more of his fight with the bear, but only that he slew him: so far were these savage creatures from being a match for him, that, according to our author, they afforded him only sport and pastime; the most terrible was as inoffensive as a kid, and the most surly as good-natured and harmless as a lamb.

Ver. 4. *Slew he not a giant when he was yet but young; and did he not take away reproach from the people when he lifted up his hand with the stone in the sling, and beat down the boasting of Goliath?* Ver. 5. *For he called upon the most high Lord, and he gave him strength in his right hand to slay that mighty warrior, and set up the horn of his people.*] The giant Goliath is described in Scripture as being six cubits and a span in height, *i. e.* nine feet and nine inches. His coat of mail is said to weigh five thousand shekels of brass, *i. e.* about one hundred and fifty pounds; the head of his spear alone weighed six hundred shekels of iron, *i. e.* about eighteen or nineteen pounds. Against one so formidable and completely armed goes forth David, with the apparatus only of a simple shepherd. The difference between the threats of the combatants is likewise very remarkable. Goliath, in full confidence of his own strength, bids David come up, and he would *give his flesh unto the fowls of the air.* David, confiding only in the protection of the Almighty, which he had often experienced, retorts, *This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand;* and then tells him what he is to expect, that he will deal with him as a warrior, and not as an inhuman savage. That a young man disarmed should, only with a sling and a stone, slay so mighty a champion, whose very appearance made armies flee before him, is indeed surprising; but what is most to be admired is, that, after having slain such an experienced champion in so unequal a combat, he should be able to suppress all sentiments of pride, which must necessarily spring up, after an action which raised him above the king himself, and was accompanied with such acclamations and songs of triumph.

Ver. 6. *So the people honoured him with ten thousands, and praised him in the blessings of the Lord, in that he gave him a crown of glory.*] If this be applied to the people, it will be clearer to read οὕτως ἐδόξασαν, καὶ ἤνεσαν, as some copies have it, which our translators follow, and then by εὐλογίαις Κυρίου may either be meant, that they bestowed on him the highest commendations, as the Geneva version un-

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derstands it; or that, whilst they praised him, they blessed and praised the Lord at the same time, for the benefits received through him by the success of that day. But there is another reading which applies the whole to God, *viz.* That God honoured David by the slaughter of his ten thousands; the Syriac has, with the praises of ten thousands, and by his own blessings added to his praises, in giving him the kingdom of his people.

Ver. 8. *In all his works he praised the Holy One most high with words of glory.*] In all the editions the reading is, ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ αὐτοῦ ἔδωκεν ἐξομολόγησιν, with a full-point there; but the other reading, which is followed by our translators, Junius, and the Vulgate, and is confirmed by the Alexandrian MS. is preferable; *i. e.* in all his victories he gave God the praise, in terms of the highest respect, and composed solemn hymns on the occasion. There is also another good sense may be given of this passage; *viz.* That he sang hymns to the Holy One most high with his whole heart, in the most dutiful manner, in words full of his glory. Thus Messieurs of Port-Royal, *Il a beni le treshaut par des paroles pleines de sa gloire:* He made the praises of God glorious, whenever he awaked his lute and harp, by the most exalted strains of praise and thanksgiving; *Carminibus honorificis, ac voce gratiarum actionis, ac laudis, plena.* (Arabic.) He was inspired to sanctify poetry and music, and employed them upon the noblest subjects, to celebrate the glory of God, and to excite a grateful acknowledgment in all men for his mercies, and deservedly is styled the *sweet Psalmist of Israel,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. Josephus says, that David added songs and hymns to the harmony of his harp, when he played before king Saul, and that the energy of both was such as repressed the suggestions of the evil spirit.

Ver. 11. *The Lord took away his sins, and exalted his horn for ever, he gave him a covenant of kings, and a throne of glory in Israel.*] Upon David's confession of guilt and humiliation before God, and a long succeeding repentance, God pronounced the sentence of pardon by Nathan the prophet. But is this change of his own condition all we are to understand by the words, *He exalted his horn for ever? Horn* is an eastern figure for a king, and by it is meant the future budding forth or future kingdom of the Messiah: and this idea being joined with the covenant of kings, or rather *of a kingdom,* as the margin more agreeably to the Greek has it, the sense will be briefly this, That God engaged to make the horn of David to flourish; *i. e.* to make a glorious king to bud, like a branch, in the house of David, and would ordain, and had decreed a lantern or kingdom for his anointed, as is expressed Psal. cxxxii. 17. (see the like metaphor, 1 Kings xi. 36.) The words *for ever* incline me to think, that besides the promises made to David and his posterity, according to the flesh, the kings of Judah, that they should continue long beyond any other regal race in the known world, in earthly splendour and authority, the author refers to that promise, (1 Chron. xvii. 12.) that *his house, and the throne of his kingdom, should be established for ever before him,* which includes an everlasting dominion over the church and people of God, and is more fully expressed in the supplement to this account; (ver. 13, 14.) *I will be his father, and he shall be my son, and I will not take away my mercy from him, but I will settle him in my house, and in my kingdom for ever, and his throne shall be established for evermore;* which contains a promise that can only respect that son of David, who was at the same time strictly and immediately *the* Son. And to him many passages in the Psalmist refer, which are otherwise unintelligible. See Psal. xxi. 4—6. *His kingdom shall stand fast for ever, and his throne shall be like as the sun before me;* and Luke i. 32, 33. where this promise is accordingly applied to our Saviour by an angel from heaven. The completion of the promise made to David, that the Messiah, or Branch, should come out of the stem of Jesse, which was renewed by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, was still looked for by this writer in the beginning of the Greek monarchy. And that Solomon was not meant by the *horn,* or *branch,* appears from hence, because Isaiah and Jeremiah, long after Solomon's death, promise *his* coming, to whom these titles do belong: and at the conception of Jesus Christ, Zachary, the father of John the Baptist, and a prophet also, declared, that *God had raised up the horn of salvation, in the house of his servant David.* (Luke i. 68, 69.)

Ver. 12. *After him rose up a wise son, and for his sake he dwelt at large.*] Δι' αὐτὸν κατέλυσεν ἐν πλατυσμῷ, i. e. *Through the blessing of the Lord he dwelt at large.* The meaning of which either is, that he lived quietly and in peace, or that he reigned far and near, and had a very extensive dominion. (1 Kings iv. 21.) Drusius understands it of his subjects under his reign, or through his means, living happily. The Vulgate has, *Propter illum dejecit omnem potentiam inimicorum; i. e.* says Calmet, for his sake the Lord subdued or quieted all his enemies round about; (ver. 24, 25.) *A cause de lui, le seigneur détruisit toute la puissance de ses ennemis.* Junius renders most unaccountably, *Per quem in lato habitabit Deus.* Grotius approves of none of these senses, and conjectures the true reading to be, δι' αὐτὸ κατέλυσεν ἐν πλατυσμῷ, *i. e.* Upon account of his superior wisdom, neighbouring nations willingly submitted to his sway.

Ver. 14. *How wise wast thou in thy youth, and as a flood filled with understanding!* Ver. 15. *Thy soul covered the whole earth, and thou filledst it with dark parables.*] This is, according to a mode of speech, frequently made use of in Scripture, wherein the same word that denotes to flow, as out of a fountain, is often used for speaking or haranguing: and by the same metaphor words are sometimes resembled to waters. Thus Prov. xviii. 4. *The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the well-spring of wisdom as a flowing brook.* (See also i. 23. xv. 28.) In allusion to this, we meet with *torrens ingenii, flumen eloquentiæ,* in approved classic writers. The extensiveness of Solomon's knowledge is here said to be so great, as like a deluge to cover the whole earth, for he excelled in all sorts of wisdom, which, as he asked of God preferably to riches or honour, so he gave it to him without measure. He delivered most admirable maxims and precepts for the service and conduct of life, called here *parables* or proverbs, so many in number, even three thousand, 1 Kings iv. 32. as comparatively to fill the earth: herein *his wisdom excelled that of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt,* ver. 30.

Ver. 18. *By the name of the Lord God, which is called the Lord God of Israel.*] This sentence, though seemingly very easy, and generally admitted as it stands in our version, gives me some suspicion. I think it is by no means to be

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connected to the latter part of this verse, but hath immediate reference to the foregoing verse. The commentators indeed all agree in expounding it of Solomon's great riches through God's blessing, but is there any need of such a formal preamble, such a solemn seal as it were of authority, not unlike that 1 Cor. v. 4. to introduce only that Solomon was very rich? I would rather refer this sentence to the former subject, and explain it, Foreign nations, and persons of the greatest note in them, admired thee for thy wisdom in all the branches of it, for thy songs, ἐν ᾠδαῖς, proverbs, parables, and interpretations, ἐν ὀνόματι, for the name, *i. e.* the power and blessing of God accompanying thee (the God of all the earth, but of Israel in a more particular manner), visible in the gift of wisdom to thee in such profusion and abundance. But we shall come still nearer the meaning, if we understand ὀνόματι as a Hebraism, and render it *praise, honour*, or the like. No doubt can be made, but the Hebrew had it לשם, and in the sense in which it occurs, Deut. xxvi. 19. *And to make thee high above all nations that he hath made in praise, in name,* לשם, *and in honour.* Where the LXX. render לשם by ὀνομαστὸν, which is to the same sense. We may therefore render this passage thus, The countries marvelled at thee for thy songs, and proverbs, and parables, and interpretations, to the glory of the Lord God, which is called the Lord God of Israel. This sense seems easy and natural, and is farther so confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions, which mention *majestas et honor* here, as to leave but little room to doubt, but that it is the true one. I once indeed conjectured that ἐν ὁράματι Κυρίου τοῦ Θεοῦ, κ. τ. λ. might possibly have been the true reading, referring to the particular honour vouchsafed to Solomon in the Lord's appearing to him twice, 1 Kings iii. 5. ix. 2. but where the present reading can tolerably well be accounted for, I am the more backward to attempt an emendation.

Thou didst gather gold as tin, and didst multiply silver as lead.] Vast sums of money are mentioned in the history of the Jews, as belonging to David and Solomon. When the former conquered the kingdom of Edom, he thereby became master of two sea-ports on the Red Sea, or Arabian Gulf, *viz.* Eloth and Esion-geber, (2 Sam. viii. 14. compared with 1 Kings ix. 26.) from whence Solomon maintained a great traffic for gold to Ophir, (which Josephus says is since called the Golden Land, Antiq. lib. viii.) supposed to be the *Aurea Chersonesus* of the ancients: and that by the assistance of skilful Tyrian pilots and mariners, whom Hiram king of Tyre, being a friend and an ally, had sent, in one voyage there were brought to Jerusalem four hundred and twenty talents of gold. A most immense sum however computed, (ver. 27, 28.) insomuch, that it made money in Jerusalem to be as stones for plenty. (1 Kings x. 27.)

Ver. 19. *Thou didst bow thy loins unto women, and by thy body thou wast brought into subjection.* Ver. 20. *Thou didst stain thy honour and pollute thy seed, so that thou broughtest wrath upon thy children.*] Every transient act of sin, as it is called, leaves a lasting stain behind it, (see Josh. xxii. 17. Jer. ii. 22.) but that of lust is of a deeper die, as being generally more complex. Solomon's lust was the more aggravated from its consequence, as being the means of seducing him to idolatry, for into this he fell through the charms and softnesses of his many heathen mistresses, Moabites, Ammonites, and other strange women. So fatal an evil is lust to the best understanding. This impiety was manifest in him about the thirtieth year of his reign, according to chronologers, but the more secret beginning of his defection is, by Josephus and other Jews, dated from the images of oxen, made by his command, as supporters of the brazen sea. It is observable, that in this whole catalogue of famous men, whom this author purposely celebrates from the forty-fourth to the end of the fiftieth chapter, Solomon is the chief, if not the only person, that he casts any reflection upon. There is not one word mentioned of the sins of David, of the murder and adultery he was guilty of, but every thing is enlarged upon that can any way tend to the honour of that prince: what reason then can be assigned for this difference? This silence with respect to David's sins seems to intimate his repentance and forgiveness; but of Solomon we may say with St. Austin, that nothing is more certain than Solomon's idolatry and sin, and nothing more uncertain than his true repentance. (Contr. Faust.) It is the opinion of many writers that Solomon died in this sin without repentance; it is more certain, that before he died he persisted in it, notwithstanding the repeated appearance of God's Schechinah, 1 Kings xi. 9, 10. And from that chapter it appears, that the Divine protection visibly departed from him. After the mention of Solomon's glory, wisdom, wealth, &c. we have in this account a sad instance of human frailty. As this wise and great man had forsook the Lord his God, the Lord stirred up an adversary to him, Jeroboam his servant; the effect of which was, the rending ten tribes from the house and family of David, so that the kingdom came to be divided into two kingdoms, or rather factions, those of Judah and Israel.

Ver. 21. *So the kingdom was divided, and out of Ephraim ruled a rebellious kingdom.*] When the kingdom was divided, ten tribes went over to Jeroboam, and two tribes, those of Judah and Benjamin, still adhered to Rehoboam, Solomon's son. (1 Kings xi. 12.) The part which adhered to Rehoboam, or the house and family of David, was called the kingdom of Judah, the other, the kingdom of Israel. The capital or chief city of Judah was Jerusalem, and that of Israel was at first Shechem, (1 Kings xii. 25.) and then Tirzah. (1 Kings xiv. 17. xvi. 8.) Afterward the royal city was by king Omri removed to Samaria, being the head city of the tribe of Ephraim. (1 Kings xvi. 23. 29.) This continued to be the regal city of Israel till a period was put to that kingdom. Whence the prophets by Samaria and Ephraim often mean the kingdom of Israel; as by Judah and the house of David, and Jerusalem, and Sion, they mean the kingdom of Judah. And in this sense we are to understand Ephraim here, and in ver. 23. But since the return from the Babylonian captivity, Israel and Judah are taken promiscuously for the same people, and are all, without any distinction, sometimes called Israel, and sometimes Judah. In reading the history of the kings of Judah and Israel, it is observable, that many of the kings of Israel came to the throne by violence, and not by rightful succession, whereas the kings of Judah, being the posterity of David, all reigned by right of inheritance, each king succeeding his father in the throne, according to God's promise to David, that he would set up his seed after him. (2 Sam. vii. 12. Psal. lxxxix. 29, 30.)

Ver. 22. *But the Lord will never leave off his mercy.*] And though for Solomon's idolatry the kingdom was divided,

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yet God's covenant with David still comforted them: (Psal. lxxxix. 29.) they still depended upon and pleased themselves with the expectation of the sure mercies of David. But why is the Messias termed *the mercies of David?* Because designed in God's promise to David by Nathan, which promise is there called *God's mercy, that should not depart from him.* He is called *the sure mercies of David,* from the certainty of the performance of this promise, because God had *sworn by his holiness, that he would not fail David.* Accordingly the sacred writers of the New Testament with good reason say, that *the sure mercies of David* were fulfilled in Christ's kingdom, Acts xiii. 34. (See Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 224.)

Wherefore he gave a remnant unto Jacob, and out of him a root unto David.] See xliv. 21, 22. xxxvi. 8. This most probably should be read in the future, as the words before are, Wherefore he *shall* give a remnant unto Jacob, and a root or chief stem unto David out of his loins; because it refers to the fulfilling of Isaiah's prophecy, still to be completed. And thus the Syriac and Arabic versions read. Very remarkable is the gloss of those interpreters upon this passage, which probably was the exposition of the Jews, among whom those translators lived, "Dabit Jacobo salutem, et Davidi regnum maximum;" i. e. *He shall give salvation to Jacob, and a great kingdom to David.* Which words imply, that the covenant of the kingdom related not so much to Solomon and his race, as to the Saviour of Jacob, whose kingdom should far exceed Solomon's, or David's, and who should, as Isaiah foretold, derive from David as the branch or stem from his root. (Ibid. p. 228.)

CHAP. XLVIII.

Ver. 6. *WHO broughtest kings to destruction and honourable men from their bed.*] Elias foretold the death of Ahab, Jezebel, Ahaziah, Joram, &c. and is therefore said here to have brought them to destruction. This is according to the Scripture phrase, which represents the prophets often as doing what they only foretold, to mark and intimate the certainty and infallibility of their predictions. He was commissioned to oppose evil kings, and to reprove and check their wickedness; and none ever supported that character with more resolution, or corrected wickedness in high places with more freedom and liberty. His zeal was so great, that it is well compared to fire, (ver. 1.) What is here mentioned of his bringing honourable men from their bed to their grave, relates particularly to Ahaziah, who died on his sick-bed not long after this prophet foretold his death; and to Jehoram, according to the writing or letters of Elijah to him, 2 Chron. xxi. 15.

Ver. 7. *Who heardest the rebuke of the Lord in Sinai, and in Horeb the judgment of the vengeance.*] Elias fleeing from the persecution of Jezebel, came at length to Mount Sinai, and from thence to Horeb, the mount of God; here it was he learnt God's intended judgments against the house of Ahab, and the whole kingdom of Israel. This seems to be the author's meaning here, but this text hath been seriously alleged by some Jews, for the προϋπαρξις, or *pre-existence* of souls. The rabbins will have it, that Elias and all the prophets were present at the giving of the law, and from Deut. xxix. 14, 15. have insinuated, that God making his covenant with the absent as well as the present, the souls of the posterity of the Jews were then in being, though not there present at the publication of the law. And some have gone so far as to suppose, that at the general judgment, not only the whole creation will be summoned into one grand solemn assembly, but those also, who never actually came into their bodies, *shall* appear in their ideal personalities, as they term it. (See More's Mystery of Godliness, p. 22.) These are Jewish conceits, which are almost infinite. The next verse will shew that the *rebuke of the Lord* and the *judgment of vengeance* here referred to relate to threats against Ahab and his posterity. As to Elias's personal presence at the giving of the law, founded chiefly on this passage, it is a groundless whim, invented chiefly to serve an opinion.

Ver. 8. *Who anointedst kings to take revenge, and prophets to succeed after him.*] This relates to Hazael king of Syria, and Jehu king of Israel, whom Elias anointed by God's order, to execute his judgment of vengeance upon such Israelites as had fallen into idolatry. (1 Kings xix. 17.) By *prophets* the author seems principally here to allude to the calling of Elisha to that office. Though Elias had a great number of disciples, or holy catechumens, whom he trained up and instructed, to stem the torrent of wickedness and idolatry, which spread more and more in Israel, and there were whole societies or schools of the sons of the prophets, of which Elias had the direction and superintendency; yet Elisha was thought the properest person to assist, and at length succeed him, and Elias by God's order formally anointed and consecrated him.

Ver. 10. *Who wast ordained for reproofs in their times.*] Ὁ καταγραφεὶς ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς εἰς καιροὺς, *i. e.* Elias was ordained or appointed to appear again to denounce reproofs, and, by threats of the greatest impending evils, to reform the world, reconcile the Israelites, prevent God's judgments, and to prepare all for the great and terrible day of the Lord approaching. And so the oriental versions have it, *Idemque venturus es, antequam veniat dies Domini.* It was the unanimous sense of the Jews, that Elias should first come himself in person before the Messiah, and restore all things: (see note on xliv. 16.) and here the author of this book, speaking of the true Elias and his personal appearance, makes one reason of it to be, for reproofs in after-times, *i. e.* in the appointed times, or in due season, according to the Geneva version. A very learned writer observes, that the translation of this passage should be, He was described to be, or *written of,* as the margin has it, *viz.* in Malachi's prophecy, a type for times to come; *i. e.* Elias was a type or exemplar, ἐλεγμὸς, for so the Alexandrian MS. reads, of what the forerunner of the Messias should be or do. (Mede's Works, disc. 25. see also Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 252.)

And to turn the heart of the father to the son.] This alludes plainly to the last verse of the prophet Malachi, where the expression is the same. The meaning is, That Elias at his appearance should put an end to those religious differences, which divided the nearest relations from each other, and make them all join in the same faith, and in the duties of repentance and reformation, and thereby prepare themselves for the reception of the Messias. But another and more easy sense may be given to this passage, if we translate עַל not *to,* but *with,* (see Exod. xxxv. 22.) and then the meaning

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will be, that this prophet's office will be, to turn the heart of the father with the son's; *i. e.* His reproof and preaching shall produce a general reformation in the minds and manners of all sorts of persons, as before he was a great reformer of the law, under its greatest degeneracy and corruption.

And to restore the tribes of Israel.] *i. e.* Deliver and redeem Israel, or restore the kingdom to Israel, through the Messiah's advent, which was part of his office. (See Isa. xlix. 6.) Or the meaning may be, to preach, and accomplish the restoring of the tribes of Jacob, whose gathering this writer prays for, xxxvi. 11. These words may also be referred to the coming of Elias, at the end of the world, or at the time of the restitution of all things, ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων, i. e. *The consummation of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his prophets since the world began.* (Acts iii. 21.) A notion entertained by very many of the fathers, and seems to have its foundation in our Saviour's own words, Matt. xvii. 10, 11. And this conjecture I am the more encouraged to offer, as I find it countenanced by a most learned writer, who enforces it with many cogent reasons, and applies this very passage to support the opinion, explaining it of an Elias, which shall be the harbinger of Christ's second coming, the ἔλεγμὸς, or type for the times to come. The foregoing passage likewise of Malachi, of turning the hearts of the children to their fathers, he refers to Christ's second advent, and to an Elias, which shall precede that, and the great and dreadful day of judgment; who shall labour to bring the unbelieving posterity of the Jewish nation to have the same heart and mind their holy fathers and progenitors had; *i. e.* to convert them to the faith of Christ, whom their forefathers, the patriarchs, hoped in and looked for, lest, continuing obstinate in their unbelief to that great day, they should be smitten with a curse, and perish among the rest of the enemies of Christ's kingdom. (See Mede's Works, lib. i. disc. 25.) In this and the five foregoing verses we have a beautiful specimen of the figure anaphora, like that admired one, Catil. Orat. 1. or that in Psal. xv.

Ver. 11. *Blessed are they that saw thee and slept in love.*] The rendering would be better, *Blessed are they that see thee,* or *shall see thee, at thy return, and shall be honoured with thy love and friendship,* κεκοσμημένοι, as some copies have it; and so the Vulgate, *Beati sunt qui . . . in amicitia tua decorati sunt.* The margin also is to the same effect; which may be understood either as a wish, or to be spoken *more prophetico.* Such he pronounces will be happy, because immediately after him they will see the Messiah. This is exactly agreeable to the notions of the then Jews; for in the Talmud, Targum, and their later comments, the coming of Elias and the Messiah usually go together: and this is the reason why the Jews pray so heartily for the coming of Elias, even without the mention of the Messiah, because the coming of the one, according to the prophet Malachi, infers the other. (See Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 81.) If we read κεκοιμημένοι, which our translators follow, the sense then will be, Blessed are the dead, those good Israelites which died in the Lord; not merely those that *slept in love,* as our version has it, but such as departed in his favour and love: they shall obtain a better resurrection; *i. e.* shall be preferred to have a part in the first, and with his other saints shall reign gloriously with him.

For we shall surely live.] Ζωῇ ζησόμεθα. We may observe here, that the conversion of the Jews at the return of Elias is represented by a new life. And, indeed, the restoration of the church is sometimes represented as a resurrection of it from the dead; and her return from a low afflicted state, under the metaphor of a new life, a revivisccence of God's church and people from the dead. This figure is no where more strongly or frequently used than in Ezek. xxxvii. where God is introduced inquiring of the Jews in Babylon, εἰ ζήσεται; *Can these bones live?* (ver. 3.) and promising to put into them πνεῦμα ζωῆς, *the breath of life,* (ver. 5.) καὶ ζήσεσθε, *and ye shall live;* and bidding the prophet blow on them, καὶ ζησάτωσαν, *that they may live,* (ver. 9.) and declaring, that when he had done so, breath entered into them, καὶ ἔζησαν, *and they lived again,* (ver. 10.) In all which places ζωὴ is used to express the return of the church from her obscurity and thraldom to a glorious state. Mr. Mede understands this place in like manner of the Jews' conversion, and observes, that this is agreeable to the ancient and general doctrine both of Jew and Christian, that they shall have an Elias sent to instruct them, a Deliverer, ἕνεκεν Σιὼν, *for the sake of Sion,* as the LXX. well express it, Isa. lix. 20. For it may be fit to conceive magnificently of so great a work of God towards a people for whom he hath formerly shewn so many wonders, especially this being the greatest work of mercy ever done for them, far beyond the bringing them out of Egypt. The common interpretation of this passage, either respects the hopes of a general resurrection, or that of the saints in particular, supposed to be previous to it. And in this last sense St. John uses ἔζησαν, Rev. xx. 4. to express the early resurrection of the martyrs slain for the testimony of the truth.

Ver. 12. *Elias it was who was covered with a whirlwind, and Eliseus was filled with his spirit: while he lived he was not moved with the presence of any prince, neither could any bring him into subjection.*] Instead of Ἠλίας, ὃς ἐν λαίλαπι ἐσκεπάσθη, which is the reading in all the editions, Grabe prefers ὡς ἐν λαίλαπι, κ. τ. λ. (Proleg. tom. iii. cap. 4.) And so do Badwell and Beza, which the Geneva version follows; *i. e.* As soon as Elias was taken up in a whirlwind, Elisha was filled with his spirit, and succeeded him immediately in the prophetic office; and he shewed on all occasions a courage worthy of the successor of Elias. Neither fear nor caresses, promises nor threats, could overcome him: he respected not the persons of the mighty, and was indifferent about their frowns or smiles. (2 Kings iii. 14.) Some understand πᾶς λόγος οὐχ ὑπῆρεν αὐτὸν, in the beginning of the next verse, of his great penetration and knowledge of things done at a distance, as his presignifying the coming of Ben-hadad's messengers to slay him, (2 Kings vi. 32.) and detecting the villany of his own servant, Gehazi; (2 Kings v. 26.) but the former sense seems preferable.

And after his death his body prophesied.] To prophesy, is a term of large signification, and, besides the foretelling of future events, which is the ordinary notion of it, it signifies to work miracles, in which sense it is taken here; for the author refers to what happened when, a dead corpse being cast into the sepulchre, where Elisha's body lay, it revived upon touching his bones. (2 Kings xiii. 21.) Hence it was conceived that the Spirit of God in some sort accompanied even the dead body of that holy prophet, and that he conti-

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nued to work miracles in his grave. The sense here is somewhat different from that in the latter part of the next verse; *viz. At his death were his works marvellous: i. e.* when he was just a dying, he foretold the downfal of the Syrians, after smiting them three times, an event of great consequence to God's distressed people, whom he comforted with his last breath.

Ver. 15. *For all this the people repented not, neither departed they from their sins till they were spoiled and carried out of their land, and were scattered through all the earth: yet there remained a small people, and a ruler in the house of David.*] The Jews were a people remarkably distinguished by the favour of God; the exemplary piety and faith of their first fathers procured the blessing of a numerous posterity, and they became a flourishing and potent state. But as sin is the ruin of any people, the degeneracy of their descendants forfeited by degrees God's favour, and brought down his judgments. For when neither miracles nor commands, promises nor threats, nor the instructions and examples of holy men and prophets among them, had any effect upon them, but they continued obstinate in their evil courses, God determined to remove Israel out of his sight, and the ten tribes were at length carried away captive by Shalmaneser, beyond the Euphrates, the small kingdom of Judah with its sceptre still subsisting. God had threatened by his prophet upon their disobedience to scatter them among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other, (Deut. xxviii. 64.) and hereby in some measure it had its completion. But the Jews themselves acknowledge this prophecy to be fulfilled at their last general dispersion, after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which those emphatical words of Josephus, "The Jews are dispersed over all the earth," confirm: (De Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 3.) which indeed appears from their present state and circumstances, for they are vagabonds and exiles from their native country, and straggle through all the world, neither God nor man being their king, and they are debarred the privilege of setting their foot on their own country, though merely as foreigners.

Ver. 23. *In his time the sun went backward, and he lengthened the king's life.*] When Hezekiah was sick unto death, Isaiah foretold his recovery, and, as an assurance of the truth of his prophecy, told him that the sun should return backward; (ch. xxxviii.) *i. e.* says the learned Usher, "Tantum nocti detractum, quantum diei fuit additum." (Ann. ad A. M. 3291.) As much was deducted from the [next] night, as was added to this day, the Divine Providence so ordering this miraculous retrogradation, that it was no hinderance to the regularity of the motions of the other heavenly bodies, as appears from the calculation of the same eclipses, by the ancient Chaldeans and modern astronomers: nor was it discerned or taken notice of in other countries, which occasioned an embassage from Babylon to inquire about the truth of it. (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) Hence some have thought this a particular miracle, manifested only by the shadow on the sun-dial of Ahaz.

Ver. 24. *He saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last.*] Πνεύματι μεγάλῳ. Isaiah was filled with the Holy Spirit in a greater degree than the other prophets. Hence Greg. Nazianzen calls him μεγαλοφωνότατον τῶν προφητῶν. By his seeing τὰ ἔσχατα we may understand the last or latter times, which phrase is frequently used in Scripture, to signify the days of the Messiah. One certain time had been prefixed by God for bestowing a great blessing on the world; this was known to all in the age of the prophets, and therefore, when the prophets speak of things to be done then, they often, by way of eminence, call that time the last time, the last days, the latter days, the end of days, and sometimes the end of the age, τοῦ αἰῶνος, as in the following verse. It is particularly true of Isaiah, above all the other prophets, that he saw what regarded these times; for he foretold the coming, the character, offices, life, and death of the Messiah, the future glories of the church, the enlargement and flourishing of it under the gospel, and the bringing the fulness of the gentiles into it, more clearly and frequently than any of them. Accordingly he is often cited in the writings of the New Testament, and obtained the character of the *evangelical prophet.*

And he comforted them that mourned in Sion.] Isaiah foresaw not only the evils coming upon Sion, but likewise their period and end. He foretold the Babylonian captivity long before it happened, and he revived the Jews with the comfortable prospect of a restoration from it, and a return into their own land. The learned Vitringa observes, that the prophecy of Isaiah is more in a consolitary way, than the generality of the other prophets, and instances in many particulars, in which this prophet foretells comfortable things, as to the future state and condition of the church. On this account some of the ancient Jews said, "Liber Jesaiæ est totus consolatorius." (Prolegom. in Jesai.) Calmet thinks our author particularly alludes to Isa. lxi. 1. Or if we understand the phrase *at the last* of the days of the Messiah, then his coming, so clearly mentioned in his prophecy, may be here referred to, who was spoken of and expected by the Jews, as the comforter and consolation of Israel. (Luke ii. 25.)

CHAP. XLIX.

Ver. 1. *THE remembrance of Josias is like the composition of the perfume that is made by the art of the apothecary. . . .*
Ver. 2. *He behaved himself uprightly in the conversion of the people, and took away the abominations of iniquity.*] Josias, of all the princes mentioned in holy writ, has the most unsullied character; his life was so pure, and his conduct so unblamable, that the Scripture represents him without fault, and as having no equal. (2 Kings xxiii. 25.) He began to reign at eight years old, and was as early in his duty to God. Though he always expressed a great regard and attachment to the true religion, it was at eighteen that he zealously set about the work of reformation and correcting the idolatrous abuses which former reigns had either introduced or allowed. Instead of the lukewarmness and indifference of many of his predecessors, who, though religious and well-disposed princes, attempted not to take away the high places, Josias exerted a laudable and disinterested courage: he demolished the high places, overthrew the altars, burnt the groves, and even the bones, which he caused to be dug up, of the false prophets; and, in the midst of a corrupt age and perverse nation, he successfully made use of his authority for the service and establishment of the true religion. The assemblage of so many good qualities and uncommon virtues in one prince, the author

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here compares to a refreshing perfume, composed with the nicest art of the most precious and exquisite spices. But the beauty of this comparison is lost without observing that his very name signifies perfume, or *thymiama*. (See Pagnin. Heb. Lex.) Messieurs of Port-Royal have a good reflection here:—"Kings generally pride themselves in victories gained in battle and trophies from conquered provinces; but God has taught us, by the praises bestowed on king Josias, that the truest honour is to serve Him by whom princes reign, and that *their* glory shall be eternized after death, who in their life labour to promote *his:* that, as Josias contented not himself with his own personal goodness or instances of private piety, nor was easy till he had brought off his people from great wickedness and idolatry to the service of the true God; so princes should be reminded, from so celebrated an example, not only to be good and religious themselves, but, as persons invested with the supreme authority, should labour with all their power to maintain a true faith, and keep up a public spirit of religion in their dominions, and firmly establish in the hearts of all their subjects, *his* pure worship who put and continues the crown on their heads."

Ver. 4. *All except David, and Ezekias, and Josias, were defective.*] *i. e.* Fell into idolatry, or however tolerated it by not destroying the high places, or acted in some way or manner contrary to the purity of God's worship, or against his will. The Scripture commends Jehoshaphat in most instances, but blames him for making an alliance with the kings Ahab and Ahaziah, and not taking away the high places. Of Asa too it is mentioned, whose heart in other respects was perfect, that in his time the high places were not removed. (1 Kings xv. 14.) And if David, here instanced in as a pattern of perfection, sinned with Bath-sheba, and by the murder of Uriah, he expiated these crimes, says Calmet, by a signal and unfeigned repentance. And if Hezekiah offended God by putting too much confidence in the friendship and alliance of foreign princes, and in the splendour and multitude of his own riches, he atoned for these faults, by a firm attachment to the true worship of God all his life, and a perfect resignation to his will at the approach of death.

Even the kings of Judah failed.] This was true of all of them from the first to the last, except the few here mentioned. We read, 2 Chron. xii. 1. that when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all his people with him, and Manasseh, one of the latter kings of Judah, before their captivity, seems to have taken up a resolution to destroy even the very name of the true God and his service from off the earth, and to establish idolatry, though he repented before his death, 2 Kings xxi. 2. And whoever reads the several instances of abomination, 2 Kings xxiii. 4—15. would suspect that the people had even received the idols of all nations to worship them; and therefore, no wonder God was so incensed with them whose offences were aggravated by his favours to and fondness of Judah. That Judah obtained the royal dignity, which Reuben by transgression forfeited, and Levi was prevented from, was an instance of God's love and particular affection, and therefore that Judah should fall into idolatry must heighten his displeasure. With what a tender regard and particular emphasis is Judah spoken of by God, Hos. iv. 15. *Though Israel play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend.* As if God expected a more ready and willing obedience from a people so highly favoured.

Ver. 5. *Therefore he gave their power unto others, and their glory unto a strange nation.*] The kingdom of Judah, consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, though they were often oppressed by God's permission for their sins, yet continued in some measure a hundred and fifteen years after the destruction of the former kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser; at length, God being more and more provoked, notwithstanding the many warnings of his prophets, by the idolatry and other wickednesses both of kings and people, decreed to remove Judah also out of his sight, or, as it is expressed, 2 Kings xxi. 13. *To stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: i. e.* (dealing with them by the same measure) utterly to destroy Jerusalem, and the whole kingdom of Judah, as he had done that of Israel, and Samaria the chief city of it, and as he had threatened to do from their first settling in Canaan, Deut. xxviii. 32, 33. which great calamity God was pleased at length to bring to pass by the Babylonians. Many Greek copies have, ἔδωκαν γὰρ τὸ κέρας αὐτῶν ἑτέροις, which reading is confirmed by the oriental versions and the Vulgate, *Dederunt enim regnum suum aliis.* This, says Calmet, literally happened, for the kings of Judah in some sort delivered up their kingdom to strangers, when Ahaz called to his assistance Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria. (2 Kings xvi. 7.) After that time, the kings of Assyria and Babylon pretended that the kingdom of Judah was tributary to them, and held of them. It was on this pretext that Sennacherib came up to attack Hezekiah, pretending that he had failed in some articles of the treaty, agreed upon between the kings of Judah and his predecessors, 2 Kings xviii. 7. 14. Nebuchadnezzar had the same pretence for his attack, that the kings of Judah, contrary to their agreement, and to withdraw themselves from their obedience to him, had made an alliance with Egypt, 2 Kings xxiv. 1—3. where it is expressly said, that all these evils came upon Judah, at the commandment of the Lord, to remove them out of his sight.

Ver. 6. *They burnt the chosen city of the sanctuary, and made the streets desolate, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah.*] Chap. xxxiv. 22. xxxvii. 8. xxxix. 8, 9. Upon king Zedekiah's revolting from or rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar, and giving a fresh provocation unto the Babylonians, Nebuchadnezzar, with his army, once more came up against Jerusalem, the head city of the kingdom of Judah, and besieged it, where the people suffered a most miserable famine. At length, after a year and a half's siege, the city was broken up and burnt, and with it the king's houses, and the famous temple of Solomon, were all laid in ashes, and the walls of the city broken down by Nebuzar-adan; and the remnant of the people, who escaped the sword, were all carried captive into Babylon. *All these evils,* says the Scripture, *came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, through the anger of the Lord, until he had cast them out from his presence.* (2 Kings xxiv. 20.)

Ver. 7. *For they entreated him evil, who nevertheless was a prophet sanctified in his mother's womb.*] This is agreeable to what God says of him, Jer. i. 5. that he was set apart for the prophetical office by a particular decree of God, and the infusion of his sanctifying grace, even before his coming into the world. The same phrase is used of John

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the Baptist and our Saviour, (John x. 36.) before they entered on their public ministry. In the character which this writer draws of the prophet Jeremiah, he seems to dwell chiefly upon the persecutions which he endured; and indeed he was all his lifetime exposed to the ill treatment of the Jews, whose irregularities and apostacy he was always reproving, and reminding them of their approaching ruin on that account. It is mentioned here, as one principal cause of the destruction of their state, that they had contemptuously and unjustly persecuted and afflicted God's prophet, whom he raised up on purpose to declare his will and denounce his judgments. For there is nothing that fills up the measure of men's iniquities sooner, or draws down God's displeasure upon them more severely, than when they not only despise and trample on his laws, but evil-entreat and injure those whom he has appointed his messengers, and the ministers of reconciliation, and who affectionately endeavour, wish, and pray, for their good and conversion.

Ver. 8. *It was Ezekiel who saw the glorious vision, which was shewed him upon the chariot of the cherubims.* Ver. 9. *For he made mention of the enemies under the figure of the rain, and directed them that went right.*] *i. e.* He also mentioned the judgments on the enemies of God under the figure of rain, and it would go well with them that went right. It has been objected by learned men, that Daniel is here omitted, where it seems proper to have inserted him, as a Jewish prophet and author, whom Josephus calls one of the greatest of the prophets, and describes as a particular foreteller of good things. (Antiq. lib. x.) On this account Mr. Whiston inclines to think, that Daniel is meant and spoken of in ver. 9. For, says he, where does Ezekiel make mention of the enemies under the figure of rain, or what sense is there in that assertion, or how is it peculiar to Ezekiel that he foretold good things to those that walked uprightly? But Daniel made mention of the enemies in that famous dream or vision, wherein he foretold what the enemies of God's people would attempt against them, as also what happiness God would at length bestow on his chosen: he conjectures, therefore, that ἐν ὀνείρῳ is the true reading, though ἐν ὄμβρῳ obtains in all the present Greek copies. (Addenda to Histor. Memoirs, p. 183.) But I cannot altogether approve of this conjecture; for as to the first inquiry, how the prophet Daniel comes to be omitted by the writer of this book, many probable reasons may be assigned; he might, says a learned prelate, forget Daniel, as he did Abel, Melchisedec, Job, Ezra, and other Scripture worthies, the latter of whom was as famous in his generation as Nehemiah, whom he praises. It may be he reserved speaking of Daniel to another place in his book (for he observes no order of time), which he lived not to finish. Or Daniel might at first be numbered with the other prophets by the first composer of Ecclesiasticus; and yet, by reason of the author's imperfect work, or loss of one of his volumes in Egypt, or the translator's unskilfulness, or the transcriber's carelessness, the name of Daniel might be wanting in all the copies. (Bishop Chandler's Def. vol. i. p. 81—85.) To these reasons I must add one, which seems to me to carry great weight with it; *viz.* That Daniel being not reputed and placed among the prophets in the Hebrew code, but among the hagiographi, if our author had intended any where to have mentioned him, yet it was not to be expected that he should do it in this very place, because here he follows the order of the books in the Hebrew division, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets; whereas Daniel is placed between Job and Ezra, of whom, as is before observed, he takes no notice. As to the second inquiry, where does Ezekiel make mention of the enemies under the figure of rain, the margin will answer this, referring us to xiii. 11. and xxxviii. 9. 16. 22. which are sufficiently clear and express. And it is remarkable, that the margin there refers us back to this passage of Ecclesiasticus, as explanatory of each other. Nor is it a forced or unusual metaphor, to express God's judgments against either Gog or his other enemies, by an overflowing rain or shower. The Psalmist, it is certain, uses this figure, when he says of God, that *upon the ungodly he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, storm and tempest; this shall be their portion to drink.* (Psal. xi. 7.) As to the last reason alleged, for adjudging this ninth verse to Daniel, *viz.* his foretelling good things to come to those who walked uprightly, it may be replied, this is not peculiar to Daniel; for which of the prophets did not foretell the same, though, perhaps, not so eminently, or at so great a distance? On the contrary, with regard to Ezekiel, it may be said, that he stands single in the two following respects, which are both mentioned by our author: 1. That he saw the vision of the cherubim; and, 2. Declared and published the security of the righteous, and the safety of them that went right in the perilous time, when God should visit, by introducing three of the most eminent for righteousness, who should deliver themselves by their righteousness under the severest of his judgments, (xiv. 14. 20.) This verse, therefore, I presume, may very consistently be referred to Ezekiel, as our translators seem to understand it. It may not be amiss to observe, that instead of *he made mention of the enemies under the figure of rain*, the Syriac and Arabic have it, *he made mention of Job;* which I do not imagine to have arisen from a different reading, but to be another translation of the same reading, because איוב, or with the *vau* quiescent איב (like as אלוה sometimes wrote אלה), is either the proper name Job, or Hebrew word for *inimicus*. Hence Mr. Hutchinson's observation, that Job signifies *persecuted*, for איוב, *Job*, is the participle passive of the root איב, *inimicitias agere*. Therefore Job signifies one evil treated by enemies, &c. Then as to the other words, ἐν ὄμβρῳ, I suppose the Hebrew gave it שער, which either signifies *rain*, and is rendered by ὄμβρος, Deut. xxxii. 2. or a *storm*, and is so rendered Isa. xxviii. 2. where it has the signification of *procella*, and by our translators called a *destroying storm*. If, therefore, the Hebrew was איב בשער, it might either be rendered τοῦ ἐχθροῦ, or τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἐν ὄμβρῳ, *the enemies in rain*, or *Job in a whirlwind*, out of which God answered him, (chap. xxxviii.) or *Job under a storm, viz.* of afflictions. And it is remarkable, that Ezekiel is the only prophet that does make mention of Job; in this he is singular, as likewise in the vision of the cherubim, which are the two points here mentioned. Perhaps the storm means the judgments of God, spoken of in the places where Job is mentioned, as one who should deliver his own soul, &c. So that Ἰὼβ ἐν ὄμβρῳ is not unlike Νῶε ἐν καιρῷ ὀργῆς, (xliv. 17.) and both are joined together by the prophet, as worthy to be delivered in the time of wrath. But how comes Job to be mentioned in this place,

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and not also Noah and Daniel, who are joined with him in the same passages of Ezekiel? I answer, if the Syriac and Arabic would bear me out in guessing at a mistake in rendering the original, as well in these two names as they do in Job's name, I would venture to conjecture, that ἀγαθῶσαι is the rendering of the original Hebrew *Noah* and *Daniel;* for in both these places of Ezekiel, Daniel is written without the *jod, Dan el,* and being mistaken, if so transcribed, for two words, would give another sense; so that נח רן אל, might signify either the two proper names, and so the Greek might by mistake be, καὶ ἀγαθῶσαι τοὺς εὐθύνοντας ὁδοὺς, instead of καὶ τοῦ Νῶε, καὶ τοῦ Δανιὴλ, τῶν εὐθυνόντων ὁδοὺς; or as מנ signifies *requies,* the rendering might be, as is the sense of our version, *Et requiem adjudicavit ad dirigentes vias suas.* Could this be admitted, how apt it would be in this place I need not say. I shall only add, that if this conjecture, for as such only it is proposed, might be allowed, the passage would be pretty clear; whereas, as it now stands, it is indeterminate, and liable to many objections.

Ver. 10. *And of the twelve prophets let the memorial be blessed, and let their bones flourish again out of their place, for they comforted Jacob, and delivered them by assured hope.*] See note on xlvi. 12. The author having mentioned Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, speaks here of the twelve minor prophets, as they are called, who completed the Old Testament canon. These too in their respective times promised the Jews, with great assurance, that deliverance which they looked and prayed daily for at the temple; and successively comforted them, that God would perform or confirm his mercy with them, and deliver them at his own good time. This comfort expressed in the twelve prophets could be no other than the redemption by the Messias, because three of the twelve that promised it lived after the return from Babylon, to which some would apply this and the like passages, and yet after that return they foretold it as a thing still future. The Jews expected it as a happy event yet to come, and prayed for it in the days of Simon the high-priest; *i. e.* near the days of Alexander the Great; and the writer of this book renews the petition, that God would make the time short for the accomplishment of their deliverance, xxxvi. 8. (See Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 44.) From the mention of the twelve prophets here it seems manifest, that the canon of the sacred books was already made, when this tract of Ecclesiasticus was composed, and their prophecies collected and digested into one body or small volume, and that the Old Testament was in the same order that now it is, with respect to the prophetical writings at least. (See Du Pin's Hist. of the Old and New Testament.)

Ver. 11. *How shall we magnify Zorobabel? Even he was as a signet on the right hand.* Ver. 12. *So was Jesus the son of Josedec, who in their time builded the house, and set up a holy temple to the Lord, which was prepared for everlasting glory.*] The former of these was governor of Judah, or viceroy of the province of Judea, and the latter high-priest at the time of the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity. To these was recommended the direction and superintendency of rebuilding the temple; to these the prophets Haggai and Zechariah address themselves, encouraging them and the Jews under their conduct to go on with the great design by a promise of God's assistance and protection, and an assurance that the glory of that house should be superior to that of the former. They readily obeyed, finished and perfected the temple, and restored the public worship of God, and prepared and fitted it for everlasting glory; *i. e.* according to Calmet, *à Son éternelle gloire,* for the Lord's everlasting glory, and not of the builder's, as Grotius explains it; or rather, fitted this second temple for the King of glory to come into it, for the appearance of the Messiah in it; in which consisted principally the glory of this latter house. These chiefs are the two anointed ones, referred to Zech. iv. 14. and are said by this writer to be *signets on the right hand; i. e.* near and dear to God, as having the care of his people and church, and commissioned thereto by his signet or authority. Both Zerubbabel and Joshua the high-priest were figures of the Messiah, or Jesus Christ, the governor and high-priest of the Christian church, the true temple or house of God.

Ver. 16. *Sem and Seth were in great honour among men.*] All the versions except ours put Seth before Sem, and indeed such an order is necessary in point of time, for Seth was the father of the righteous before the flood, as Sem was after it. The Syriac and Arabic versions insert Enos after Seth: and there seems to be good reason to place Enos among these worthies, for he was the first man that was celebrated for piety, and began to call upon the name of the Lord, and therefore was he named Enos, *i. e.* a true man, as if there had been no true man before him in that generation, because there was no pious man. Anciently there were a set of men called Sethians, who derived their name from this patriarch, and maintained that he too, as well as Enoch, was translated without seeing death; but the church condemned these as heretics.

And so was Adam above every living thing in the creation.] Adam had the honour which belonged to no other, of being created immediately by the very hand of God himself, of being constituted by him lord of the creation, and endowed with higher faculties and greater intellectual powers; and, above all, of being born in a state of innocence and spotless purity; so that he could truly boast of having God for his father in a higher sense than any of his posterity. All others are by lineal descent, and from men like themselves, and bring into the world with them sin, corruption, and hereditary guilt. The ancient fathers gather, that Adam was much more in favour with God than any of his sinful seed, from God's walking in the garden in his presence, and his hearing his voice there; from whence they conclude, that, before the commission of sin, God appeared to Adam in a bodily shape, and like a friend spoke to him mouth to mouth. Nothing can be closer or more worth observing than what Philo says of Adam, Ὃς ἕνεκα εὐγενείας οὐδενὶ ἀνητῷ σύγκριτος, κ. τ. λ. *Cui mortalis nemo hac nobilitate conferendus est; qui in corpoream statuam Dei manibus affabre formatus est, summo artificio: animi verò dignitatem adeptus est a Deo, inspirante divinæ virtutis tantum quantum mortalis natura potuit capere. Præstans adeo nobilitas, ut nulla alia quævis earum, quæ illustres nominantur, in comparationem venire potest,* &c. (Περὶ εὐγενείας.) See also more to the same purpose, De Mundi Opificio.

CHAP. L.

Ver. 1. *SIMON the high-priest, the son of Onias, who in his life repaired the house again, and in his days fortified the*

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temple.] We find in the Jewish history two Simons, sons of Onias, both high-priests, but at times very distant from each other; the first was Simon the Just, so called for his great piety towards God, and for his good-will and benevolence to the children of his people. (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 2.) The second is mentioned likewise by the same historian, (ibid. cap. 4.) and is the same high-priest, who in his great zeal opposed Ptolemy Philopater's entrance into the sanctuary. (3 Maccab.) Learned men are divided which of these the author here speaks of. Grotius, Bossuet, and Calmet, contend for the latter; Eusebius, Jansenius, Corn. a Lapide, Drusius, Badwell, and the very learned author of the Discourse concerning the Age of the Two Sirachides, hereto prefixed, are for the former, whose opinion is supported by the following reasons:—1. The great character here given of Simon, with which agrees the testimony of Josephus, who says nothing in honour of Simon II. 2. Simon the Just was contemporary with this writer, for he mentions him as officiating, and takes particular notice of the gracefulness of his performing the service, ver. 11, 12. and was himself then probably about ten years old. 3. The author manifestly speaks of a Simon then dead, for he mentions what he did in his lifetime, ver. 1. particularly his good deeds for the house of the Lord, and the offices thereof; but the pontificate of Simon II. was at a good distance from the time of this writer, and will suit better with that of the translator.

Ver. 3. *In his days the cistern to receive water was covered with plates of brass, being in compass as the sea.*] In, or rather before, the tabernacle of Moses, there was only a laver or kettle; afterward, when the Jewish church was in its flourishing and settled state, Solomon enlarged it to be a brazen sea, or cistern, 1 Kings vii. 23. It is affirmed by many writers too hastily, that in the second temple there was no proper ark, no throne encompassed by cherubims, no visible glory, no molten sea. However the learned may determine the three former particulars, there seems great reason to conclude from the words of this writer, that there was a molten sea. (See 2 Chron. v. 12.) In the catholic church of Christ, as represented in the book of Revelation, there is a sea of glass, like crystal, infinitely more precious and beautiful, than either of those in the Jewish temple, or any thing made of metal. (See Daubuz on Apoc. cap. 4.)

Ver. 7. *And as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds.*] Ὡς τόξον φωτίζων νεφέλας δόξης. I would rather render, *As the glorious bow shining in the clouds*, or, *As the rainbow enlightening the clouds with glory.* One cannot help observing, what pains this writer takes from ver. 5. to 12. to set forth the graceful presence and august appearance of this favourite high-priest; he searches heaven and earth for comparisons to illustrate the piece; whatever is either grand, magnificent, beautiful, precious, or lovely, is introduced upon the occasion. The sun, moon, and stars, in their greatest lustre and perfection, are all made to assist in their turns. The glorious bow on high, as well as the variegated flowers beneath, lend their colours. The gold and superb ornaments of the temple, the odoriferous incense and holy fire on the altar, the rich vases, &c. meet to reflect honour on him. In short, the works both of nature and art, the most curious and valuable in their kinds, are borrowed, either to express the superior dignity of his person, amidst his surrounding brethren, like a tall cedar; or the perfection and glory of his pontifical apparel, as if, when he put on the robe of honour, in *his long garment was the whole world*, as the book of Wisdom expresses it, (xviii. 24.)

Ver. 15. *He stretched out his hand to the cup, and poured of the blood of the grape; he poured out at the foot of the altar a sweet-smelling savour unto the most high King of all.* Ver. 16. *Then shouted the sons of Aaron, and sounded the silver trumpets, and made a great noise to be heard, for a remembrance before the Most High.* Ver. 17. *Then all the people together hasted, and fell down to the earth upon their faces to worship their Lord God Almighty, the Most High.* Ver. 18. *The sinners also sang praises with their voices, with great variety of sounds was there made sweet melody.* Ver. 19. *And the people besought the Lord by prayer, before him that is merciful, till the solemnity of the Lord was ended, and they had finished his service.*] The eighteenth verse seems out of place here, it should follow the sixteenth, and the whole will be better connected. While the sacrifices were offering, which was the first part of the temple-service, the priests with trumpets, and the Levites with musical instruments, and the singers, together with the people, joined their voices and sang psalms to complete the harmony. We find that David and Solomon appointed singing and trumpets at the time of sacrificing, (1 Chron. vi. 31. xvi. 7.) and that Ezra restored this custom after the return from the Babylonish captivity, (Ezra iii. 10, 11.) and the same continued in after-ages. But at the time of incense there was kept silence, the people praying to themselves. (Luke i. 10.) We have here a distinct and clear description of the manner of the people's praying without, whilst the priest offered the sweet-smelling savour of incense within: for at the time when the priest offered incense in the sanctuary, the people were left without in the *atrium Judæorum*, praying for the pardon of their sins, every man silently apart for himself. This seems likewise to be referred to by the half hour's silence in heaven, Rev. viii. 1. which is set down there, to point to the time of the priest's being gone in, to offer incense, or the odour of sweet smell. I see no necessity, with Calmet, Bossuet, and others, to apply the description here particularly to the high-priest's officiating at Ptolemy Philopater's solemn sacrifice in the temple: it is as applicable to the high-priest officiating upon any other solemn occasion; nor can a true synchronism be preserved according to that interpretation.

Ver. 20. *Then he went down and lifted up his hands over the whole congregation of the children of Israel, to give the blessing of the Lord with his lips, and to rejoice in his name.* Ver. 21. *And they bowed themselves down to worship the second time, that they might receive a blessing from the Most High.*] When the solemnity of the Lord was ended by the incense being offered, the high-priest came back and pronounced the εὐλογία, or benediction. The form of the solemn blessing with which the priests dismissed the people by God's especial order was this, *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and give thee peace.* (Numb. vi. 22.) And lest any one should think too slightly of this blessing, because pronounced by a mortal like himself; it is added, Numb. vi. 23. *I the Lord will bless him*, and therefore properly called here, *the blessing of the Lord*, by the priest's lips; shewing, that the effect

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of this blessing does not depend upon man, but upon the ordinance of God, from the mouth of his own minister, whom he hath appointed to bless in his name, (Deut. xxi. 5.) and whose blessing he hath promised to confirm. We see from this passage, that, when the Jews received the blessing from the priest, they received it kneeling, or bowing down their heads. In the primitive times it was customary for the deacon (to prepare the people the better for it) to call out immediately before the time of the blessings, in such words as these, *Bow down to the blessing.* (Chrysost. Liturg.) The blessing of the bishop or priest was so highly esteemed in the primitive times, that none durst go out of the church till they had received it, according to the councils of Agatha, (can. 31.) and that of Orleans, (can. 22.)

Ver. 22. *Now therefore bless ye the God of all, which only doeth wondrous things every where, which exalteth our days from the womb, and dealeth with us according to his mercy.* Ver. 23. *He grant us joyfulness of heart, and that peace may be in our days in Israel for ever.* Ver. 24. *That he would confirm his mercy with us, and deliver us at his time.*] We may learn from this short prayer of the wise man, how to compose and regulate our own; we should acknowledge God therein, to be omnipresent and almighty; that ever since we were born, we have been preserved by his good providence every day, hour, and moment; that it is an instance of his great mercy to us thus to be mindful of our preservation and being, having nothing in us but sin, and nothing due to us but punishment. The conclusion of this prayer seems to contain more than a request for peace and temporal blessings, it relates to and manifests this writer's and his countrymen's impatience for the Messiah, and their earnest wish that God would speedily send the blessing of all men, to *perform the mercy promised to their forefathers, and remember his holy covenant.* (Luke i. 72.) For it was the constant prayer of the Jews, both before and under the Messias, that God would hasten the blessings hoped for and expected by them, and that he would make the time short; and it is still their form in the synagogue to say, *in our days,* i. e. quickly, when they pray for the blessing of the Messias.

Ver. 25. *There be two manner of nations which my heart abhorreth, and the third is no nation.*] It is to be observed, that the two nations here referred to are not to be taken exclusively, and in opposition to the Jews; but as *gens* among the Latins is sometimes taken in a very limited sense, to signify no more than a family or kindred, so here δύο ἔθνη, *two nations,* may signify two parts or cities of Palestine, as it had several divisions; and Samaria is probably one of them. Our translators, by rendering δύο ἔθνη, *two manner of nations,* seem to guard against understanding them strictly as such. The author will not allow the third to be any nation, because of the great mixture of all sorts of people among them: he means the Cuthites or Samaritans, who dwelt at Sichem, whose ancestors the king of Assyria sent thither; for when the Assyrians carried away captive the ten tribes, (2 Kings xvii. 24.) they placed strangers in the chiefest part of the country, *viz.* Samaria.

Which my heart abhorreth.] The schism of the ten tribes was the first rise of the extreme aversion the Jews had for the Samaritans, Samaria being the metropolis of the kingdom of Israel, and set up in a manner as a rival to Jerusalem, as the temple on Mount Gerizim was to that of Solomon. The hatred of the Jews against the Samaritans, was likewise much increased by the opposition these last made against the former on the return from the Babylonish captivity, both in the rebuilding of the temple and the repairing the walls of Jerusalem. (Ezra iv.) On these accounts the disputes and animosities between them rose to the greatest degree imaginable. (See Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. 6. 18.) The Scriptures and the Jewish records acquaint us, that the jealousy and averseness between the two were so great, that they would have no converse together, nor shew any act of kindness to each other: and that this hatred was very ancient, appears from hence, that when the Jews would express their utmost aversion to our blessed Saviour, they said, *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil;* (John viii. 48.) as if to be a Samaritan, and have a devil, were things of equal reproach. If the Jews hated the Samaritans, the Samaritans were equally fierce in shewing their resentment against the Jews upon all occasions, as is plain from Luke ix. 53. Jesus going one day to a village of Samaria, the inhabitants would not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. Josephus instances in many affronts and injuries offered to the Jews, as they passed through the country of the Samaritans to their solemn feasts at Jerusalem. (Antiq. lib. xviii. xx. cap. 5.) The same is also evident from what the woman of Samaria, or rather from what St. John in a parenthesis, says, *viz.* that the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans, (iv. 9.) which some have extended so far, as to exclude all manner of civil intercourse, even the asking or giving one another a glass of water, and that the answer of this woman was an insult upon our Saviour, out of an ill-natured joy and satisfaction, to find a Jew forced to beg a little water of her. It may seem somewhat strange, that this writer, who has delivered such excellent precepts of morality and instruction in this book, should be so uncharitable and ill-natured at the conclusion of it, as to declare, that he hates such and such nations from his heart. Calmet, in answer to this, says, that the author does not here declare that he himself hates any in particular, but that he judged these people, from their inveterate malice against the Jews, to be their greatest and most dangerous enemies, and as such to be disliked and shunned by every true Israelite.

Ver. 26. *They that sit upon the mountain of Samaria, and they that dwell among the Philistines, and that foolish people that dwell in Sichem.*] Some have fancied that the Samaritans are spoken of in the first and last part of this verse; and indeed one would be apt to think, by what Josephus says, that Samaria and Sichem were one and the same city, since that historian places Sichem on Mount Gerizim, and calls it the capital of the Samaritans. (Antiq. lib. ii.) But the most exact geographers make Samaria and Sichem to have been two different cities. However this be, it is not probable that our author should mean the same people in both places, or that, mentioning three nations whom he disliked, he should name the Samaritans twice in so short a compass, though we should suppose him tinctured with the national hatred to that people. I rather therefore incline to Drusius's learned conjecture, that the true reading here is, ἐν ὄρει Σηείρ, those that inhabit Mount Seir, *i. e.* the Idumeans, *Qui sedent in Monte Seir;* so that the three nations, or rather the three particular sorts

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of people that he is offended at, are now clear and distinct, *viz.* the Idumeans, who inhabit Mount Seir; the Philistines, who were continually at war with the Israelites; and, lastly, the inhabitants of Sichem, *i. e.* the Samaritans, whom he undervalues, and scarce allows them worthy of the name of a people, either because they were a mixed multitude, or were apostates, and held many erroneous tenets, and particularly favoured Sadducism.

CHAP. LI.

Ver. 1. *JESUS, son of Sirach the elder.*] The author of this book finishes his work with a prayer or hymn (see first Prologue), from which we learn many particulars relating to his life; as, the dangers he met with, the favour of God in delivering him, his travels for the acquisition of wisdom, his application to and success in it, and his earnest exhortation to the study of it, which we meet with likewise in the body of the work, which is no improbable reason that this prayer also belongs to him. It appears from it that he was brought in danger of his life before the king on an unjust accusation, probably a charge of some offence against the state; but whether it was before a king of Syria or Egypt that he was accused is uncertain. Such as understand the accusation here referred to of the grandfather, differ greatly in point of time when it happened, some placing it so early as in the reign of Ptolemy Lagi, others so late as that of Ptolemy Epiphanes: however this be, most probably this ill usage was the occasion of his passing into Egypt, where he spent the latter part of his life and wrote this work, and here it was his grandson is said after to have found his writings. Grotius contends that this chapter, and the three last verses of the foregoing, were wrote by the grandson, Jesus the translator; and with him agrees Dr. Prideaux in both these particulars, who assigns the incident of the accusation to the reign of Ptolemy Physcon, whose cruelty inclined him to bring any one, and on the slightest occasion, into danger of his life, that came into his power. (Connex. tom. ii. b. v.)

Ver. 10. *I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord, that he would not leave me in the days of my trouble, and in the time of the proud, when there was no help.*] When the proud or wicked have most power and authority, that is said to be their time. Thus our Saviour says to the chief priests and the elders, and those that came to apprehend him, Αὐτὴ ὑμῶν ἐστιν ἡ ὥρα, *This is your time.* (Luke xxii. 53.) Most of the interpreters observe, that the second person in the Trinity is here plainly distinguished from the Father. A very pious and learned prelate says, that the author speaks as plainly here of our Lord Christ as David did when he said, *The Lord said unto my Lord,* Psal. cx. 1. to which probably he alludes, and plainly gives us to understand, that not only the prophets, but all God's faithful people in those days, believed the Lord, the Almighty God, to be the Father of one who was himself also *the Lord,* and in a peculiar manner *their* Lord and Saviour; and that in their prayers they had a respect unto him, and prayed in his name, calling upon *the Lord* as the Father of *their Lord Christ,* Matt. xxvi. 63. John i. 49. and so expecting only to be heard upon his account and for his sake who was promised by the name of *the Lord,* Dan. ix. 17. for Daniel prays in his name as plainly as we do now, saying, *Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, that is desolate, for the Lord's sake; i. e.* for the Lord Christ's sake, for no other Lord can possibly be meant there. (Beveridge's Serm. vol. iii. p. 205.) Grotius will have Κυρίου to be an interpolation from some officious Christian hand, and makes the reading only to be, ἐπεκαλεσάμην Κύριον πατέρα μου, κ. τ. λ. Calmet reproves him smartly for his suspicion, and determining so magisterially in the point; and observes, that errors propagated under so great a name are the more dangerous, and that an opinion, grounded on so little reason as this is, ought to be exposed, and the truth thereby vindicated. Nor is Bossuet more favourable to this critic on the same account: he allows him to have excelled "in grammaticis, in historicis, sæpe etiam in moralibus;" but thinks him not altogether orthodox, and therefore advises such as consult him, "ut eum adjutorem, non ducem, non magistrum habeant." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 28. *Get learning with a great sum of money, and get much gold by her.* Ver. 29. *Let your soul rejoice in his mercy, and be not ashamed of his praise.* Ver. 30. *Work your work betimes, and in his time he will give you his reward.*] The advice is, ver. 25. *Buy her for yourselves without money,* which is not inconsistent with what the author directs here. The sense of both connected together seems to be, That diligence alone will make a considerable progress in wisdom, and procure a large share of it; that the value of it is so inestimable, that no expense should be thought too great for the obtaining it; and should ever so large a sum be laid out in the way of education, and for the purchasing the necessary helps towards learning and improvement, whatever it may cost is not to be repined at, for she will sufficiently repay the charge; *for all good things come together with her, and innumerable riches in her hand.* (Wisd. vii. 11.) The advice is not unlike that of Solomon: *Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.* (Prov. iv. 7.) Let the pleasing reflection of the many benefits and advantages proceeding from her encourage your pursuit (so Grotius expounds, ἔλεος, reading likewise αὐτῆς); nor be ashamed at any time, or repent of your fondness and affection for her. Our translators, more agreeably to the Greek, understand it of the mercy of the Lord; and so Calmet renders: and the Geneva version, very explicitly, *Let your soul rejoice in the mercy of the Lord;* which, it must be confessed, introduces the next and last verse better; the sense of which is, Labour to obtain true wisdom, and to work the work of God and of your own salvation early in life; and when the time of recompence shall come, wherein God will reward the improvement of men's talents, you shall have the happiness to reap the blessed fruits of righteousness, and to find that *your labour will not be in vain in the Lord.* In a word, the author finishes this work as Solomon does his book of Ecclesiastes; and the *conclusion of the whole matter* is this,—*Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is both the glory and happiness of man.*

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A

CRITICAL COMMENTARY

UPON

THE BOOKS

OF

TOBIT, JUDITH, BARUCH, THE HISTORY OF SUSANNA,

AND

BEL AND THE DRAGON:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

TWO DISSERTATIONS ON THE BOOKS OF MACCABEES AND ESDRAS.

The authors of the books of Tobit and Judith, and the rest of that order, were no prophets inspired by God to write his authentical Scriptures. They who first put these deutero-canonical, or ecclesiastical books into the Bible, did not thereby intend to make them equal to the books of Moses and the prophets, but only to recommend them unto the private and public reading of the church, both for the many excellent precepts and examples of life that be in them, and for the better knowledge of the history and estate of God's people, from the time of the prophets to the coming of Christ.—*Bp. Cousins's Scholast. Hist. of the Can. of Script.* cap. 19.

Libros Tobit, Judith ad Synedrium Alexandrinum delatos fuisse plusquam probabile est. Si fuerint autem delati, tunc in examen vocati; si in examen vocati, tunc approbati, vel reprobati: si reprobati, aut rejecti, tunc proculdubio non accepissent hos Christiani: sed hos acceperunt Christiani; imo acceperunt etiam ex Judaismo ad Christum conversi, seu potius hos prius receptos Christiani facti non rejecerunt—rejectos a Synedrio isto (cujus res hæc erat) non fuisse, ac damnatos, citra omnem est controversiam: receptos fuisse ac comprobatos verisimile est valde.—*Grabe's Prolegom.* cap. 1. tom. ii.

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A

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE BOOK OF TOBIT.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

THOMAS,

LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.

THE following sheets, part of a larger work, which his Lordship has been pleased to favour with his encouragement, and occasionally with his illustrations, are, with all gratitude, humbly inscribed,

By his Lordship's

Most dutiful and obedient servant,

RICHARD ARNALD.

PREFACE.

BEFORE I proceed to speak to the book itself, its original language, and by whom wrote, at what time, and on what occasion, its several versions, and their agreement, it seems necessary, in the first place, to consider the nature of it, and to examine, and if possible settle, this fundamental point, *viz.* whether it be absolutely a real history, or how far it may be considered and allowed as such.

Many, and especially some of the moderns, contend that this book does not contain a true history; that there is too much of the marvellous and supernatural to be accounted for as historical fact; and that the whole is a pious fiction, wherein, under borrowed names, is given a pattern or image of a good father, and an obedient and dutiful son; in what manner God rewards the practice of good works even in this life, and especially the care of burying the dead; and the superintendency of his ministering angels over such as shall be heirs of salvation. But even considered in this light as fiction (an opinion which I cannot by any means subscribe to), it should not be represented as lying fiction, but rather like the invention of a Xenophon or a Homer, to which last Dr. Prideaux indeed compares it, and the most exceptionable parts, as so many studied ornaments to an instructive narration: a narration (for fable I cannot consent to call it) founded on historical truth, but dressed up in some particulars, perhaps with improvements, to dignify and set off the story, which have in them at least poetic truth; *i. e.* what agreed with the current notions of the age, or was thought an allowable embellishment (and may not the figurative and miraculous parts be innocently considered in this light?) to make it read with more delight, or remembered with more ease.

Moral fictions are very different from forgeries and falsehoods. Xenophon's Life of Cyrus, to which this of Tobit has been resembled, is one such, amongst many others, of heathen writers; and possibly many pieces in the early times of Christianity were such, which have coarser names injuriously given them. Telemachus bears a distinguished rank among those of the present age, and neither the more ordinary facts, nor the miracles related in it, are considered as lies, though they are not true. The eastern writers make more free with the marvellous in such compositions than we of the west do; and what they have at any time wrote of this sort agreeably surprising, is rather to be excused, if not commended, for the improvement, or at least amusement designed us, than condemned for the want of veracity. Of this sort are the Arabian Tales, which is really an Arabian performance; and though it abounds with bold flights, according to their figurative manner of writing, yet ought it not, I conceive, to be charged with want of truth. In like manner, though we cannot perhaps vindicate the whole of this history as real fact, and its embellishments have a near conformity to the theology then in vogue, so as to give some umbrage to a reader, who will not be so candid as to acknowledge with St. Jerome, "Multa in Scripturis sacris dicuntur juxta opinionem illius temporis, et non juxta quod rei veritas continebat," (in Jer. cap. xxviii.) Yet it may be sufficient for the present purpose, that the historical ground-plot is true, whatever may be said as to particular passages in it. Amongst the most exceptionable of these, the continuance of angels for several days with particular persons of no extraordinary note, and seemingly on no very important occasions, and under disguise too, and being what we have no instance of in genuine Scripture, has been most insisted on and objected to. But if we consider the stories of Raphael and Asmodeus in an allegorical view, as re-

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presentations of the doctrine of good and bad angels allowed to every person, the one as a guardian, the other as a tempter, the objection will be greatly weakened, if not wholly vanish. They are both words of Hebrew original, and, according to their primitive signification, might possibly be adapted by the writers to their characters in the history. And should any one conjecture that Tobiah, the Chaldee name both of father and son, was invented to express the good man of God, טוביה, and his wife Anna, his vexation, from ענה, *afflixit, respondit, clamavit,* it would not perhaps be any forced or unnatural interpretation, nor altogether to be disapproved of. Not that I mean hereby to insinuate, that these are not proper names, or to weaken the evidence of their real persons, or that they acted their parts only dramatically.

What ancient works were designed as dramatical, and what as historical, must be judged partly by internal characters, partly by the opinions originally entertained of them. By internal characters, I would understand such notes or marks, by which the reality of what is related may be discovered and ascertained; as, personal facts, the time when done, where performed, and on what occasion, and their being recorded and transmitted by the actors themselves, all of which circumstances declare in favour of Tobit's being a true history. In it we have his genealogy or pedigree, the place of his nativity, the time in which he lived, his condition of life and employment; his family, his captivity, poverty, blindness, his recovery from it; his age, death, and place of burial; all which are personal circumstances, and are expressly mentioned. We have also his behaviour and moral conduct set down in the different states of life, particularly under his misfortunes. In him we have a perfect model of private life, and all the virtues and duties of that condition seemed united together. We see in him a firm resolution to stand upon his guard against the contagion of ill example from his infancy, an equality of mind in the different situations of life, a generosity in the time of his plenty to succour the distressed, and lend even large sums of money without interest; a patience in supporting even an extreme poverty, not only without murmuring, but with thanksgiving: an invincible courage in the exercise of works of mercy; a gentleness in bearing with contradictions at home, a firm confidence in God under the severest trials: a constant care in training up his son, as well by his example as by his instructions, in the fear of God, in doing justice to his neighbour, and shewing compassion to the poor: and, lastly, a lively and fixed expectation of future blessings, and an assured hope of the promises made to Israel, which supported and comforted him under the greatest afflictions; and these he reminds his fellow-Jews of, to excite their trust in God and the belief of his prophets, for the fulfilling of those things which were yet behind: (see Rollin's Belles Lettres, vol. iii.) a character resembling that of holy Job, in almost all the particulars, whose history, like this, has been misrepresented likewise as purely dramatical. But if, where such express circumstances of real historical facts appear, a strong conceit shall be allowed wantonly to turn all into parable, there must be an end of the certainty and reality of all history. By the same right and with as much justice every author, sacred or profane, might be made to be or speak any thing, which fancy invents or caprice dictates, and to take his turn upon the stage to act a part of some drama. Might not the history of our first parents be made to open the scene? But when enigmatically represented, as some bold spirits have of late attempted, what a forced and unnatural appearance does it make! The story of the brazen serpent, and the surprising cures wrought even by the sight of it, on those bitten by serpents, with that of Gideon's fleece, what a scope might they give to a teeming fancy! The like might be said of the history of Samson, where one meets with a number of facts so extraordinary, that they might seem incredible, were they not warranted by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. To say nothing of the three hundred foxes tied tail to tail, as it is a mistake, I conceive, of our version, the great number slain by him, even a thousand Philistines, with no other arms than the jawbone of an ass, an instrument very unusual and unpromising for so great a slaughter; the surprising flow of water from that jawbone for his refreshment; the ponderous gates of a city carried away on his shoulders to the summit of a hill;—these, and other the like actions, of which that history is full, are so extraordinary, that, should jealous and suspicious persons, who cannot persuade themselves to believe any thing that surpasses the ordinary course of nature, but employ the like ingenious torture, might not these too be metamorphosed into enigma and parable? At this rate, the history of Esther may become also a tragedy: for the sudden and astonishing revolutions, the hasty and precipitate changes, recorded there, brought about almost in a few hours, beyond all observations and precedents in story, may possibly be represented, rather to carry the air of a tragedy, than to contain a real historical event, especially as it is not agreed who Ahasuerus certainly is, nor in what time that history is to be placed. What I have urged in defence of the history of Tobit, particularly the latter instance, is equally applicable to that of Judith, which Grotius and other learned writers have represented likewise as parabolical, and may serve to shew what a warm, unrestrained fancy *might* attempt. But if to attempt to weaken and explain away, by enigma and parable, the credibility of these, or any parts of Scripture, is rashness and presumption, to say no worse of it, why should a like liberty, with regard to either of these deutero-canonical pieces, as they were anciently called, be thought allowable, which carry in them the strongest marks of their being real histories?

The other way I mentioned, by which ancient works designed as historical might be distinguished, was the opinion originally entertained of them. With respect to the book of Tobit, it is certain that the Jews had all along a great regard for it, that they read it, and looked upon it as a true history of this particular family at least, and compiled from the memoirs remaining with it; and though they did not receive it into their canon, as they did none not wrote in Hebrew, or not extant before the time of Esdras, yet they admitted it into their Hagiographa; see Grot. Præf. in Tob. et Sixt. in Senens. Bibl. lib. viii. where it stands placed in the Alexandrian MS. and the best editions of the LXX. The ancient Christians, who confined themselves to those books which the Jews acknowledged, for the same reason admitted not this book into their canon, but still they paid a great regard to it as an instructive manual. Polycarp, Clemens Alexandrinus, Chrysostom, and other fathers, frequently quote and refer to it; and St. Am-

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brose has a whole treatise on it. We may be assured that persons of their nice discernment would not have spent their learned labours on it, nor made use of its authority, if it had been a mere drama, a parable, or an entertaining fiction only; nor have recommended the principal person in it, as a pattern worthy of imitation for his many virtues, if the character had existed only in imagination. Several councils, as those of Carthage, Florence, and Trent, have even made this book canonical; but though this is carrying matters too far, it shews however their sentiments of its value. They would scarcely have taken into their canon a romance, or a fable, however instructive or piously designed.

I shall next consider the original language of this book: it is generally agreed, that it was first written either in Hebrew or Chaldee, though the original cannot now be found. P. Fagius contends for the former, and that the original was what he saw at Constantinople; but many learned men are of a very different opinion, and think that to have been only some later version, probably made from the Greek. (See Huet. Demonst. Evang. prop. 4. Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. tom. ii.) It is most probable that it was wrote in Chaldee, which was the language of that country where Tobit was a captive. St. Jerome having met with a Chaldee copy, employed a person that perfectly understood that language to render it into Hebrew, which himself at the same time translated into Latin, and his translation is that which we have in the Vulgar Latin edition of the Bible. The book itself is supposed to have been wrote, the former part of it by Tobit himself, and the latter, almost to the conclusion, by his son Tobias; but there is no certainty of it: at least it is thought, that they left behind them memoirs of their family, and such materials as a Chaldee author afterward digested into t hat form in which we now have it. A late writer surmises it to be the work of some Babylonian Jew in particular. (Whiston's Sac. Hist. vol. i.) And indeed Calmet observes, that the name Raphael, which is found no where but in the book of Tobit, is of Babylonish extraction. However this be, the design of the book, when or by whomsoever wrote, was certainly commendable and good; it appears to be not so much to preserve the memoirs of a single religious family, as, from the example of so good a man, exercised with a sad variety of misfortunes, and yet rising superior to them, through an assured hope of the promises made to Israel, to comfort the Jews under their captivity, and by a prospect of future blessings, to alleviate their present afflicted condition.

As to the several versions of this book, besides that of Jerome's abovementioned, there is a Greek one much ancienter, for we find it made use of by Polycarp, Clemens Alexandrinus, and other fathers, who were before him; and from this the Syriac version is supposed to have been made, and the English one which is at present used; for Coverdale's was apparently from the Vulgate. It is uncertain by whom the Greek version was made; that it was after that of the LXX. appears from viii. 6. which is manifestly transcribed from thence; nor can it any more belong to Theodotion, because Polycarp quotes from it long before that translator: it seems rather the work of some Hellenist Jew, probably one of Alexandria. The Hebrew copies of this book are thought to be comparatively of modern composition, and to have been made by Fagius and Munster, whose names are prefixed to them: that of Fagius approaches nearest to the Greek, and seems more pure and correct; the other, some have suspected to have been done from the Vulgate. The Latin and Greek copies vary extremely, each having some particulars which are wanting in the other. Hence some have surmised, that the history of Tobit was written twice; once more large and fully, which the Vulgate is thought to follow; and once succinctly, which the Greek copied from, or in the form which we at present have it; which, if true, may account for the variations mentioned. Thus much however should be observed, that the preference should be given to the Greek. As Jerome himself did not, as he acknowledges, understand Chaldee, the substance of his version was either dictated to him by some learned Jew, upon whose skill and sincerity he must depend, or, which seems not improbable, was the translation of a translation, and consequently, as Huetius observes, "Hinc alienum aliquid et adventitium huic adhæsisse par est suspicari." (Demons. Evang. prop. 4.)

If by comparing carefully these several versions together, and critically examining the Greek text in particular, I have been so happy as to throw a new light upon passages otherwise obscure, and, if I may so speak, have helped Tobit's blindness; if the solutions which I have offered of the objections made to this history, shall in some measure contribute to clear difficulties, remove prejudice, and silence profane and low raillery, and thereby to justify the wisdom of our church in the public use of it, I shall answer my design in engaging in this work, and think my labour not misemployed.

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A

DISSERTATION

ON

THE DEMON ASMODEUS.

TRANSLATED FROM CALMET.

IT is very surprising that the Holy Scriptures, which speak so often of good and evil angels, their appearing, and the supernatural and miraculous works performed by them, should mention so little of the nature, power, functions, qualities, glory, subordination, and the manner of acting, of these spirits, whom we look upon as the chief of the works of the great Creator, the most excellent productions of his power. All that we find there concerning them may probably be reduced to these heads; *viz.* that there are both good and evil spirits; that the former continue in a state of glory, because they preserved their innocence, and persevered in a dutiful submission to their Creator; that the latter, being elated with pride, by rebellion forfeited their first estate, and are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire; that they employ themselves in exerting their rage and malice against mankind, to draw them into the same condemnation and unhappy condition to which they are reduced themselves: that good angels are God's ministers sent on gracious errands, and for the purposes of mercy and loving-kindness; and evil ones are the executioners of his justice and vengeance: that among devils as well as among angels there is a certain subordination, the conditions of which are unknown to us; that they act upon bodies and spirits in a manner yet more incomprehensible to us: that every kingdom has its angel which presides over it, and every one of us a guardian angel, which watches for our good and preservation, and is assisting in the great business of our salvation, if we ourselves do not oppose their kind intentions, and frustrate the mercies and good-will of God towards us.

But even in that which God has been pleased to discover to us, how great is the obscurity, and how many the difficulties! Angels and devils are almost always represented as corporeal. Most of the histories which make any mention of them, have rather the air of fiction and romance than of true history. Let us examine, for instance, the account given of the temptation of Eve, and that of the angel's appearance to Balaam and his ass, the history of the demon Asmodeus before us, Satan's tempting of Job, and the blessed Jesus himself in the wilderness: are not these instances more likely to increase our doubts and multiply difficulties than to dispel or remove them? God seems to have designed thereby to put bounds to our curiosity, and to turn away our attention from such matters, the knowledge of which is not so necessary for us, in order to employ the whole capacity of our minds upon more important subjects, and which have a nearer and more direct regard to our true and essential interests.

The ancient Jews before the captivity of Babylon do not seem much to have concerned themselves in their inquiries about angels: we do not any where find that they paid any sort of worship, either true or false, superstitious or otherwise, to them. It was not, by their own confession, till they came into Chaldea, that they learned the names of Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, and that there were seven principal spirits before the throne of God. Nor was their knowledge more perfect with respect to evil spirits: the name *Satan*, which we sometimes meet with, is general, and signifies *an adversary*. Beelzebub is the name of an idol. Isaiah (xiv. 12.) mentions *Lucifer;* but that means only the morning star, and when applied to the devil, it must be only figuratively. Asmodeus seems to be the first proper name of the devil that we meet with in Scripture,* and yet there is room to doubt whether this be really a proper name; as we may understand the passage of Tobit, iii. 8. in this manner, *viz.* the evil angel, the destroyer, killed her seven husbands. But indeed it must be confessed, that the natural sense of that place rather leads us to understand Asmodeus as a proper name. The Greek reads, *Asmodeus, the evil spirit;* Prosper styles him, *the most wicked;* and Munster's Hebrew copy, *the prince of the devils.*

Amongst the many etymologies of the name of Asmodeus, one cannot fix upon a better than that which is derived from the verb *schamad*, which signifies *to ruin, to destroy, to exterminate, to make desolate,* &c. titles which belong but too truly to the devil, whose principal aim is to ruin souls, to destroy works of piety and virtue, to overthrow good intentions, and to oppose all the gracious and merciful designs of God our Saviour towards us; in a word, who glories in mischief, and employs his power to make men wicked and miserable, and to spread discord, confusion, and disorder, through the world. St. John (Rev. ix.) mentions an evil angel, whose name in the Hebrew tongue

* Calmet here calls the book of Tobit *Scripture*, from the council of Trent determining it to be so.

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is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek, *Apollyon*, and in Latin, *Exterminans*. It seems to be that destroying angel which executed God's vengeance upon the Egyptians by the ten sore plagues inflicted upon that people, and upon the murmuring and rebellious Israelites also, who died in the wilderness, and on the army of Sennacherib, destroyed in Palestine. It was he that stirred up the first persecutors, and hath ever since raised disturbances in the church of Christ. It is he, finally, who continues to make war against it by heretics and wicked persons, who corrupt its faith and dishonour its purity, by their evil lives or pernicious doctrines.

But as the name *Exterminator*, or destroyer, suits equally all evil spirits, it may be asked, which that in particular was, which tormented Sara, and killed her seven husbands; for we are assured, that there are devils of more sorts than one. (1 Cor. xv. 24.) Some are princes and rulers, some inferior and subalterns; some preside over one vice, and some over another. There are demons of avarice, and demons of impurity; demons of drunkenness, and demons of luxury. Some are concerned in foretelling future events, and giving out pretended oracles: some are employed in tempting and seducing people; others in tormenting those whom they have taken possession of: there are some who occasion certain diseases; and it appears from the gospel, that the Jews ascribed to the devil most of the illnesses and calamities which men are visited with. In fine, it is thought that there are evil spirits who have their habitation in the air, others in deserts, others in provinces and great kingdoms. What is then the employment or rank of Asmodeus, of whom we are speaking? The Hebrew copy, which we have already cited, gives him the title of *king of devils;* but there is mention of more than one king of the devils. The Jews accuse our Saviour for casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. (Matt. ix. 34.) St. Jerome, upon the authority of the Hebrews, gives the name *Resceph* to the prince of the devils, in Habac. iii. which signifies *live coals, sparks, arrows*, &c. terms suitable to the devil, either on account of his great readiness to do mischief, or the vengeance thundered out against him by God for his deceiving the first woman. St. Chrysostom calls the prince of the devils *Sathael; i. e.* one that is estranged, or disdainfully turns away from God.

St. John bestows on him many epithets, as, the *great dragon*, the *old serpent* called the *devil*, and *Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.* (Job i. 6. Rev. xii. 9.) And our Saviour himself (Matt. iv. 10.) likewise calls him *Satan*, a name which expresses perfectly his hatred and malice against men, and his aversion to all goodness. The Greek word, Διάβολος, has the same signification, and means a false accuser, and unjust and spiteful enemy. St. Peter paints him, *as a roaring lion, going about and seeking whom he may devour*, (i. 5. 8.) He is, as before observed, sometimes also called *Lucifer*. There are some that think him to be the chief of the demons of Media, where he principally exercised his sovereignty: in like manner as that other demon, mentioned Dan. x. 13. exercised his over Persia, and opposed the archangel Michael, the protector of the people of God. The name Asmodeus may possibly be also derived from the Hebrew *Esch-Madai; i. e.* the *fire of Media;* because there this evil spirit kindled the fire of impure love. The rabbins will have it that Asmodeus was descended from Naamah, the sister of Tubal-Cain, and that he is the same with him who is called Sammael, in the Targum on Job, chap. xxviii. In short, the Talmudists unanimously hold that Asmodeus is the prince of the devils.

But the opinion which seems most probable to us is, that Asmodeus was the demon of impurity. We see no reason to follow the Hebrews, who give him the rank of the prince of the devils. What the Scripture says of him requires not that we should give him that precedence amongst his fellow-rebels and apostates. God permitted him to punish with death those that approached Sara with a brutal and criminal passion: he had no power himself over the virtuous maid; but contributed, against his will, and without his knowledge, to her happiness, and that of Tobias. This young pair was made for one another; and God, who was mercifully disposed towards them, suffered not that the seven first husbands should come near her, as he reserved her for one more worthy.

Raphael discovers to young Tobias the true cause of their death, when he says, *I will tell you whom the devil has chief power over; they are those who marry without the fear of God, who exclude him from their affections, to indulge their passions and brutal lust, like the horse and mule which have no understanding*, (vi. 16, 17.) Sara, in like manner, assigns one of the reasons why the former persons could not have her to wife; perhaps, says she, *I was not worthy of them, or because they were not worthy of me,** (iii. 19.) This last was doubtless the true reason, but not a sufficient one to expose them to death, if they had not drawn that misfortune on themselves, by their criminal excess and evil dispositions.

What is most difficult to conceive in Sara's deliverance is, the evil spirit being driven away by the smoke of the heart and liver of the fish. How can a spirit receive any impression from smoke, or be sensible either of an agreeable or disagreeable smell? It is certain that both smoke and effluvias proceed only from bodies, and act only on matter, and as the ideas of pain or pleasure arising from the impressions which sensible qualities make on our bodies, are not common to, or compatible with, spirits disengaged from matter, we cannot conceive that such sensations should affect them without a sort of miracle, and the power of God so ordering it, that, by means of certain movements, extrinsical and foreign to them, they shall receive the same impressions as if they were really corporeal: it is after this manner some have attempted to explain the punishments in hell, how the devils and souls of the damned can be said to be tormented in material fire; *viz.* that that element does not act directly and immediately itself on them, but by an effect proceeding from the all-powerful will of God, its presence causes in their souls the same sensations of pain, as if they were really clothed with flesh and composed of matter.

The heathens, who supposed the bodies of their demons to be very subtile, and exempt from matter, were at little pains to explain how they could be affected with agreeable or bad smells. Their subtile bodies, which partook of the nature of the purest ether, were fattened, according to

* This and the foregoing sentence are according to the Vulgate; the Greek omits them.

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them, with the libations and the odour of the sacrifices offered in honour of them; they were fed and refreshed with the smoke of the incense and perfumes, and were invigorated with sucking the blood of the victims. But, as Porphyry observes, a wise man would be cautious how he offered such sacrifices, for fear of inviting such mischievous spirits; he advises rather to purify the soul, as they have no power over one that is pure, uncorrupt, and unsullied. The Chaldeans, among whom the book of Tobit was written, and the Jews for whose use it was composed, were doubtless of opinion that the demons were not absolutely disengaged from all matter. They attributed to them all such sensations and impressions, as belong only to beings that are corporeal. Hence Tobias, speaking according to the notions and prejudice of that people, says to Raphael, that the demon Asmodeus loved Sara, and had a passionate fondness for her beauty, and through jealousy kept all others from coming near her. On this occasion we may very well apply St. Jerome's observation, "That in Scripture one often finds things mentioned rather according to the prevailing notion of the times when they happened, than according to strict truth." (In Jer. xxviii.) The ancient fathers of the church were not entirely free from this error; they represent demons or spirits as having subtile bodies, and as affected with odours and other fine and delicate sensations. Origen mentions it as a thing incontestable, that demons love liquors, and the taste of flesh roasted. (Cont. Cels. lib. iii.) He thinks that they appear in and assume the form of holy persons or good angels, to deceive the simple; are fond of impure love, and affected with the sounds of instruments and music; that there are certain charms, verses, herbs, and figures, that have the power to drive them away, and to cure the distempers which they occasion. (Ibid. lib. viii.) These opinions are very ancient, and authorized and supported as well by the number as the great character of those that maintain them. And though the church seems entirely to have abandoned these, yet there have been in these later times some learned authors, who cannot persuade themselves to give any bodies but those of a very subtile and refined nature, both to good and evil angels. Grotius cannot help shewing his spleen and indignation against those who have paid too great a deference to Aristotle, who was the first, he says, that asserted natures purely intellectual. Upon the supposition of their being corporeal, there will be little difficulty to explain how demons and angels may appear in a bodily shape, eat and drink, occasion and cure several distempers; for nothing is more easy and natural than for bodies to act upon matter, and to strike the senses.

I do not very well see how those who pretend that the smoke of the heart and liver of the fish drove away the demon by a natural virtue and efficacy, can maintain that sentiment, without admitting that the unclean spirit had a body and senses. Notwithstanding all the efforts of their philosophy, they will never persuade any, that there could be that antipathy which they hold between Asmodeus and the smoke, in a spirit absolutely divested of matter. Such aversions and antipathies being founded on a diversity and opposition of qualities, cannot meet in beings which have such a disagreement and even contrariety between them, as spirit and body have; if they could, all other bodies and spirits for the like reason must be supposed to have the same, as they equally and essentially differ in the properties peculiar to each.

If the efficacy of the smoke, of which we are speaking, is supposed to consist in the sensation which it occasioned in the person affected by it, which producing an agitation and alteration in the blood and humours, thereby acted indirectly upon the demon himself, by taking from him the means made use of to incommode and torment the party possessed, such an opinion seems to contain nothing but what might be admitted by the most scrupulous divines, and the most exact and inquisitive philosophers. If melancholy was the cause of Saul's malady, it is no ways strange that the sweet sounds of David's harp, driving away that black humour, and raising his spirits, might at the same time take from the evil spirit his principal means and springs of mischief; and in that sense music might be said to hinder, or however to suspend and stop his farther evil designs. One may observe the like of those roots of which Josephus speaks, Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2. which were applied to the nostrils of the possessed, the virtue of which Solomon himself, he says, first discovered to those of his nation. We are told likewise of certain roots, herbs, plants, stones, and other things, which have the power, as is pretended, to drive away evil spirits, and to hinder them from entering into such and such places, and there doing mischief. But we may apply the words of St. Austin, who, speaking of the perfumes and odours which demons have been represented as fond of, says, "they are not fed or supported by such things as these, but by the folly and errors of men." (De Civit. lib. xx. cap. 22.) They are neither smoke, nor herbs, nor minerals, that drive them away and keep them in awe; but it is an error, and a foolish mistake in men to think so. The devil indeed amuses them with such a notion, and leaves them there, being sufficiently indemnified, and made amends for the small suspension of his malice, by the great advantage he makes in keeping up superstition and error.

But with regard to magical effects of certain words, plants, and characters, we should judge otherwise. The devil on such occasions seems willing to submit to conditions, and to engage not to act contrary to the will and pleasure of such as are devoted to him, and are in league with him. In this consists the devil's hard and cruel empire; he never ceases to do hurt, but it is in order to do greater mischief. He contents himself in thus attaching men to his service, and seducing them through the errors of magic. But we need not enlarge farther on this, as it will be of no service to explain the matter in hand, since it is certain that no sort of magic was employed in dispossessing Sara of the evil spirit.

Serrarius thinks that a middle opinion should be followed; one betwixt that which holds the expulsion of Asmodeus to have been done purely by natural means, and that which asserts a supernatural and miraculous power. He observes, that a thing may be done, or something brought to pass, either by a good or evil spirit, or by the sole will and commandment of God, without either of them employing any agent, or secondary cause, outwardly concurring and co-operating with them; or God may employ some angel or demon, who shall make use of some natural and sensible means, as his instrument and assistant, whether the agent employed hath need of such natural assist-

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ance or not, or the thing made use of has naturally a disposition and quality fit for the purpose, or derives all its virtue and efficacy from him who applies it. In the present case, he thinks the smoke of the liver of the fish had a sort of natural power to drive away the evil spirit, which he proves by what the angel, speaking as a man, says, *If a devil or an evil spirit trouble any, we must make a smoke thereof before the man or the woman, and the party shall be no more vexed.* (vi. 7.) Young Tobias, who then looked upon Raphael only as a mere man, understood it in this sense; and when he said to the angel, to what use is the heart and liver of the fish? he thought nothing, doubtless, of any supernatural effect; one ought to believe, therefore, that Raphael spoke to him according to his sense of the matter. The same writer is of opinion, that God foreseeing, in the beginning of the world, the evils which the devil would bring upon mankind, gave to certain plants a natural power and virtue to oppose and hinder these bad effects. He acknowledges, however, something supernatural in the smoke beforementioned, founded principally upon what the angel says, that the devil never returns to make a second attack upon those who have once proved the happy effects of the remedy; a thing which is altogether singular, and cannot be said of any other natural one. In short, he thinks that the prayers and continence of Tobias, his good dispositions, and those of Sara, who entered into the marriage-state in the fear of the Lord, together with the presence of Raphael, contributed very much to the producing so unusual and extraordinary an effect.

Grotius seems to suppose all this to be a parable, and understands it in a figurative sense. He neither acknowledges an evil spirit, properly such, to be concerned, nor any thing supernatural to have happened in the cure of Sara. The pretended Asmodeus, who killed her seven husbands, was only some ill quality attending Sara's body, which proved mortal to such as approached her. The Hebrews used to ascribe to the devil all the diseases which they could not account for, or assign the cause of. They thought there were devils which made persons deaf and dumb, epilepsies, and other illnesses not well understood, and which medicine despaired of curing, and could not effectually reach, were, according to them, inflicted by evil spirits, as appears from several passages in the gospel. Sara's malady, he says, was of this sort; but Tobias, by using such fumigations in the bridal chamber, and about his person, as were proper in that case, not only preserved himself from the fate of his predecessors, but cured his wife likewise of a complaint or indisposition that was unknown to physic, and therefore ascribed (as the custom of the Jews was, with every distemper they could not cure) to the operation of the devil. This is cutting the knot, as they say, and turning to novel and romance an authorized and well-grounded history, received and acknowledged as a true one by the Jews and the whole Christian church: for I do not much regard, or lay any great stress upon, the singular opinion of some modern expositors, who, without any substantial proof, have attempted to dispute the truth of this history.

Those who hold that the expulsion of Asmodeus was by a supernatural power, do not entirely agree among themselves. Some assert, that the smoke of the fish was only a symbol of the prayers of Tobias and Sara, to which alone they ascribe the success of her cure, in the same sense that our Saviour Jesus Christ spread clay upon the eyes of the man that was born blind, and ordered him to wash in the pool of Siloah, not as the cause, but as the proof of the cure. Asmodeus was one of those evil spirits, which were not to be expelled but by continence and prayer, like those under the gospel, which went not out but by prayer and fasting. Others think, that the burning of the fish's entrails was only as a sign when the evil spirit should be chased away. There are some also that maintain, that it was Raphael that drove away Asmodeus, and purposely concealed what was done by a supernatural power, under that seemingly natural one, lest Tobias should discover he was an angel, which was contrary to the intention of God, who would have Raphael remain undiscovered till the return of Tobias to his father's house. Prosper ascribes the whole effect of the smoke to Jesus Christ, whose mystical name ἰχθὺς means a fish, and that it is he that drives away unclean spirits, and heals our infirmities; but as that father declares he speaks figuratively, his opinion is not to be put in the number of literal explications.

The principal proofs of those who contend here for a supernatural and miraculous power are, 1. The essential difference which there is between any thing sensible, gross, and corporeal, and a being purely intellectual. 2. The disproportion between the remedy and the disease. Bodily illnesses are ordinarily cured either by applying remedies correspondent to the nature of the disease, or by evacuating and taking away the humours that occasion the complaint, or by bringing the blood and humours into a right order again; which is to be effected various ways, either by acting directly upon the humours, and taking away the cause of the disorder, or by restoring tranquillity and cheerfulness to the mind, as the content and satisfaction of this necessarily influences, and has an effect upon, the blood and humours, and settles them in a just and due equilibrium: or the indisposition may be an atrophy, weakness, and faintness, and then it is helped or removed by raising the spirits, and repairing, by good and wholesome nourishment, the blood and exhausted humours.

But in the case before us, none of these means could take place. Sara had no bodily illness that one knows of; the business to be done was to drive away the evil spirit which molested her, without doing her any harm, but would not suffer any to approach her with impure dispositions. Now the burning of the fish's entrails could not act upon the body of the demon, because he was purely spiritual, nor on his spirit, because the smoke was wholly material; besides, the same remedy, when applied to other persons in the like malady, appears to be insignificant; neither fumigations, perfumes, good or evil smells, have ever been able to drive away devils from any determinate place or person. If exorcisms are sometimes accompanied with burning of brimstone and other things, of a quick and strong scent, it sufficiently appears, from divers circumstances, that one is not to ascribe the effect which attends them to the power of the effluvia, but to the efficacy of the prayers which accompany them. In short, if the smoke from the burnt entrails had a natural and sufficient efficacy to chase away the evil spirit, to what purpose were Tobias and Sara's prayers, and their remarkable continence? Why does Raphael say to Tobias, that the

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evil demon has no power but against those that abandon themselves to their impure and brutal lusts? Does a natural remedy depend upon the virtuous or evil dispositions of those that apply it?

Amidst this variety of sentiments we think we may venture to affirm: 1. That the smoke of the liver could have no direct or physical effect upon Asmodeus. 2. That it operated only on the senses of Tobias and Sara, and possibly might serve to suppress in them carnal and sensual inclinations, and contribute to their continence and chastity; effects which naturalists ascribe to some plants, juices, and odours. This virtuous disposition having disarmed the fiend, and put it out of his power to execute his malice against Tobias, as he did against the seven others, he retired to the upper Egypt for the same evil designs, filled with confusion and vexation at his disappointment; especially observing that this pious couple joined prayers, watching, and humiliation, to temperance and chastity, and that for three nights successively. 3. The angel Raphael, without doubt, contributed greatly to Tobias's conquest over Asmodeus, not only in discovering to him the remedy we have mentioned, and acquainting him how good and true Israelites should enter upon, and behave in the marriage-state, but by his presence more especially, and invincible power, which he could not resist. The Scripture sufficiently intimates, that he had the greatest share in the victory, when it says, that Raphael bound Asmodeus, and sent him away into the uttermost parts of Egypt, which cannot be ascribed either to the smoke from the entrails of the fish, nor even to Tobias's wise conduct or prayers. So that the miracle of Sara's deliverance from her malady consisted chiefly in these three particulars: 1. In the discovery of so singular and extraordinary a remedy as we have mentioned. 2. In laying open the cause which gave the evil spirit power to kill those who approached Sara, and pointing out the means to render his malice impotent and ineffectual. Lastly, In the supernatural assistance which Raphael invisibly gave Tobias on the occasion, and sending away the demon a great way off, in a manner never heard of before.

The only thing which remains at present to be examined is, the manner, cause, and the place of the confinement of Asmodeus. The Scripture, without being more explicit, says, that Raphael seized the demon and sent him into the deserts of the upper Egypt. The Greek adds, that Raphael chained him there. The Hebrew says, that Asmodeus, smelling the smoke of the burnt liver, fled into the upper Egypt. But neither the one nor the other makes mention of the angel's seizing him, as the Vulgate does; which insinuates, that it was done even in Raguel's house, and from thence conducted him to the deserts of Thebais, as to a prison. But however it happened, it is certain we ought not to understand the account in a literal and strict sense. For how can an evil spirit be chained, or confined to a determinate place, or how is it possible to seize him, and bring him as it were prisoner to a dungeon? We must, therefore, understand the word *bound*, here, as in other passages of Scripture, where the devil is spoken of almost in the same terms: for instance, our Saviour says, *No man can enter into a strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man.* (Mark iii. 27.) And in the Apocalypse, the *dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan,* is laid hold on by an angel, and bound for a thousand years, (xx. 2.) St. Peter, speaking of the fall of the apostate angels, says, that *God cast them down into hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment:* (2 Pet. ii. 4.) and St. Jude, *That the angels which kept not their first estate are reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day,* (ver. 6.) None of these expressions were ever understood of a real confinement, or material chains, to bind, fasten, or keep prisoners those unclean spirits, but of a superior force, which continued them in their torments, and stopped the violent effects of their fury and malice.

St. Austin, explaining the manner how evil spirits may be bound or loosed, says, that these terms signify no more, when applied to these enemies of mankind, than that they have liberty or permission to do mischief, or have not the liberty to hurt. The devil's place at present is in hell, as he does not deceive the world now, as formerly, by idolatry. Since the gospel of Jesus Christ hath been preached through the whole world, our Saviour has bound the strong man, entered into his house, taken away the arms wherein he trusted, and spoiled his goods. Raphael, with respect to Asmodeus, was as a mighty conqueror, who disposes of his captive at his pleasure, lays him in chains, or sends him into banishment where he pleases. That archangel, by the command of God, ordered him to flee away; he signified to him, that the power hitherto indulged him was revoked, of hurting those that approached near to Sara. In this sense we are to understand binding Asmodeus, as he could not act without God's will and permission; as soon as that permission ceased or was recalled, he then might properly be said to be bound, or confined from doing farther mischief. St. Austin very well compares him to a great mastiff, tied up and chained, who growls angrily, and shews an inclination to bite, but can hurt none but those who are so imprudent as to come too near him. (Ser. 197.)

But how can the evil spirit be properly said to be confined to a determinate place? Is it not equally a contradiction to say that a spirit is confined, as to say that he is bound or in chains? Neither the one nor the other of these can belong to, or be inflicted on, a being purely spiritual. But it is easy to solve this difficulty from the principles just laid down; if the evil spirit was bound when God suspended or revoked the power he had given him, it is equally clear that the same spirit is confined or shut up, when God sets certain bounds to the exercise of his power, whether it be with regard to times, or places, or things, or persons. Thus Asmodeus attending upon, and being attached to, the person of Sara, and not having any power but against those that came to her with evil and impure dispositions, was confined to the place where Sara lived. He could not exert his malice any where else, nor upon any other than those that were given up to him. He was sent away from thence into the deserts of the upper Egypt, not to be confined or locked up there, as in a fixed place, or certain limited bounds of space, like a prisoner, but to execute his power within a certain district assigned him, or rather to continue there without any at all, as that part was desert, wild, and uninhabited. So that to be confined to or shut up in a place, with respect to an evil spirit, means

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only his power to do mischief, and to execute his wicked intentions, within the extent of such a place: as, when God permits any person to be tempted, the tempter's power is limited to that person, and to the place where he is.

It is only God that commands the evil spirits, and has a right to fix the places and times when and where they may exert their power. He alone can set bounds to their malice, and stop its mischievous effects when he judges proper. It is true, indeed, that both angels and men have sometimes made use of the same power in confining evil spirits, and stopping the progress of their rage and violence; but neither angels nor men could effect this by any proper power of their own, they acted only by the appointment of God, and in his name. It was thus Raphael subdued Asmodeus; it was thus Michael the archangel stopped the attempt of the devil to carry away the body of Moses. (Jude, ver. 9.) He used no other arms, no other reprimand, than *the Lord rebuke thee.* It was thus holy martyrs and confessors of old, and our exorcists at this day,* control evil spirits, and limit the extent of their power. All was done in the name and by the power of Jesus Christ.

Not so the magicians, who boast of their power over evil spirits, that they can at pleasure stop their operations, and keep them, as they pretend, chained up and confined, some in a circle or chamber, and others in their places. One cannot say that magicians act in the name of God, and make use of his authority over evil spirits; much less that they act against the permission of God, and in spite of him; for who can resist his will? we cannot help thinking, therefore, either that this pretended power of magicians over evil spirits, is purely chimerical and imaginary; or that God, by a secret but most terrible judgment, permits for a time, that those miserable and wicked persons, who have deserted his service, should become slaves of the devil, who wretchedly deceives them by an appearance of submission, which he obsequiously pays to them, whilst in truth he tyrannizes over them, and treats them worse than the most abject and miserable slaves. It is not impossible but that the devil may exercise such a sort of authority over his subjects, as to command them to execute the will of such wicked magicians, as have given themselves over to him. But however this be, neither religion nor good sense will permit us to ascribe either to the devil himself, or any of his subalterns, much less to magicians, an absolute and independent authority. All the motions, power, and force of the devil, are dependent upon, and subject to, the Father and Sovereign of all spirits, who rules and governs them by his infinite power and incomprehensible wisdom.

The place where Asmodeus was banished to, was the desert of the upper Egypt; a soil dry, sandy, uncultivated, and almost entirely uninhabited; as it never rains there, and the overflowings of the Nile cannot reach it, by reason of the mountains and its high situation, it must of course be barren. St. Jerome intimates, that it abounds with serpents and venomous creatures. This frightful desert would for ever have continued in abhorrence and oblivion, if it had not been visited, and as it were consecrated, by a great number of religious hermits, who by their abode have made it venerable and famous, and have changed the honour and barrenness of it into a delicious paradise; a place particularly favoured, and where Jesus Christ displays the greatest and most sensible effects of his grace and power. The devil, who had established as it were his empire here, being drove from other parts by the virtue of the cross, found himself here vanquished and subdued, by the penance and austerities of these anchorets. This was the field of battle where St. Anthony, Pacomius, Macharius, Paphnucius, and many others, so often engaged with and overcame the devil, whose fury and obstinacy were so weakened, that he could only maintain the fort where he had intrenched and fortified himself.*

The Scripture does not mention for how long time Asmodeus continued bound in the upper Egypt, but we may be assured that he remained so all the time of Tobias and Sara's life, since it is before remarked of this remedy, that the evil spirit, once drove away by the power of it, never returns again to the person. One cannot say but after their time God might permit him to exert his malice and evil arts afresh against other persons, but this is a secret which God has not been pleased to make any discovery of. It is to be observed, that Jesus Christ, in his gospel, intimates, that the Jews believed, that the *unclean spirit, when gone out of a man, walketh through dry places, and seeking rest there for a time, and finding none, returns into the house from whence he came out;* (Matt. xii. 33, 34.) *i. e.* to take possession again of that unhappy person, whom he before dwelt in. Thus the evil spirit that haunted king Saul, returned upon him at intervals, after it had been drove away by the harmony of David's harp. The LXX. describing the sad estate to which Babylon would be reduced after its fall, say, that *sirens shall lie there, and devils dance there, and centaurs shall dwell there.* (Isa. xiii. 21, 22.)

A late writer mentions strange and prodigious things of a serpent in the upper Egypt; one cannot help thinking almost that there was something supernatural in it. This serpent frequented a grot or cave of a mountain, over against the village of Saata, about a hundred leagues from

* In the apostolic age, and the next following, the power of exorcising, or casting out devils, was a miraculous gift of the Holy Ghost, given to many Christians in common. The particular order of exorcists was first settled in the church, upon the withdrawing of that extraordinary and miraculous power, probably about the latter end of the third century. (Bingham's Antiq. tom. ii.) It does not appear by any good or certain authority, that after that time they really did reject demons, either out of infants, or demoniacs. But under that pretence, many counterfeit miracles have been obtruded on the credulous. Erasmus has wittily exposed the pretence to this power, in his Spectrum, or Exorcismus. In the Roman Ritual we have the form of exorcising expressly set down, called *Exorcismus obsessorum*, which Calmet probably refers to; viz. "Exorcizo te, immondissime Spiritus, omnis incursio Adversarii, omne Phantasma, omnis Legio, in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi, eradicare, et effugere ab hoc Plasmate Dei. Ipse tibi imperat, qui te de supernis cœlorum in inferiora terræ præcepit. Ipse tibi imperat qui mari, ventis, et tempestatibus imperavit. Audi ergo et time, Satana, inimice fidei, hostis generis humani, mortis adductor, vitæ raptor, justitiæ declinator, malorum radix, fomes vitiorum, seductor hominum, &c. Recede, et da locum Spiritui Sancto per hoc Signum Crucis Christi Domini nostri."

* The Egyptian hermits were doubtless very extraordinary persons, and of great sanctity, as appears from the account given of them by Jerome, Athanasius, Sozomen, Cassian, Sulpitius Severus, Du Pin, and others; but that they cured all diseases, delivered those that were possessed, had personal conflicts themselves with the devil, attacking them sometimes in a brutal form, at other times tempting them in a beautiful and pleasing one, and came off more than conquerors over that grand and subtle adversary: these, and many other as surprising things, which are recorded of them, we may suspend our belief of, till it is certain that miracles continued in the church in the third and fourth century. Calmet seems to have singled out these as the principal devotees, and probably because they were the institutors of the monastic life.

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Grand Cairo, upon the western border of the Nile; he hurt nobody, one might touch him, fondle him, kill him, cut him in pieces, and carry him several days' journey from thence, and yet after all this he would appear again in the cavern alive and well. It seemed to make a distinction between persons; some it would go before, fondle them, and wrap its folds about them; others it would flee away from and shun. In short, if what is said to be true, we cannot help acknowledging something miraculous in the creature. Some have thought that it might possibly be the demon Asmodeus, whose abode we mentioned to be in these parts. One could wish it could be certainly known how long it is since it first appeared there, for the ancients say nothing of it. Or possibly the whole may be only invention, to embellish the travels, and to entertain and amuse credulous readers. (Lucas's Voyage into the Levant, tom. i. cap. 9. 14.)

As I have already pointed out some errors of the Romanists, couched in this Dissertation, it may not be amiss, at the conclusion of it, to take notice, that in the old Roman Missal, and also in the Missal of Sarum, there is a proper mass of Raphael the archangel, with the following rubric, by way of preface to it, grounded plainly on this history:—

The following office of Raphael the archangel, may be celebrated for pilgrims or travellers; that as he conducted and brought back (in his journey) Tobias safe and sound, so he would bring back those for whom the mass is said. It may also be said for all sick people, and such as are possessed with the devil; because he is a medicinal angel, who restored sight to Tobias, and dispossessed a devil out of Sara, his son's wife.

Then the following prayer to God:—

O God, who didst direct blessed Raphael the archangel, to go before thy servant Tobias, hastening in his journey, and gavest him to be his keeper, amidst the varieties and dangers of this life and way; grant, we beseech thee, that we may be protected by his aid, so that both we may shun the dangers of this present life, and may be able to come to the joys of heaven, through our Lord, &c.

Then a prayer to S. Raphael himself:—

I entreat thee also, do thou assist me, O excellent prince Raphael, thou best physician of soul and body; and thou that didst presently enlighten the bodily eyes of Tobias by curing them, do thou also enlighten my spiritual and carnal eyes, and do not cease by thy heavenly prayer to cut off all the darkness of my heart and body. (Hor. Sec. us. Sarum. f. 92.)

THE

BOOK OF TOBIT.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *THE book of the words of Tobit.*] Βίβλος τῶν λόγων. Λόγος often stands for *thing;* thus Sophocles, τοῖς κυρίοις πάντα χρὴ δηλοῦν λόγον. The Hebrew word דבר, signifies promiscuously *a word* and *a thing*, and is rendered both by ῥῆμα and λόγος. See Exod. viii. 12. 1 Kings xiv. 19. Eccles. i. 1. Mark i. 45. Luke i. 37. ii. 15. ῥῆμα τοῦτο γεγονὸς, i. e. *this thing was done.* The margin rightly renders λόγων here by *acts.* The Hebrew versions, and Syriac, and the Alexandrian MS. differ in the following genealogy; the Vulgate wholly omits it. Our translators follow the Rom. and Complut. editions.

Ver. 2. *Who in the time of Enemessar king of the Assyrians, was led captive,* &c.] The first book of Chronicles v. 26. tells us, that God stirred up Pul and Tiglath-Pileser, kings of Assyria, against the impious Israelites, and that the latter carried them away from beyond Jordan, and sent them into the countries of Halah, Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan. And this book adds, that the tribe of Nephthali, of which Tobit was, being carried away by Enemessar, who is the same with Shalmaneser, as the margin has it, was placed in the province of Media, and himself at Nineveh. It is plain from hence, that there was a double invasion, and a double captivity of the Israelites. Of this second captivity we must necessarily understand this place, which was thirty years after that by Tiglath-Pileser. In the time of this last translation, Tobit was carried away captive with many others, being then, as is supposed, about forty-four years old, with his wife and young Tobias, A. M. 3283. before Christ 721 years, or thereabouts.

That city which is called properly Nephthali in Galilee.] *Properly,* Κυδίως. Where is there such a Greek word so used? All other translations have it as a proper name, Cydios, or some such-like. The Alexandrian MS. has Κυδίων, which Grabe alters for Κυρίως. Calmet thinks the reading might be Καδίως. This is thought to be the same with that which was otherwise called Kadesh-Nephthali, and so the margin explains it. This being the principal city in the tribe of Nephthali, in the more early times, for brevity's sake, was called Nephthali. It was not only a Levitical city, but also one of the three cities of refuge on the west of Jordan. It is the opinion of the learned, founded on Isa. ix. 1—3. compared with Matt. iv. 14. that as the land of Galilee, or of Zebulun and Nephthali, had the misfortune to be first in that calamity, which befel their nation by the Assyrians, so, in recompence of that misery which they suffered above the rest of their brethren, they had the first and chiefest share of the presence and conversation of the Messiah; which the prophet Isaiah com-

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forts them with accordingly, and we see actually fulfilled in the gospel. In like manner it may be presumed, and from many passages in this book (see chap. xiii. xiv.) it seems probable, that to Tobit, and others of the faithful Israelites, was vouchsafed in their captivity a distant prospect of this glorious appearing, and of the happy state of the church under it.

Ver. 3. *I Tobit have walked all the days of my life in the way of truth and justice, and I did many alms-deeds to my brethren, and my nation, who came with me to Nineveh, into the land of the Assyrians.*] Tobit here in person relates his own history; and so the other versions, the Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, and the ancient Latin, all read in the first person; the Vulgate only differs, which from hence to the end of the third chapter, runs in the third person. One may observe that Tobit's misfortunes never induce him to leave the way of virtue; but his charity to his brethren under the same captivity, is most extraordinary and amiable. Human prudence proceeds upon maxims very different; it is natural for a captive, at a distance from his country, and reduced in his circumstances, to manage and reserve the little remainder to subsist himself and family, and to think that giving to others may be the way to bring poverty upon himself; but Tobit's faith judged otherwise, and had a respect unto the recompence of the reward. St. Ambrose's character of him is very just: "He bore with humble patience absence from his own country, and the loss of his goods occasioned by it, and was more sensibly affected with the afflictions of his brethren than his own; he regarded not as his private property what he had hitherto acquired, but distributed it to the necessities of his fellow-captives, esteeming only what he himself suffered as his due, and the just punishment of his sins. He was every where and in all things submissive to the will of God, without listening to the motions of self-love, or the suggestions of partial and corrupt nature." (In Tob. cap. 1. tom. i.)

Ver. 5. *Now all the tribes which together revolted, and the house of my father Nephthali, sacrificed unto the heifer Baal.*] For distinction's sake, Baal had particular titles and different rites of worship; here Baal the heifer is specified, to point out to us what Baal is meant, *viz.* the heifer, or calf of Beth-el, or rather Dan, which was near to the tribe of Nephthali. The margin renders, *to the power of Baal,* as if the reading was, τῆς Βάαλ τῇ δυνάμει. Spencer and some other learned men contend, that the true reading here is, τῷ Βάαλ, τῇ Δυνάμει, *to Baal, the strength,* or *the power,* which is probably the sense of the other marginal reading, viz. *the god Baal,* and is countenanced by many copies, and may seem confirmed from Hos. x. 5. and Mark xiv. 62. where the *right hand of Power* means, the right hand of *the* Power, or of God, the all-powerful. And it is observable, that Aquila, in his version, renders *Eli, Eli,* which in the LXX. is ὁ Θεός μου, ὁ Θεός μου, (Psal. xxii. 1.) by ἰσχυρέ μου, ἰσχυρέ μου. That God is called *the Strength, the Rock,* &c. is indeed evident from many passages in Scripture; (see Exod. xv. 11. Deut. xxxii. 37.) but then such a title does not belong, nor was usually given, to false gods or idols, who are always styled *vanities,* because of their nothingness and impotence. Nor is it probable that Tobit, when he is condemning image-worship, should honour its object with a title of such pre-eminence and distinction. The true reading seems rather that which is followed in our version, τῷ Βάαλ τῇ δαμάλει, *i. e.* to the idol or image of Baal, with the form or resemblance of a heifer. And so Jer. ii. 29. Hos. xiii. 1. where the LXX. render τῷ Βάαλ, the Chaldee adds *image* or *idol.* It remains only to inquire, why Baal is here expressed in the feminine gender; besides the common one, the learned Selden assigns these two particular reasons: 1. That Baal was ἀρσενόθηλυς, *male and female;* like the Egyptian Isis, the Syrian Astarte, and others of those images, which antiquity worshipped, who were indifferently gods or goddesses among those nations who adopted their figures. (Plut. de Isid. Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. iii. Tertull. Apol. i. 13.) 2. The Egyptians, and other idolatrous nations that worshipped beasts, preferred, according to Herodotus, *fœminas boves,* before other animals, and hence such as described their worship, styled them δαμάλεις, or *Juvencas.* (De Diis Syris, Syntag. 1.) To these I shall subjoin a third reason, countenanced by Bochart and our Fuller, (Miscell. Sacr. lib. ii. cap. 7.) that when Josephus, or the LXX. or St. Paul, (Rom. xi. 4.) speak of Baal in the feminine gender, it is by way of ridicule and contempt. The like may be observed of the calves of Dan and Beth-el, which, by the inspired writers, (2 Kings x. 29. Hos. x. 5.) are styled αἱ δαμάλεις, not that they were always of that sex, but by way of contempt, and to expose them the more; like that of Virgil,

"O vere Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges"— (Æn. ix.)

Ver. 6. *But I alone went often to Jerusalem at the feasts, as it was ordained unto all the people of Israel by an everlasting decree.*] As the whole body of the people complied with that idolatry which Jeroboam set up and authorized as the national religion, except a small remnant of the faithful in Israel, which bowed not their knees unto Baal; so it is greatly to the honour of Tobit, that, amidst the great number of his own tribe, which together revolted, he kept himself undefiled, and free from the general offence; especially as he was young, and might easily have been led away by the power of example. For it is a proof of an uncommon degree of virtue to live untainted in the midst of surrounding wickedness, and to preserve the purity of innocence in the time of a general corruption. But when it is here said, that Tobit alone kept himself from idolatry, and went to the regular and appointed place of worship at Jerusalem, at the usual and stated feasts, it is not to be taken so strictly and exclusively, as if he alone had been thus remarkably religious, or was the only happy one that had escaped the pollution; for the contrary appears from v. 13. where Ananias and Jonathas are mentioned as accompanying him to Jerusalem, and making their offerings together at the temple of the habitation of the Most High. This expression, therefore, is to be understood like that concerning Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 14.

Having the first-fruits and tenths of increase, with that which was first shorn; and them gave I at the altar, to the priests, the children of Aaron. Ver. 7. *The first tenth part of all increase I gave to the sons of Aaron, who ministered at Jerusalem: another tenth part I sold away, and went, and spent it every year at Jerusalem.* Ver. 8. *And the third I gave unto them to whom it was meet.*] In these verses we have the regular method and order for bringing unto God, or his ministers the priests, those things which were to be offered to him, to the payment of which the Jews were

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strictly obliged; as, the ἀπαρχὴ, or *the oblation*, that was made out of the fruits of the earth, particularly corn; as also the firstlings, and tenths of their flocks, and of the wool of their sheep, which were paid in kind to the priests themselves at the temple: then the first tithe, called here *the first tenth part of all increase*, viz. of wine, oil, figs, and other fruits of the earth; this was given unto the Levites, and was always paid in kind. But the learned differ whether it was always brought up to Jerusalem, as some assert, or paid unto the Levites in the several cities of tillage, as others conclude from Neh. x. 37. The *decima prima* or first tithe being paid, the husbandman paid out of that which remained the second tithe, the δευτεροδεκάδη, or *the second tenth part*, as it is here called; this they might either pay in kind, or by way of commutation give the worth of it, which Tobit seems to have done; this, whether in kind or in money, was brought up to Jerusalem, and the possessors made a kind of love-feast therewith, unto which were invited the priests and Levites. The third tithe, or, as it may be rendered, the tithe of the third year, was called the *poor man's tithe;* this the possessor carried not to Jerusalem, but spent it at home within his own gates upon the Levites, the fatherless, the widow, and the poor. (Deut. xiv. 28. xxvi. 12, 13.) Hence these sorts of tithes were called πτωχοδεκάδαι. So that the first and second tithes were paid by the husbandman, the first, second, fourth, and fifth years after the sabbatical year; but upon the third and sixth years only the first tithe was paid to the Levites, and the second was spent or distributed at home, and given unto them to whom it was meet; *i. e.* to widows, orphans, and strangers, as Munster's copy has it; or for the repairs of the house of God, as that of Fagius. St. Chrysostom, speaking of the liberal maintenance of the Levites among the Jews, has a fine reflection on the occasion: "Observe (says he), how much the Jews gave to their priests and Levites—as, first-fruits, tenths, then tenths again, then other tenths, yet no man at that time envied them, or said they had or ate too much." (Epist. ad Philip.)

Ver. 10. *And when we were carried away captives to Nineveh, all my brethren, and those that were of my kindred, did eat of the bread of the gentiles.* Ver. 11. *But I kept myself from eating.*] Many of them that were carried away by Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, and Esar-haddon, still retained the true worship of God, and observed, in a strange land, the ordinances appointed by the law, and fell not into the idolatrous usages and impieties of the heathens, among whom they were dispersed. It is certain, from the instances of Daniel and his associates, Eleazar, the Maccabees, and others, (Dan. i. 8. Judith xii. 2, 3.) that the Jews, from the time of their captivity, when they could not avoid conversing with the gentiles, were careful to abstain, not only from things really sacrificed to idols, but from most things that came out of gentile hands; because there was a presumption, that a part of most kinds, by way of first-fruits, had been offered to idols; the rest being by those first-fruits esteemed polluted, as dedicated likewise to the idol. It appears, therefore, that they forbore, from such an apprehension, all meats and drinks that came from the gentiles, or to eat promiscuously with them. In particular the Jews tell us, that Nehemiah, being cupbearer to the king, was dispensed with from tasting or drinking the wine of the gentiles. The like is recorded here of Tobit, who, though by his office of purveyor he was obliged to provide corn, and all necessaries for the king's use, yet kept clear of all defilement, as Joseph did upon a like occasion in Egypt. (Gen. xliii. 32.) "The example of Tobit's resolution and constancy in this particular, makes one to reflect with tears (say Messieurs of Port-Royal) upon the weakness of Adam, who, being perfectly free, and the general use of the creatures indulged him, yet could not refrain from tasting that single fruit which God had forbidden him: whilst Tobit, a captive, deprived of all his possessions, in the midst of idolaters, and even living among Jews, who scrupled not occasionally to eat things forbidden by their law, preserved his innocence by a religious abstinence." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 12. *Because I remembered God with all my heart.*] Our version manifestly refers to the foregoing verse, and assigns his great regard to God, as the reason for Tobit's not eating forbidden meats; and indeed this sense is a very just one, as the ceremonial law was strict in this respect, and had its sanction from God, and was the rule for every Jew's conduct. But there is another sense of the place, supported by good authority, *that because of his great piety, God gave him favour in the sight of king Shalmaneser*, referring to the following verse. And thus the Vulgate understands it, *quoniam memor fuit Domini in toto corde suo, Deus dedit illi gratiam in conspectu Salmanassar regis.* And Fagius's Hebrew copy is to the same effect. The like is mentioned of Daniel, i. 9. But μορφὴ, in the following verse, may signify also an engaging mien, something in his looks and gestures that gave the king a liking to him.

Ver. 14. *I went into Media, and left in trust with Gabael, the brother of Gabrias, at Rages a city of Media, ten talents of silver.*] The Vulgate intimates, that Tobit lent this sum to Gabael, and took his note of hand for it; but the Greek and Hebrew versions import, that he only lodged it with him, and took a note of its being in his possession. And indeed this seems most probable, as it is here said, that he committed such a sum to his trust; and ix. 5. that Gabael brought out the money in bags sealed up, upon Raphael's producing the hand-writing. It may seem strange that Tobit, knowing Gabael to be poor, should lodge such a considerable sum of money with him as ten talents; but it is probable that he chose to deposit it at Rages in his hands, rather than have it with him at Nineveh, where it might be in some danger; or possibly he might permit him to traffic with it upon a promissory note to return it when able; it being the noblest instance of charity thus to befriend persons reduced.

Ten talents of silver.] If one was sure of the original language, whether Hebrew or Chaldee, this book was wrote in, it would greatly help to solve many difficulties. Thus, for instance, if the Hebrew word for talent ככר was supposed to be in the original, it would not necessarily bear the sense of τάλαντον in Greek, but might only signify the largest piece of silver which was in use as money in those days. And thus I would expound ככר כסף *talentum argenti*, 2 Kings v. 23. begged of Naaman by Gehazi. It might be, I think, more properly rendered *massa*, or *frustum argenti*, for so ככר signifies in its first sense, than *a talent:* unless it be reasonable to believe, that Gehazi would ask in his master's name, for the entertainment of two young visitants, between three and four hundred pounds of our money, or that Naaman would load him with between seven

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and eight hundred pounds of silver in specie. But if Tobit was wrote originally in Greek, we must then necessarily expound this place of a talent properly so called, the least of which amounted to a great sum. Bishop Cumberland computes a Hebrew talent of silver, at 353*l.* 11*s.* 10½*d.* of our money; consequently, ten such talents amount to 3535*l.* 18*s.* 9*d.* But then possibly this passage is not to be understood of the Hebrew, but only of the Greek or Attic talent, which was but half the value. And as it was nearly the same with the Babylonian talent, as the learned say, it might be nearly the same with that in use in Assyria and Media too; and this will reduce the sum to one-half of the former, *viz.* to 1767*l.* 19*s.* 4½*d.* of our money, which was precisely the worth of one of the Attic lesser talents. For when nothing is added to specify *talentum*, say the antiquaries, then the common or lesser Attic talent is always meant, consisting of six thousand drachmas of silver. If this therefore be understood of the lesser Attic talent, the sum will not seem so improbable, especially as Tobit had been the king's purveyor.

Ver. 15. *When Enemessar was dead, Sennacherib his son reigned in his stead, whose estate was troubled that I could not go into Media.*] From the time of Pul, or Tiglath-Pileser, the Medes continued in subjection to the Assyrians, but under Sennacherib, the Assyrian monarchy fell into decay, either by his imprudence or ill fortune, or a mixture of both. The Medes taking advantage, it is likely, of his long and distant absence, or perhaps upon the news of the sudden and general destruction of his army, revolted, and were never after reduced in like manner to the Assyrian yoke, though Esar-haddon in the course of his reign seems to have been both a valorous and fortunate prince, as well as ambitious of enlarging the empire. These are the troubles which prevented Tobit from going into Media, according to his custom, or intention. But the Greek, καὶ αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ ἠκατέστησαν, will perhaps admit of another rendering; *viz. And the ways or passes* αὐτοῦ *thither were troubled, infested, or dangerous, so that there was no getting safely into Media.* Munster's Hebrew copy strongly confirms this interpretation, *Et clauderentur propter bella itinera in Media, ut non potui venire in terram Medorum.* The margin offers a third reading, but it carries not so determinate a meaning as either of the former.

Ver. 16. *And in the time of Enemessar.*] Fagius's Hebrew copy, the Greek, and Syriac, agree with our version, but the Vulgate and Munster both omit these words. And indeed it may seem a little preposterous, after the relation of Enemessar's death, and Sennacherib's succeeding, and the account of his kingdom being disturbed with civil commotions, to resume the account of Enemessar. Calmet is expressly of opinion, that what follows here of Tobit's charity regards the times after Enemessar, who had some compassion for the Israelites, when there were not so many public instances of distress; but Sennacherib treated them with the utmost cruelty and rigour, which gave Tobit many opportunities to shew his zeal, and exercise his charity towards his distressed brethren.

Ver. 18. *If the king Sennacherib had slain any when he was come and fled from Judea, for in his wrath he killed many,* &c.] Sennacherib, after his return to Nineveh, being inflamed with rage for his great misfortune, in having lost in one night a hundred fourscore and five thousand of his men, by the angel of the Lord smiting them, as if he would revenge himself of this accident upon his subjects, and particularly his captives, grew thenceforth very cruel and tyrannical in his government; especially towards the Jews, numbers of whom he caused every day to be slain and cast into the streets, in defiance of all decency and the common rights of humanity.

I buried them privily . . .] St. Ambrose, speaking of this charitable action of Tobit's, says, "that there is not a more excellent duty than to do good to them that cannot repay, and to rescue the partner of our nature from the violence of the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field." (Lib. de Tob.) It was always held an act of justice and mercy to bury the dead; of justice, that earth may be restored to earth, the first mother; of mercy, that bodies might not be exposed to savage violence. To want the honour of burial, was among the ancients held one of the greatest punishments that could be inflicted; and with this Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, is threatened, Jer. xxii. 19. The disconsolate mother of Euryalus, in the poet, is not so much grieved for the murder of her son, as that he should be left a prey to the birds and beasts. (Æn. lib. ix.) And Mezentius, in the same writer, does not desire Æneas to spare his life, but earnestly entreats him to give him burial. (Æn. lib. x.) Turnus earnestly entreats for the same favour from Æneas. (Æn. lib. xii.) The right of sepulture hath been by all nations reckoned so sacred, that the violation thereof hath been counted sacrilege; and how just a thing it is to bury the dead, is intimated by the Latins, when they call the funeral duties, *justa exequiarum*, or *justa funebria.*

Ver. 21. *And there passed not five-and-fifty days, before two of his sons killed him.*] Many copies read πεντήκοντα, or *fifty* only, from Sennacherib's return to Nineveh. Usher says, after forty-five days, ad A. M. 3294. the time in which he places this history. This latter account is confirmed also by the Vulgate. As to Sennacherib's murder by two of his own children, the following is given by many learned men, and occurs also in Munster's Hebrew copy, as the reason and excuse for so wicked and barbarous a parricide; *viz.* that Sennacherib demanding of some about him what might be the reason that the God of heaven so favoured the Jewish nation, as he had found by sad experience, he was informed that Abraham, from whom they descended, sacrificed unto him his only son, which made him so favourable ever after to his progeny: upon this he resolved to sacrifice to him two of his sons, to gain his favour and protection; which Sharezar and Adramelech hearing of, prevented their own death by his, and fled into Armenia, or the mountains of Ararath, and his third son reigned in his stead. Calmet says this story is fabulous, and deserves little attention.

Sarchedonus his son reigned in his stead, who appointed over his father's accounts, and over all his affairs, Achiacharus my brother's son . . .] The margin has *Esar-haddon.* He is called Ἀσορδὰν by the LXX. a name near akin to *Assaradin*, by which he is styled in Ptolemy's Canon; as also *Sargon*, by Isaiah, xx. 1. and the same person with *Asnapper*, Ezra iv. 10. Ἀνειρδωνὸς and Σαχερδονὸς, as different copies have them, are judged by Usher to be both mistakes. Some copies, instead of τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ, have τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ, which seems preferable. The meaning seems only to be, That he was διοικητὴς καὶ ἐκλογιστὴς, as fol-

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lows in the next verse, the latter part of which can hardly be excused from tautology.

In this chapter there are several commendable qualities to be observed in Tobit. 1. That when all the tribes revolted to idolatry and ate forbidden meat, he was careful to go up to Jerusalem to worship the true God, in the place set apart by God himself. 2. That he did this when he was young, and the example of the generality of his countrymen urged him to the contrary. 3. That he, out of a religious regard to God's appointment, observed the stated anniversary feasts and holy times of the Jewish church, as the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. 4. He was exact in paying the several tithes and oblations to the priests, and others who were authorized to receive them. 5. His dutiful regard to his parents' instructions is very observable in all matters of moment. 6. His great charity to those of his own kindred and nation, in feeding and clothing, and even burying them himself, at the hazard of his own life and safety, finishes and perfects his character.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *A GOOD dinner was prepared me, in the which I sat down to eat.*] Ἀνέπεσα τοῦ φαγεῖν. Syr. *Cumque accubuissem ad edendum;* and Junius, *Accumbens ad edendum.* From this, and part of ver. 4. which the Vulgate renders, *Statimque exsiliens de accubitu suo,* we may conjecture, that in Tobit's time the posture of lying at meals prevailed: that custom we know was common in the east; and after that the Jews had acquaintance and dealings with the Babylonians, Persians, and Syrians, little or no mention is made of sitting at meals. (See note on Judith xii. 15.)

Ver. 2. *And when I saw abundance of meat, I said to my son, Go, and bring what poor man soever thou shalt find out of our brethren, who is mindful of the Lord, and, lo, I tarry for thee . . .*] Thus 1 Esd. ix. 51. *Go then, and eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send part to them that have nothing, for this day is holy unto the Lord.* And Eccl. ix. 16. the wise man's advice is to the same purpose, *Let just men eat and drink with thee.* Agreeably to what our Saviour says, *When thou makest a feast call the poor.* (Luke xiv. 13.) Plutarch gives this extraordinary character of Cymon the Athenian, ἀνελάμβανε τοὺς πένητας, δεῖπνον καθ' ἡμέραν τῷ δεομένῳ παρέχων, in Vit. Pericl. which is confirmed by Lactantius, "Egentibus stipem dedit, et pauperes invitavit." (Lib. vi. 9.) And every good man, says he in another place, should do so, "Justi et sapientis viri domus non illustribus debet patere, sed humilibus et abjectis." (Lib. vi. 12.) Charity sets all persons, both rich and poor, upon an equal footing, acknowledging the same God as the common parent and father of all. This influenced Tobit's conduct on the occasion; and on the same generous principle and noble motive were the *agapæ,* or love-feasts, among the primitive Christians founded, in which the rich fed and relieved the poor. One sees from this example of Tobit, that the Jews observed certain festival-days, especially those of most note and distinction, which were recommended to them either by some temporal or spiritual mercy, and accounted them holy; *Festi dies Domini,* the Vulgate calls them. Secondly, That on these they had set feasts and entertainments, and fared better than at other times, and this in compliance with the appointment of the law, which on certain occasions ordered these religious repasts. (Exod. xii.) Thirdly, That on these solemn anniversary days, it was the constant custom to invite the poor and orphans, widows and strangers, or, if hindered, to send portions to them.

Ver. 3. *One of our nation is strangled, and is cast out in the market-place.*] It seems from this instance, as if the Israelites were evil-treated, and escaped little better in the time of Esar-haddon than in the former reign. Josephus mentions the like barbarity, as practised by the zealots on their countrymen; and all that the friends of the deceased could dare to do, was now and then in the dark to cast a little dust with their hands upon the bodies that were exposed. (De Bell. Jud. lib. iv.) No wonder that such an instance of cruelty affected young Tobias, who possessed his father's tenderness of spirit. It is a sight indeed shocking to human nature, and not only affronts man but God himself, in whose image man is made. Homer informs us how angry Jupiter and Apollo were with Achilles, for abusing and neglecting to bury the body of Hector; that Achilles, by such an act of inhumanity, had lost all mercy and modesty.

——— Ἔλεων μὲν ἀπώλεσεν οὐδέ οἱ αἰδώς.

The very heathens counted this the greatest calamity, and such as hindered the deceased from entering into a state of happiness: hence probably it was that Patroclus, in the same poet, does so earnestly solicit the same stern hero to bury him. The like earnest suit does Palinurus in Virgil put up to Æneas for the same favour. Horace brings in a dead corpse, promising a reward from Jupiter to him that should cast some earth upon it; but if he should refuse to do this good work of humanity, that no sacrifice should be able to expiate the crime. And because want of burial was counted one of the greatest disgraces and punishments that could be inflicted on the dead, hence self-murderers were debarred the privilege of interment. (See St. Austin de Cura pro mortuis gerenda, and Spelman de Sepultura, 2 Esd. ii. 23.)

Ver. 4. *Then before I had tasted any meat, I start up, and took him into a room until the going down of the sun.* Ver. 5. *Then I returned and washed myself, and ate my meat in heaviness.*] "He rose immediately upon his son's relation (says St. Ambrose) from the entertainment to which he had invited many Israelites, the children of his people; his piety would not permit him to feed and refresh his own body as long as the corpse of a deceased countryman and brother lay publicly exposed and unburied. *Non putabat pium, ut ipse cibum sumeret, cum in publico corpus jaceret exanime.*" (Lib. de Tobia.) It has been matter of inquiry, especially among the commentators, whether Tobit himself removed the dead body, and whether he carried it to his own house or to one in the neighbourhood. His readiness indeed to do such an act of kindness appears from i. 18. But if Tobit was really the person that took up the dead corpse, though he might use the ceremony of washing himself before he returned to meat, as is here affirmed of him, yet how could he escape notwithstanding being legally polluted by the touch, or forget what is mentioned Numb. xix. 11. *that he that toucheth a dead body, shall be unclean seven days?* It has therefore been thought more reasonable to suppose, both on account of the pollution attending such

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an act, and from the consideration of his own safety, which would have been endangered hereby, that he did not in person do this, but ordered the dead body to be removed out of sight by others; or if he did do this, says Calmet, we must suppose that he ate his meat at his return separate, and by himself; and perhaps by *eating his bread in heaviness*, the text may seem to intimate his being thus lonely and apart. And for the like reasons they have concluded that it was carried to another's, and not his own house. Our version indeed leaves it at large, but the Roman and some other Greek copies expressly read εἰς τι οἴκημα, *in domum quandam*, as Junius renders.

Ver. 6. *Remembering that prophecy of Amos, as he said, Your feasts shall be turned into mourning, and all your mirth into lamentation. Therefore I wept.*] Amos prophesied under the reign of Oziah king of Judah, and Jeroboam king of Israel, about fourscore years before the event here mentioned. It appears from hence, that Tobit read the Scriptures with great attention, and that he occasionally applied what he read. Amos in the place referred to either foretells the misery of the captivity, in which Tobit and his countrymen were involved under the Assyrians, which Tobit then saw and bewailed the accomplishment of; or he accommodates the words of the prophet to their present unhappy state and circumstances, when, instead of celebrating their feasts with joy and gladness, as usual in their own country, they groaned under the yoke and tyranny of their oppressors, being denied even the innocent liberty and commendable right of burying their murdered countrymen, without manifestly incurring the danger of their lives. A spirit full of tenderness and sympathy like Tobit's, could not be insensible at such a melancholy juncture; the reflection on his own danger, and the continual injuries his brethren were exposed to, called forth his tears; but more especially was he grieved, when he considered the sins and idolatry which had provoked God to deliver his chosen into captivity, and to inflict such heavy judgments upon them.

Ver. 7. *After the going down of the sun, I went and made a grave, and buried him.* Ver. 8. *But my neighbours mocked me, and said, This man is not yet afraid to be put to death for this matter; who fled away, and, yet, lo, he burieth the dead again.*] To let a corpse lie exposed, putrefying in the face of the sun, seemed so inhuman, that Tobit chose rather to hazard his own life, than to endure such an offensive spectacle; and for this the angel commends him, (xii. 12.) and no wonder that he thought himself concerned to render the last kind office to an unfortunate strangled brother, when even the high-priest among the Jews, though he was not to be present in person at the funeral, yet if by chance he found a dead corpse, was obliged to bury it himself. The primitive Christians were remarkable for the like pious zeal; no danger or threatenings could affright them from doing this charitable office to their deceased brethren, especially such who died martyrs for the faith. The Roman clergy, in an epistle to them of Carthage, (Epist. 2. int. Epist. Cypr.) reckon it as one of the greatest instances of charity, above that of relieving the poor, or ministering to the sick; and that fidelity in this matter would be highly acceptable to God, and rewarded by him: Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, speaking of the plague that reigned there, commends the Christians for carrying out their dead brethren, which they cheerfully did, notwithstanding the great danger that attended it. St. Ambrose's sentiments on this occasion are very fine and moving; "Si viventes operire nudos præcipimur, quanto magis debemus operire defunctorum corpora? Si viantes ad longiora deducere solemus, quanto magis in illam æternam domum profectos, unde jam non revertentur? nihil hoc officio præstantius, ei conferre, qui tibi jam non potuit reddere, vindicare a volatilibus, vindicare a bestiis consortem naturæ. Feræ hanc humanitatem defunctis corporibus dedisse produntur; homines negabunt?" (Cap. 1, 2.)

Ver. 9. *The same night also I returned from the burial, and slept by the wall of my court-yard, being polluted.*] St. Ambrose says, that he slept "in cubiculo suo," *in his chamber;* but it seems most probable, from the accident which is related afterward, that he reposed himself in the court-yard by the wall of the house, not through fatigue, as if sleep had overtaken him just at the entrance of his house, nor on account of the excessive heat, as the ancient Italic version has it, but, as our version intimates, on account of his pollution from the dead body which he had just buried. Munster's Hebrew copy says, that Tobit had prepared a bath to purify himself withal, not being able to employ the means prescribed in the law, which he intended to make use of the next day, and so would pass the night till that time out of his house, as every thing or person that touched one thus defiled was made impure thereby.

Ver. 10. *And I knew not that there were sparrows in the wall, and mine eyes being open, the sparrows muted warm dung into mine eyes, and a whiteness came in mine eyes, and I went to the physicians, but they helped me not.*] I think we need not ask here with the commentators whether Tobit slept with his eyes open or shut, since the text says expressly his eyes were open, and his face uncovered. The author of the Synopsis, attributed to Athanasius, mentions that usually ὡς εἴωθεν, Tobit slept with his eyes open, as some people are known to do, particularly such as walk in their sleep. If Tobit's eyes were open, either naturally or by accident at this time, it is easy then to comprehend, says Calmet, how the dung of swallows might occasion the accident here mentioned; for the excrement of these birds, according to some naturalists, (Pliny, lib. xi. cap. 37. Gesner, Hist. Anim. lib. iii.) is extremely hot and acrimonious, and may cause blindness by falling in the eye, and occasioning an inflammation there; and though the secret seems not to have been known to the Assyrian physicians, as they are here called, yet later times have found out a successful method to remove this obstacle of vision, by the dexterity of couching. As to the remedy which Raphael employed to restore Tobit's sight, which this place prepares us for, we will consider whether it could naturally produce such an effect when we come to that chapter.

Moreover Achiacharus did nourish me, until I went into Elymais.] The commentators are divided, whether this is to be understood of father or son; if it respects either, most probably Tobit himself is meant, as he continues to speak in the first person. The sense is, That Achiachar took care of Tobit under this infirmity, till he (Achiachar) went into Elymais, whither he seems to have gone when he was in disgrace, and deprived of his place and dignity, (ch. xiv.) It appears from some parts of this history, (ch. xi. xiv.) that Tobit continued at Nineveh till his death: the true reading, therefore, I presume to be ἐπορεύθη, which Drusius and Gro-

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tius both prefer, and Junius renders accordingly, *Achikar vero aluit me, donec profectus esset in Elymaida.* There seems to be the like mistake in the LXX. Psal. vi. 7. where ἐπαλαιώθην should be rather ἐπαλαιώθη, to answer to the Hebrew.

Ver. 11. *And my wife Anna did take women's works to do.*] Tobit was at this time extremely poor, and maintained by his nephew Achiachar. It may seem surprising that Tobit, who before had lived in good condition, should fall so soon into a state of poverty: but it may be observed of this holy man, that he did much alms, and was continually employed in some instance or other of charity, till Sennacherib deprived him of the place and employment which he had in the court of Shalmaneser: the ten talents left in trust with Gabael he could not recover, not being able to go into Media through the troubles of the times; he had been at considerable expense too for advice and help under the misfortune of blindness, and had doubtless suffered great loss and injury for his care in burying the dead, by a severe persecution on that account. All these joined together; *viz.* his having lost his employment, bestowing much alms, suffering great oppression and loss, and the expenses incurred for the recovery of his sight, were such drawbacks, as will sufficiently explain the alteration in Tobit's circumstances; and hence we may account for his wife taking in work, and being necessitated to seek out an employment for her livelihood and subsistence.

Ver. 14. *She replied upon me, Where are thine alms, and thy righteous deeds? Behold, thou and all thy works are known.*] Tobit, who adhered strictly to justice, and whose maxim was, *do uprightly all thy life long, and follow not the ways of unrighteousness,* (iv. 5.) thinking such a present as a kid not usual, above the common wages, suspected that the distressed circumstances they were in put her upon stealing it, and reproached her accordingly with it. Upon this she upbraids him with his tenderness of conscience, and the little good it had done him. "You need indeed reproach me, behold your disgrace is known to every body; the charities which you have exercised all your life long profit you nothing, they have not kept you from blindness, which deprives you of all comfort. You had fine hopes that living so piously you could not fail to be prosperous and happy, and that serving God he would most certainly repay thee, (iv. 14.) But where are your alms and righteous deeds now, that they stand you in no stead? Have they kept blindness or adversity from you? Have not your excessive and indiscreet charities brought us to the distressed condition we are now in?" Fagius and Munster thus expound, and Cyprian comprises all, when he says, "Ubi sunt justitiæ tuæ? Ecce quæ pateris." (De Mortal.) This reproach from his wife, and raillery upon his religious disposition, who might rather have been expected sweetly to have administered consolation to him under his misfortunes; this taunting behaviour to him, from one so nearly allied to him, was almost as insupportable to him as his blindness. It reminds one of that of Job's friends, or rather of his wife's behaviour to him under his affliction; *Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die,* (ii. 9.) as our version briefly has it; but in that of the LXX. we see her outrageous temper more at large. The Vulgate here uses this very comparison, *Hanc tentationem ideo permisit Deus evenire illi, ut posteris daret exemplum patientiæ ejus, sicut et sancti Job.* St. Austin thus draws the parallel, reflecting upon the different conduct of this couple: "How miserable is his condition thought who wants the blessing of sight! When such a sad spectacle appears, censorious and ill-natured persons presently say, He has committed some great crime, and God was angry and displeased with him. In this sort of strain Tobit's wife insulted her husband; the good man exclaims upon the subject of the kid, from a conceived jealousy of its being stolen; his wife replies upon him with great warmth, And what is all your righteous dealing come to? How blind was the woman, and how enlightened her husband! The one enjoyed the outward benefit of the sun, and the other the inward light of justice and the blessed fruits of the Spirit; and can there be any doubt which of these illuminations to prefer?"

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THEN I being grieved, did weep, and in sorrow prayed, saying—Punish me not for my sins and ignorances.*] The foregoing chapter concluded with Tobit's wife's taunts, proceeding, no doubt, from his suspecting her honesty, which will in some measure plead her excuse. In this we have a farther instance of his good disposition, and particular sweetness of temper; he does not return railing for railing, but silently, and, as it should seem from the latter end of ver. 17. in some retired place from the house, he pours forth his complaints to God, of the great injustice done him, but confesses at the same time, in the spirit of humility, that his sins had deserved a worse treatment. Sins and ignorances are here synonymous, and so the oriental versions generally render them; and thus also ἀγνόημα is used often by the Hellenistic writers. (See Numb. xii. 11. Judith v. 20. Ecclus. xxiii. 2, 3. 1 Esd. viii. 77. 1 Macc. xiii. 39. Heb. ix. 7.)

Ver. 5. *And now thy judgments are many and true, deal with me according to my sins.*] How is this consistent with ver. 3. where it is said, *Punish me not for my sins and ignorances?* there seems some omission or mistake here, probably the negative particle is wanting; the Vulgate takes no notice of this sentence: Fagius's Hebrew copy has quite a contrary sense, *Nec facias nobis juxta iniquitates nostras, et iniquitates patrum nostrorum;* and Munster's, *Ne quæso retribuas mihi juxta iniquitates meas,* &c. the Geneva version affords a new sense, and a good one, *And now thou hast many and just causes to do with me according to my sins.* Our translation, I think, hath wrongly followed the Complut. in reading ποίησον, whereas Alex. Ald. Vat. Syr. and the older Latin versions, read ποιῆσαι, and so the sense and translation will be plain, and more agreeable. Grotius thinks the true reading may be, ἐξ ἐμὲ ποίησον, *tolle me de rebus humanis;* but as this sense follows in the next verse immediately, it seems not agreeable to this place.

Ver. 6. *Command my spirit to be taken from me, that I may be dissolved, and become earth; for it is profitable for me to die, rather than to live.*] The Vulgate omits what follows, and finishes the verse here. Tobit begs of God, the sovereign Disposer of life and death, to set him free from the prison of the body: and in this sense of dying, or departing out of this life, we find ἀπολύω frequently used in Scripture and profane authors. (See ver. 13. and Luke ii. 29.) The term *dissolution,* confirms the distinction of the

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soul from the body, the latter returning to earth, and the former continuing in a state of separation, even in *hades*, or the everlasting place, *domus statuta omni viventi*, as Fagius expounds here. There is nothing more common even in Scripture, than for the saints, under great tribulation, to express a *tædium*, or loathing of life. Holy Job, grieved with the unjust reproaches of his friends, the insults of his wife, and various assaults from Satan, in the bitterness of his soul cries out, *My soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life. I loathe it; I would not live always*, (vii. 15, 16.) When the prophet Elijah was persecuted by wicked Jezebel, he asks it of God as a favour, that he might die, *It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life:* (1 Kings xix. 4.) and St. Paul, *that through trouble he was pressed out of measure, above strength: ut tæderet eum vitæ*, says the Vulgate. It is therefore not at all surprising, that Tobit, under the misfortune of poverty and blindness, insulted and reflected on by his wife and friends for the good deeds of his past life, should desire to die, and thereby be freed from the unjust scandal cast upon him; but it is observable, that he introduces this request to God with submission to his will, who knew best what was most for his advantage.

Ver. 7. *In Ecbatane, a city of Media.*] The Vulgate and the old English translations have here *Rages, a city of Media*, contrary to vii. 1. If Sara lived at Rages, then Gabael and Sara would have been in the same city, nor would there have been any occasion to have gone from Ecbatane thither, as is mentioned ix. 2. As certain therefore as Raphael went to Rages, so certain also is it that Sara did not live there.

Ver. 8. *Asmodeus the evil spirit.*] Some will have it, that Asmodeus is so called from the place which he chiefly haunted, *a regno Medorum, ubi dominabatur*, and to be the same with the *prince of Persia*, Dan. x. 13. (Jerom. in loc. et Cassian. in Collat.) but more probably this is a Hebrew name, signifying a *destroyer*, evil spirits delighting in mischief, and leading them that worship them into perdition; hence almost all plagues, ordinary and extraordinary, were attributed to them. And it is worth observing, that the names of the devil and evil spirits in Scripture, have all a relation to the mischief they do, or occasion; thus Lev. xvii. 7. they are called שעירם, frightful, or, as others render, lustful as goats; Deut. xxxii. 17. שדים, destroyers, as here; שטן, an adversary, Job i. 6.; διάβολος, a calumniator, Matt. iv. 8.; ἐχθρὸς, an enemy, Matt. xiii. 39.; ἀνθρωποκτόνος, John viii. 44.; ἀντίδικος, 1 Pet. viii.; Ἀβαδδὼν, or Ἀπολλύων, Rev. ix. 11. the *destroyer:* the same according to some with Apollo, the famous god of the heathens, whose image accordingly is represented with arrows in its hands, prepared for slaughter and destruction; and, lastly, κατήγορος, an accuser, Rev. xii. 10. According to the notion of the Hebrews, there were also evil angels or genii, whereof some presided over one vice, and some over another, insomuch that there are demons of avarice, demons of pride, and demons of impurity, each endeavouring to ensnare persons with a complexional temptation. The Vulgate insinuates, that the seven husbands who met with their fate the very day of their marriage, were killed by the demon Asmodeus, because lust was their chief motive; for thus Raphael, according to that version, (vi. 17, 18.) explains that accident, *Ostendam tibi quibus prævalere potest dæmonium; hi namque qui conjugium ita suscipiunt, ut Deum a se et a sua mente excludant, et suæ libidini ita vacent, sicut equus et mulus, quibus non est intellectus, habet dæmonium potestatem super eos.* Grotius supposes, that the pretended Asmodeus here, was only some ill quality attending Sara's body, which had proved mortal to her other husbands; but that Tobias, by using such fumigations as were prescribed in that case, not only preserved himself from the fate of the rest, but cured his wife likewise of a malady that was unknown to physic, and therefore ascribed (as the custom of the Jews was, Luke xi. 14. Matt. ix. 32. with every distemper they could not cure) to the operation of the devil. Hence, or on account of this bodily infirmity, he conjectures, she is reproached in the words following by her father's maids, as ἀποπνίγουσα τοὺς ἄνδρας. (See Dissertation.)

Thou hast had already seven husbands, neither wast thou named after any of them.] All of them being killed by the evil spirit before the consummation of marriage. It may perhaps seem surprising, that Sara should have such a succession of suitors, when matching with her was by experience found so very dangerous: the reason that induced them was probably her beauty, or portion of inheritance, or pretended nearness of relation. And what seems to have hastened their fate was, either their immoderate lust, void of all fear of God, or religious sense of the matrimonial institution, or the illegality of their claim. A learned writer indeed thinks, that the Jews allude to this history of Sara, when they speak of seven brethren that had all been married to one wife, Mark xii. 20. (See Whist. Auth. Rec. vol. ii.) But this seems a fanciful conceit, as in this history no mention is made or intimation given of any such near relation; and from that in the gospels it may, I think, be gathered, that each of the husbands cohabited with the woman at least for a time, which does not suit this account in Tobit: and in reality Sara had eight husbands, including Tobias, whereas seven only are mentioned in the gospels, and then the woman, surviving all of them, died also, which does not seem clear of Sara, especially as Tobias died in such an advanced age, as a hundred and seven-and-twenty years old, (xiv. 14.)

Ver. 9. *Wherefore dost thou beat us for them? If they be dead, go thy ways after them.*] All the Greek copies place the interrogation as our version does, pointing the passage thus, τί ἡμᾶς μαστιγοῖς περὶ αὐτῶν; εἰ ἀπέθανον, βάδιζε μετ' αὐτῶν. But Junius conjectures it ought to be placed in this manner, τί ἡμᾶς μαστιγοῖς περὶ αὐτῶν εἰ ἀπέθανον; i. e. *Why by your blows do you revenge upon us the death of your husbands?* And indeed the versions both of Fagius and Munster confirm this latter construction.

Ver. 10. *When she heard these things she was very sorrowful, so that she thought to have strangled herself.*] Ἐλυπήθη σφόδρα ὥστε ἀπάγξασθαι. Our version manifestly implies, that she had actually thoughts of strangling herself. But though it is certain that grief does sometimes put persons upon desperate courses, yet that any such rash resolution was entered into here, as to design actually to make away with herself, does not appear, but rather the contrary; for the history informs us, that she not only suppressed such a thought, but condemned such a fact, as what would bring great reproach to her family, being the ordinary and common punishment of great malefactors. On her father's account too, whose death it would probably occasion or

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hasten, she rejects such an intention; and, lastly, one who appears so religious and well-disposed, cannot be suspected of any such wicked design as self-murder, which would be inconsistent with her general character, and the resignation which she expresses to the will of God. Others therefore think that the words, ἐλυπήθη σφόδρα ὥστε ἀπάγξασθαι, do not mean any premeditated design of strangling herself, but that she was so concerned at the reflections cast on her, and grieved so extremely, as to fall into so deep a melancholy, as to be in a manner suffocated and strangled as it were by it, according to that of Ovid, "Strangulat inclusus dolor." The consequence of which unhappy state of mind was, her wishing herself dead. (See Hammond on Matt. xxvii.) And thus the words, ἀπήγξατο καὶ ἀπέθανε, 2 Sam. xvii. 23. may not improperly be understood; for Ahithophel, according to the sense of the most learned rabbins, did not hang himself, but was stifled with grief. And so, where St. Matthew, speaking of the death of Judas, xxvii. 5. says, ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγξατο, very judicious interpreters expound it, of his being suffocated by grief, by a disease called ἀγχόνη, when a man in a violent fit of spleen or melancholy is strangled, and sometimes bursts with it; which, according to St. Peter's exposition, Acts i. 18. seems to have been Judas's case.

Ver. 11. *Then she prayed towards the window.*] *i. e.* Of the upper room or oratory, which opened towards Jerusalem. Munster's Hebrew copy has, *She prayed before the Lord; i. e.* towards his sanctuary at Jerusalem. The Vulgate is more explicit, *Perrexit in superius cubiculum domûs suæ, et tribus diebus, et tribus noctibus non manducavit neque bibit, sed in lacrymis persistens deprecabatur Deum, ut ab isto improperio liberaret eam.*

Ver. 12. *And now, O Lord, I set mine eyes and my face towards thee, and say, Take me out of the earth.*] Εἶπον ἀπολῦσαί με ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς. Our version is not very accurate here, it would be better rendered imperatively, *And now, O Lord,* command or *speak,* εἶπον, *that I may be taken from the earth, and hear no more reproaches,* like ἐπίταξον ἐπιβλέψαι ἐπ' ἐμὲ, ver. 15. (see also viii. 7.) The old Latin version accordingly has, *Jube me jam dimitti.* The Syriac, indeed, countenances the other rendering; and it may seem to have some support from Isa. xxxviii. 10, 11. With respect to the manner of expression here, and other places of the apocryphal writings, it may be pertinent to observe, that what in pure Greek would be very singular, becomes just and natural, considered either as the translation of Chaldee or Hebrew, or as the writing of a Hebrew author used to Hebrew tautology, and to that most peculiar mood, *hiphil.*

Ver. 13. *That I may hear no more the reproach.*] Terentius Christianus introduces Sara thus lamenting and expostulating:—

"Nam quid tandem est, quod in hac vita diutius
Esse velim, aut cur non malim extemplo abolerier?
Quoquo versum foras prospicio, passim irrideor
Misera, ac conspuor ab omnibus. Imo, quod est longe crudelius,
Cuncti me ut portentum execrantur, horrent ut venefícam.
Quin et diris ut parricidam devovent . . . et nomen commutant mihi,
Pro Sara appellantes Zaram: videlicet parricidii
Facinus exprobrantes." (In Tob. act. i.)

Ver. 14. *Thou knowest, Lord, that I am pure from all sin with man.*] The Vulgate is more full and explicit, *Tu scis, Domine, quia nunquam concupivi virum, et mundam servavi animam meam ab omni concupiscentia. Nunquam cum ludentibus miscui me, neque cum his qui in levitate ambulant, participem me præbui.* Ἁμάρτημα here relates to the sin or offence against chastity in particular, and thus many interpreters understand ἁμαρτωλὸς, Luke vii. 37. (See also John viii. 11.) And in this impure sense *peccare* is used by the Latins, especially the poets.

Ver. 15. *Neither any near kinsman, nor any son of his alive, to whom I may keep myself for a wife.*] *i. e.* Her father had no son to inherit his substance, nor any near kinsman or relation, neither brother, nor brother's son, to whom, as the law required, she might dispose of herself in marriage. Agreeably to this the writer of Judith's history says, that her husband was not only of the same tribe, but of the same family also. For the women of Israel, who had no brothers of the same blood, were enjoined by the law of Moses to marry the next of kin. As appears particularly in the case of the daughters of Zelophehad, (Numb. xxxvi.) who were confined not only to the same tribe of their father, but also to the very family of that tribe: and the reason there given is, that the inheritance of the father should not pass unto strangers. A wise provision, not only for preserving the tribes, but the several families likewise entire.

Ver. 16. *So the prayers of them both were heard before the majesty of the great God.*] See Titus ii. 13. where there is the like expression. Some copies have only τοῦ μεγάλου, which seems an omission. In the Alexandrian MS. Ῥαφαὴλ is wrongly joined to it, which proper name ought to begin the next verse, as in our translation. It may be asked, how what is here said, that the prayers of them both were heard before God, can be true? for both of them prayed to God, if it was his good pleasure, that he would remove them from a world where they saw religion reviled and innocence oppressed; and yet one of these lived to a very advanced age, and the other probably very long with Tobias, as it appears in the sequel of the history. To this it may be answered, that it is true that both of them were heard; not that they obtained precisely the very particular they asked, but God, at their request, granted what was more for their benefit: he did not indeed take life from them, but he made it more easy and agreeable. Or thus, that, as they were entirely resigned to the will and determination of God, their prayers were so effectually heard, that his good pleasure accomplished in them what was most for his own glory. This example, as the Port-Royal comment well observes, affords excellent matter of instruction, assuring us, "that if we pray as Tobit and Sara did, with a spirit of humility and submission, our prayers shall not be rejected; and, though perhaps we may not be answered at the time or in the manner we expected and wished for, we shall in another way, that may be more advantageous and better for us, and more agreeable to what he designs us for. And thus it is observable it happens often in life, that one prays to God for health, another for sight, a third for hearing, without obtaining their particular request; and yet, if their prayer is with faith and a pious resignation, it may truly be affirmed, that their prayers are heard of God, who, foreseeing some danger or misapplication of those faculties, that the blessing of health will be abused, or sight

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an inlet to temptations and final ruin, exchanges the object of their wishes for a better, and, instead of granting what would prove matter of offence to them, bestows on them, in a manner wholly spiritual, what his wisdom sees best and most convenient for their everlasting interest." (In loc.)

Ver. 17. *And Raphael was sent to heal them both.*] The introducing Raphael, a name no where mentioned in Scripture, as the ministering angel for the purposes here mentioned, has been objected against this history. But this deserves little attention; for, 1. This name may as inoffensively be used as Gabriel and Michael are by the sacred penmen. 2. As part of Raphael's commission was to heal Tobit's blindness, the name of this angel was particularly proper to be used, as being expressive of the business itself; for Raphael signifies one that healeth from God, and in Munster's version he is called *princeps et præses sanitatum.* When God would cure any sick person, says St. Jerome, he sends the archangel Raphael, one of the seven spirits before his throne, to accomplish the cure; *Ille minister curationis, Deus autor sanitatis; hoc videlicet nominis interpretatione significante, quod in Deo sit medicina vera.* (Dan. viii.) Some will have the angel that went down at certain seasons to move the waters of the pool, (John v. 4.) for the cure of the distempered, to be Raphael. And in allusion to this history of Tobit, probably, says Calmet, he is invoked as the patron of the sick and guide of the traveller. 3. Such an exalted spirit was proper to be opposed to and to subdue the evil fiend Asmodeus, which will in some measure satisfy the inquiry, why such a distinguished angel was introduced here.

And Sara, the daughter of Raguel, came down from her upper chamber.] Where probably she had been praying: and so Fagius expounds it, *Sara descendit e cœnaculo, in quo oraverat.* It seems to have been customary among the devout persons of the Jewish nation, of both sexes, to set apart some upper room for their oratories, where they might attend the business of prayer without noise or disturbance. (See Dan. vi. 10. Acts i. 16.) Or this might be a sort of *gynæceum,* where she sat at work; for it was the custom of the early times to assign the uppermost rooms to the women, that they might be farther removed from interruption in their employment: accordingly Penelope in the Odyssey mounts up into a garret, and there sits to her business. So Priam had chambers for the ladies of his court, under the roof of his palace. (Il. vi.) Munster's Hebrew copy and the Syriac begin the next chapter with this verse.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 3. *My son, despise not thy mother, but honour her all the days of thy life.*] The son of Sirach presses the same duty very strongly, and by a variety of reasons asserts the reverence due to parents. (Eccles. iii.) With respect to the mother, whose authority is generally less regarded, he urges filial obedience, from the consideration here insisted on; *viz.* the sorrows of the mother in the time of gestation, and the dangers attending her bringing forth, (vii. 27, 28.) The advice which Tobit in this chapter gives his son, when he presumed death was approaching, and that God had heard his petition to be removed from the miseries of life, which he enters upon preferably to the settling his worldly affairs, has always been esteemed an excellent abridgment of moral duties. The precepts are very plain and obvious, and require only sincerity and a good disposition to apply them. St. Austin, reflecting upon the fine instruction given to Tobias by his father, cries out, "O lux quam videbat Tobias, cum clausis oculis istis filium docebat viam vitæ, et ei præibat pede caritatis nunquam errans." (Confess. lib. x. cap. 34.)

When she is dead, bury her by me in one grave.] The ancient patriarchs expressed the same care and concern in this particular of interment. Abraham purchased the cave of Mach-pelah for the burying-place of Sarah, (Gen. xxiii. 19.) and was afterward deposited in the same himself, (xxv. 10.) Isaac and Jacob with their wives were buried there also, (xlix. 31.) By this officious care providing, that such as were intimate and loving in their lives, in their deaths should not be divided, but that a kind of friendship should be continued in death, and the conjugal society as it were made perpetual and indissoluble: thus Apuleius, "Unita sepultura marito perpetuam conjugem reddidere." (Lib. viii.) And the following is a most memorable instance of conjugal tenderness and union, which Valerius Maximus relates of M. Plautius: "Funerata uxore Orestilla, atque in rogum imposita, inter officium ungendi et osculandi, stricto ferro incubuit. Quem amici, sicut erat, togatum et calceatum corpori conjugis junxerunt, ac deinde subjectis facibus, utrumque una cremaverunt. Quorum ibi factum sepulcrum Tarenti etiamnum conspicitur, quod vocatur τῶν φιλούντων." (Lib. iv. cap. 3.) Anciently it was esteemed a mark of ignominy, as well as a misfortune, not to be buried among one's ancestors: that the kings of Judah when they died were buried in the sepulchre of their fathers, is a circumstance scarce ever omitted in the relation of their deaths; and indeed this inclination of lying by, and mingling with kindred dust, prevails almost among all people: so that the following decree of pope Leo to enforce this, which seems even a dictate of nature itself, appears the more strange; "Nos instituta majorum patrum considerantes, statuimus unumquemque in sepulcro suorum majorum jacere, ut patriarcharum exitus docet." (Titul. de Sepult.) From the like union of affection dear friends often coveted one common mausoleum; and the regard which one good man bare to another we may suppose induced the prophet to speak to his sons, saying, *When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried, lay my bones beside his bones.* (1 Kings xiii. 31.)

Ver. 6. *If thou deal truly, thy doings shall prosperously succeed to thee, and to all them that live justly.*] This whole verse is omitted in the Vulgate. Munster and Fagius's Hebrew copy take no notice of the last sentence, nor does St. Cyprian, who recites all the foregoing part; and indeed it seems improperly inserted here, as one sees no reason why Tobias's personal honesty and righteousness should succeed prosperously to all others that live justly. But, however, the observation will be found true in the general, applied to all others that deal fairly and uprightly.

Ver. 7. *Give alms of thy substance; and, when thou givest alms, let not thine eye be envious, neither turn thy face from any poor, and the face of God shall not be turned away from thee.*] This is agreeable to that of Solomon, Prov. xii. 13. *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, and not be heard;* which may mean, that both God and man shall be deaf to his petition when he cries for

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relief in the day of necessity. See also James ii. 13. where the apostle says, *He shall have justice without mercy, who hath shewed no mercy.* By an *envious eye* we are to understand a niggardly and covetous one. (See Ecclus. xiv. 10. xxxv. 10, 11.) The Port-Royal comment restrains the charity here enjoined to men's own proper goods, to that which truly and lawfully belongs to them; for alms founded upon spoil, and given from another's substance, is not charity, but theft and robbery, and will be so far from procuring the favour of God or his blessing, that a sacrifice of goods unjustly gotten will rather provoke his resentment and call down his judgments. And, indeed, if we consider the context, and compare this with the two foregoing verses, this exposition of the place will not appear forced or unnatural.

Ver. 8. *If thou hast abundance, give alms accordingly: if thou have but a little, be not afraid to give according to that little.*] Our charity to others ought to rise in proportion to what we have received ourselves from the hand of God, who, if he gives much, it is with an intent that men may in return bestow the more. Not to give plenteously, *i. e.* in proportion as a man is able, is frustrating the designs of God's providence, who will treat such of the rich as public robbers who look upon that to be their own which they were intrusted with for the benefit of others; injuring by such niggardly behaviour as many poor persons as they were able to relieve. If we take in the whole verse, the advice then is of very great extent, and one may affirm that nobody is exempt: in what state or condition soever he be, it is impossible but that he must have something or other to bestow, either money, or victuals, or clothes; or, if all these be wanting, attendance, or some bodily help and service, may be administered; or, however, advice and kind and tender expressions to such as are in affliction will not be unacceptable, as one testifies thereby a sympathizing and humane temper, which soothes and engages the distressed, and is a relief next to alms.

Ver. 9. *For thou layest up a good treasure for thyself against the day of necessity.*] *i. e.* God will reward the charitable person with temporal blessings, or guard him against necessity, or provide for him under it. David pronounces the same blessedness on him; (Psal. xli. 1.) *Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble, the Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon earth: the Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, and make all his bed in his sickness.* And Solomon confirms the same truth, *He that giveth to the poor shall not want.* (Prov. xxviii. 27.) The phrase θέμα ἀγαθὸν θησαυρίζειν, very much resembles that of St. Paul on the like occasion, ἀποθησαυρίζειν θεμέλιον καλὸν εἰς τὸ μέλλον, 1 Tim. vi. 19. where a very learned writer observes, that θεμέλιον in the rabbinical dialect signifies a bond or obligation, whereby such as lend are secured to receive their own again; and that the apostle's meaning in that place is, That those who exercise works of charity and beneficence, do provide themselves as it were of a bill or bond, upon which they may sue and plead for a reward, and a suitable return of their kindness. (Mede's Works, lib. i. disc. 22.) The like may be said of θέμα here used. And accordingly the Hebrew copy set forth by Fagius, renders it by a word which signifies *depositum*, or a pledge.

Ver. 10. *Alms do deliver from death, and suffer not to come into darkness.*] *i. e.* Charity, through the blessing of God, often proves the means and occasion of long life, as seems to be more fully expressed, xii. 9. Or it may mean, that it is effectual for the procuring of God's mercy and favour in the day or manner of one's death; that it shall make the good and beneficent man's exit easy, and his death comfortable; according to that observation of St. Jerome, "Nunquam memini me legisse mala morte mortuum, qui libenter opera caritatis exercuit." (Ad Nepot.) Or, lastly, that charity wipes away sins, and delivers from death the consequence of them. (See Dan. iv. 27. Ecclus. iii. 30. 1 Pet. iv. 8.) St. Austin has a fine reflection upon the other part of the verse: "Tobit had the misfortune to be blind, and yet he shewed his son the way of truth. He who had lost his bodily eyes, could say to his son, *He that does alms, shall not come into darkness.* Being deprived of outward light, he yet found himself in a condition to direct others how to walk. There is therefore another illumination than that of sense, which enlightens the soul of the good man. He feared not any such reply from his son: *My father, have not you been careful to give alms, and yet you are blind? Is it possible that alms should deliver from darkness, when you, who have been a cheerful giver, are oppressed with it?* Tobit might very consistently say what he did; he knew what light he was then speaking of to his son, and what he saw and perceived was spiritually discerned. The eyes of understanding were his support and comfort, and for the outward help which he received from his son, he returned a better guidance. *Filius patri porrigebat manum ut ambularet super terram, et pater filio, ut habitaret in cœlo.*" (August. de verb. Dom. Serm. 18.)

Ver. 12. *Remember that our fathers from the beginning, even that they all married wives of their own kindred, and were blessed in their children, and their seed shall inherit the land.*] May not the falsity from hence appear of that vulgar notion, that relations who marry never thrive? and may it not be farther observed, that the whole Jewish nation (whose riches are even become proverbial) descends from Isaac and Rebecca, who were related in the same degree?

Ver. 13. *And in lewdness is decay, and great want; for lewdness is the mother of famine.*] This is undoubtedly a very true observation, and confirmed by the unhappy experience of persons addicted to it. But ἀχρειότης, the term here used, I apprehend, is an unusual word for lewdness; it signifies rather *unprofitableness*, or idleness, and to this the observation will equally correspond.

Ver. 15. *Neither let drunkenness go with thee in thy journey.*] Fagius's Hebrew copy has, *Neque cum temulento consuetudinem habeas in omnibus viis tuis.* And Junius, by a Hebraism, understands מדה to signify *vir ebrietatis;* according to which the sense is, *Keep not company at any time with such as are addicted to drunkenness:* or may we not suppose, as the expression in the Greek is ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ σου, that Tobit had the particular journey in his eye he was going to send his son upon, and that the thirst arising from travelling, especially in a warm climate, being a strong temptation to drink plentifully, he might caution his son against any excess? The Vulgate omits this precept relating to sobriety.

Ver. 17. *Pour out thy bread on the burial of the just.*]

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The Jews had not only banquets upon account, or in honour of, the dead, but even over their dead: so that we may distinguish their funeral entertainments into two sorts, domestic, or such as were kept in the house of the deceased, for the refreshment of the melancholy relations and friends there present, which were more or less public and expensive, according to the quality of the deceased; (see Joseph. lib. xvii. Antiq. Jud. cap. 8. and de Bell. Jud. cap. 1. Jer. xvi. 5. 7. in the LXX.) and, secondly, sepulchral entertainments, or such as were carried to the very sepulchre of the deceased, and there either consumed or distributed and carried away by the poor. (Meursius de Funer. cap. 35.) The exhortation of Tobit here to his son to pour out his bread, ἐπὶ τὸν τάφον τῶν δικαίων, alludes to this latter custom (an ancient one among the heathens), and shews, that it was of some antiquity among the Jews. Villalpandus, referring to this passage, says, "Sat patet moris fuisse, ut in ipsis sepulcris mortuorum epulæ ponerentur," in Ezek. xxiv. 17. The words ἐπὶ τὸν τάφον imply something particular to be done *upon the tomb itself*, and not barely something to be expended at the burial of the just, as if the ἐπιτάφιος ἐστίασις in general was only enjoined. We cannot have a more ample testimony of this custom, than what we meet with Ecclus. xxx. 18. *Delicates poured out upon a mouth shut up, are as messes of meat set upon a grave.* Where the son of Sirach manifestly alludes to this ceremony of feasting at or upon the graves of the deceased; a comparison, which he would not have used to have explained his meaning, had not the custom been well known and established. (See note in loc. and Spencer, de Leg. Hebr. tom. ii. p. 1145.) The distinction which Eustathius makes upon that verse of Homer—αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσι τάφον μενοεικέα δαῖνυ, (Il. Ψ.) makes much for our purpose, where he distinguishes between the entertainment on the tomb, calling it τάφον, from the name of the sepulchre, and *that* after the burying, which he calls περίδειπνον. We have express mention of the περίδειπνον νεκροῦ, or the funeral feast, in the Epistle of Jeremy, v. 32. The primitive Christians, many of whose customs it is well known were derived from the Jews, expressed thus their pious regard to their saints and martyrs, by pouring wine upon their tombs, and celebrating the funeral or sepulchral feast over them; but these at length degenerating into dissoluteness and debauchery, St. Ambrose found it necessary to forbid them in the churches of Milan, as did St. Austin in those of Africa. They obtained also among the Romans; but the same abuse probably induced Numa to give strict orders that no one should honour the dead by pouring wine upon their tombs. Estius and Tirinus upon the place remark, and Bellarmine abuses it to the same purpose, that Tobit had not recommended to his son such a practice, if he had not thought that this work of mercy regarded, and in some sort affected, the just persons themselves; *i. e.* that it would procure some ease and refreshment to the souls of the deceased; and from hence they infer the advantage and necessity of those solemn masses and oblations, which the Romish church offers for the repose of the soul. To this it may be answered, 1. That by these sepulchral feasts no oblation was intended to be made to God, but only a decent honour shewn thereby to the memory of the righteous. 2. That no mention is here made of any prayers or intercessions for the dead. 3. That what is here enjoined was to comfort, by a seasonable entertainment, the distressed relations and friends of the person deceased, and was purely for the benefit of the living. 4. That the heathens, from whom this rite was borrowed, and who entertained a notion that the ghosts of the deceased were regaled with this sensible repast, yet extended it not so far, as to the purging of the soul thereby, or affecting the condition of it in its separate state.

Ver. 19. *For every nation hath not counsel.*] No nation, *i. e.* no part of mankind, mere mankind, independently of God, hath counsel or wisdom enough to effect any scheme of importance, or establish any business of consequence: which is a sufficient reason for all private persons or communities to trust in the Lord Jehovah, and to depend upon him for direction and assistance. The context warrants this interpretation. Munster's Hebrew copy has, *Quoniam non est in potestate hominis ullum consilium, sed solum in manibus Dei;* and Fagius, *Quoniam non est sapientia, neque prudentia, neque consilium contra Dominum.* Calmet also takes it in the same sense, *Mettez en Dieu votre confiance, et desperez en lui; il fera reussir tous vos desseins; parce qu'il n'y a ni sagesse, ni prudence, ni conseil contre le Seigneur.*

Ver. 20. *And now I signify this to thee, that I committed ten talents to Gabael, the son of Gabias.*] Chap. i. 14. he is called *his brother.* The Hebrew versions give no light here, as Munster has *brother* in both places, and Fagius, *son.* St. Ambrose admires the conduct of Tobit, and his remarkable disinterestedness with respect to this money. "He was poor and in want, and yet, regarding less his own than others' necessity, he thought not of recalling a very considerable sum which he had lent, and which would have been of great service to him in the condition he was in: nor did he resolve to call it in, till he imagined himself near death, and then he thought it but a piece of justice due to his family to inquire after it, that his son should not be deprived of a sum which lawfully belonged to him, *Non tam cupiens commodatum reposcere, quam sollicitus ne fraudaret hæredem.*" (Ambr. in Tob. cap. 2. tom. ii.) The same writer takes occasion, from this example of Tobit, to reflect on "the prodigious difference between his conduct and that of those who are so wedded to their interests, that they are glad of an opportunity to take advantage of a brother's necessity to enrich themselves, under the pretence of doing them a kindness, and on that account exact large and unlawful interest: whilst the generous and open-hearted Tobit, unmindful of the necessity he found himself in, and of the regard which he owed to his family, hasted not to demand this money, nor require any thing more than the bare principal, though it had been lent a long time; even from Tobias's infancy," as the Vulgate here adds. (Ibid.) There is also another useful inference, which may be drawn from this place, *viz.* that though Tobit seems from ver. 1. to have sent for his son on purpose to communicate to him the affair of the money lent, yet it is observable, that he rather chooses to begin his seemingly farewell charge, by laying down rules for his moral conduct, and his instruction in righteousness, which indeed is the substance of it, before he opens to him the business of the talents in Media; as if in those early times he had known the Divine precept, given by him who fulfilled all righteousness, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* (Matt. vi. 33.)

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Ver. 21. *Thou hast much wealth, if thou fear God.*] This sentiment is so exalted, that, as the Port-Royal comment observes, one would think that it was spoken by some Christian father to his son, in the times of the gospel. It is not unlike that of St. Paul, *Godliness with contentment is great gain.* Tobit had lost his sight, was a captive, and reduced to low circumstances; and yet, in the full assurance of faith, from the good treasure of his heart, he pronounces this encouraging maxim to all others in the like distressed circumstances, *Thou hast much wealth, if thou fear God.* God will either return with usury to a persecuted and afflicted servant, what he may at any time have lost, especially for the sake of his truth, and bless his latter end, as he did that of Job, with the greater flow of prosperity; or having proved his soul by a great trial of afflictions, reserve for him a treasure in the heavens, with which temporal goods are not worthy to be compared. St. Austin, full of admiration of Tobit's devout behaviour in a state of poverty, says, "Quam laudabilis sit Sanctus Tobias, scriptura docemur, cujus devotionem nec captivitas minuit, nec oculorum amissio, quominus Deo benediceret, persuasit. Neque, exhausta substantia, a via justitiæ et veritatis avertit. Necessitas enim probat justum. In egestate æquitatem servare, vera et perfecta justitia est. Unde enim quorundam devotio minuitur, inde augmentum facit laude dignus Tobias." (Quæst. 119.) How happy would the case of the poor be, if, like Tobit, they had ever this excellent maxim in their minds, which he here gives in charge to his son! It may not be amiss to observe, and place in one view, the several admirable precepts given by a religious father to his son in this chapter: 1. To remember God, and to praise him devoutly for his blessings. 2. To pay a reverence and regard to parents, for the kindness received from them. 3. To shew charity to the poor. 4. To avoid fornication and every species of lewdness. 5. To abhor all pride. 6. To be just towards all, and in particular to give the labourer his hire. 7. To honour good and just men, and to pay a respect to their memory by a decent funeral. 8. To ask counsel of the wise, and follow it. 9. To trust in God's goodness, even in the midst of poverty.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 3. *SEEK thee a man which may go with thee, whilst I yet live.*] Besides that of our version, there are other renderings of this sentence, according to the pointing of the Greek. The Vulgate has, *Ut, dum adhuc vivo, recipias pecuniam.* Fagius's Hebrew copy, *Fortasse redibitis, me adhuc vivente.* And the Greek and Syriac, *Dabo ei mercedem dum vivo.* The Vulgate properly enough inserts *fidelem* here, *Inquire tibi aliquem fidelem virum, qui eat tecum; i. e. Inquire for somebody of trust and probity to go with you:* for every idle person or vagrant was not proper to be sent on such an errand, or joined in a commission of receiving such a sum of money. (See ver. 8.)

Ver. 4. *He found Raphael that was an angel.* Ver. 5. *But he knew not.*] *i. e.* He knew him not to be such, having assumed a human form, of no mean or common appearance, but, as the Vulgate adds, having an air of majesty and greatness, which he looked upon as his natural mien, and not as the reflection of a heavenly glory, as he found it afterward to be. That good angels are appointed by God to be the guardians of particular men, and in execution of this their office, do frequently assume human shapes, to guide them in their journeys, and to deliver them from all dangers, is a doctrine as ancient as the patriarch Jacob's time, embraced by Christians, and believed by the wisest heathens. (Gen. xlviii. 16. Psal. xxxiii. 8. Matt. viii. 10. Acts xii. 15. Hes. Oper. et Die. lib. i. Plato, de Leg. lib. x.) Hence Mercury was fabled to be the messenger of the gods and guide of the way; and as such was said to have wings on his arms and his feet. A learned writer observes, that this story of Tobias and the angel has a wonderful relation and a great conformity, both in the ideas and the style, with Mercury's descending in the shape of a young man, and conducting Priam in his journey to the pavilion of Achilles, Il. Ω. where their conversation on the way is described. And the example of Homer, so long before Tobit, proves, that this opinion of God's sending his angels to the aid of man was very common, and much spread among the pagans in those former times, as will appear to any one that consults their theology. (Dacier's note, in loc. cit.) The part which the angel acts in this history is attended with some difficulties, and has been made a principal objection to the authority of the book; for though it be true, that angels have sometimes actually assumed the form or appearance of men, upon some extraordinary or high errand from God to man, yet this has been in appearance only: our Saviour himself seems to say as much; for when, upon his entering into the room where his disciples were assembled, and the doors shut, they were terrified, and thought they saw a spirit, he puts the proof of its being really himself, and no mere appearance, that a spirit has not flesh and bones, as they might actually feel and experience him to have. But it may be thought incredible, that Tobias should so long travel, and eat and lodge, with an immaterial form or appearance, and after so many occasions as must unavoidably offer for sensible touch, not only to himself, but in the family of Raguel, &c. no discovery should be made, nor so much as any suspicion raised of the thing. In answer to all which, it may, I presume, be very justly replied, first, with regard to the angel's appearing at all in this transaction, that it was an occasion *vindice digna Deo;* for whether we consider the greatness of Tobit's virtues, who was probably the most illustrious instance of piety and charity amongst the whole ten captive tribes, or the loss of his fortunes first, and his eyes after, and so the greatness of his sufferings also; if we attend farther to the particular situation of himself and his countrymen, which required uncommon supports to keep up their spirits, and maintain a proper dependance and hopes in God, it could be no ways unworthy God's wise and good providence in such circumstances, to send a messenger from heaven, and to make this a sensible example, that he had neither cast off his people, nor would at any time be wanting in the care of good men under their afflictions. As to the other part of the difficulty, which arises from an immaterial being conversing and cohabiting under a corporeal appearance only, without any discovery, or so much as suspicion, that it was not a real body, we answer, that the angel's skill and address, ever awake to his business, and not subject to such absence and inadvertencies as ourselves, would easily prevent or divert the occasions of discovery. And if, as we have a right, we farther include

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God's extraordinary providence here, all the difficulty is at once removed.

Ver. 9. *So he called him, and he came in, and they saluted one another.* Ver. 10. *Then Tobit said unto him, Brother, shew me of what tribe and family thou art.*] The Vulgate is fuller and more explicit as to the salutation, *Dixit, gaudium tibi sit semper. Et ait Tobias, Quale gaudium mihi erit, qui in tenebris sedeo, et lumen cœli non video. Cui ait juvenis, Forti animo esto; in proximo est, ut a Deo cureris:* preparing the reader for the accomplishment of this, chap. xi. The term *brother* is not to be taken strictly; the Jews called all those of their own tribe or nation *brethren:* Tobit, who uses this appellation in several places of this chapter, speaks to Raphael according to his human appearance, as one of the brethren.

Ver. 11. *Dost thou seek for a tribe or family, or a hired man to go with thy son?*] *i. e.* Why dost thou trouble thyself about my tribe or family? content thyself, without any farther inquiry, that thou hast got a good guide for thy son, *ad votum tuum mercenarium,* according to Munster's Hebrew copy. Of what service will it be, in the intended journey, to know my family? Dost thou want the family, or a hireling only, that is well acquainted with the way, to conduct thy son? And thus the Port-Royal comment explains it, *Est-ce la famille du mercenaire, qui doit conduire vôtre fils, ou le mercenaire lui-même que vous cherchez?* There is, however, more in this question than may seem at first hearing; it is not merely a question of curiosity, natural to old men, but Tobias being young and inexperienced, the intention of the good old man, his father, was, by this inquiry, to get all the intelligence and assurance he could possibly of the condition and credit of one, to whom he was about to entrust a son, whom he had been all along careful to bring up in the fear of the Lord, and with an abhorrence of evil company: and when Tobit asks Raphael of what family he was, it was in effect only to demand who and what he was himself; for from the good or evil disposition of the stock, or heads of the family, may with great probability be inferred the temper and manners of the children and dependants; as we form a judgment from the tree itself what fruit may be expected from it. Terentius Christianus expresses this conference more clearly:

> " *Tob.* Amabo, hospes,
> Cujas es? aut quibus parentibus, quæso,
> Prognatus? *Raph.* Quorsum id percontare? Nil refert
> Ad id quod agimus nunc. *Tob.* Ne id mihi, precor, frater,
> Succenseas, quòd curiosius stirpem
> Tuam expiscari non erubuerim. Scis quàm
> Non sit tutum cuiquam, hoc rerum statu, quicquam
> Committere ignoto: et curæ est mihi gnatus."
>
> (In Tob. act. ii.)

Ver. 12. *I am Azarias, the son of Ananias the Great, and of thy brethren.*] *i. e.* An Israelite. See vii. 3. where he makes himself to be of the tribe of Nephthali. Many Greek copies read here very corruptly, ἐγὼ τὸ γένος Ἀζαρίου καὶ Ἀνανίου τοῦ μεγάλου; but the reading followed by our version is confirmed by vi. 8. vii. 8. ix. 2. It may be more material to inquire, how Raphael is Azarias, and with what propriety or truth he styles himself so? To this objection several answers may be given:—1. That angels having no proper name, but what is derived from the office and ministry they are employed about, and Azarias, according to the Hebrew signification, meaning a *helper from God;* this name may agree very well to the angel Raphael, who was sent for this very purpose to be instrumental in curing Tobit's blindness, and to be a guide and assistant to Tobias in his journey, and therefore very prudently concealed his quality of an angel, that he might more conveniently execute his commission. The giving of proper names to persons derived from some accident, quality, or office, belonging to them, was very ancient, and customary among the Hebrews. There are many instances of this kind in Scripture, particularly Gen. xxx. where the names given to Jacob's children are very observable and expressive, if considered in this view. Secondly, As the angel had assumed the form and person of Azarias, he may be supposed to speak according to his appearance only; as the author of the first book of Samuel saith, That Samuel spake to Saul, seeking his counsel by the witch of Endor, because the person that appeared was in Samuel's habit, and the witch, or at least king Saul, did repute him to be so. In like manner this angel, personating Azarias, for a time bare his name: or thus, as the picture is usually called by the person it represents, and he who in the tragedy acts the part of Cyrus, does for that time go under his name, so Raphael, personating Azarias in the form and appearance of a young man, was in that capacity to act and speak as if he had been such. Thirdly, The following instance may likewise serve to illustrate this, *viz.* When Joseph was sent after his brethren to Sichem, and had lost his way, there met him a person, (Gen. xxxvii. 15, 16.) that directed him where to find them, which the Targum of Jonathan on the place pronounces to be the angel Gabriel. As this concealed angel had the appearance of a man, and is indeed so called in that text, and under that form was assisting in directing the way, we may hence perhaps conceive, how the same person here should be the angel Raphael and yet Azarias also.

Ver. 13. *My brother, thou art of a good stock.*] It may seem surprising, that Tobit, hearing the name of Ananias the Great, did not think proper to inquire how it happened, that Azarias, the son of so considerable a person, was so reduced in his circumstances, and to such a state of meanness, as to be obliged to get a poor livelihood, by occasionally hiring himself. To say nothing of the vicissitude of fortune, which God has placed in his own power, it may be sufficient to answer, That in a time of captivity, such as was that of the Israelites at present, all distinction of families is lost, or however not considered, the greatest and most considerable are confounded with the meanest; as they are carried away promiscuously from their country, so they are equally stripped of their possessions and fortunes, and condemned by the merciless victor to the same instances of hardship and servility.

Ver. 14. *Wilt thou a drachm a day.*] It appears by the gospel of St. Matthew, that a Hebrew drachm was the fourth part of a shekel, *i. e.* ninepence of our money; for there, xvii. 24. the tribute-money, annually paid to the temple by every Jew, which was half a shekel, is called δίδραχμον (*i. e.* the two drachm piece); and therefore, if a half shekel contained two drachms, a drachm must have been the quarter of a shekel, or ninepence, as every shekel

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weighed about three shillings of our money. If we suppose this Greek version of Tobit to be made from the Chaldee by some Alexandrian Jew, then, as every Alexandrian drachm contained two Hebrew drachms, one drachm of Alexandria will be of our money eighteen-pence.

Ver. 16. *Go thou with this man, and God, which dwelleth in heaven, prosper your journey, and the angel of God keep you company.*] As indeed he did, according to the representation of this history, though Tobit in faith spoke this. This pious wish, no less than Raphael's example and presence, shews us the opinion of the Jews at least, that God has given his angels the charge of mankind, and that he makes use of their ministry to conduct them through this life, in the midst of the many dangers that accompany them. Our Saviour intimates such a tutelar care with respect to little children in particular, Matt. xviii. 10. But it does not from hence follow, that the angels have such a knowledge of human affairs, or power over them, as that prayers should be offered up to them, or their intercession with God should be requested, or that any reliance should be had on their merits, as the popish expositors on this book would infer; for however highly favoured, still they are but servants of God, and his ministering spirits, and have neither omniscience, nor omnipresence, nor any attribute to make them fit objects to be addressed to in a manner which is incommunicable to the Divinity. Tobit's affectionate charge here greatly resembles Abraham's commission to his servant, Gen. xxiv. 40. upon his sending him to fetch a wife for his son Isaac; *The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house.* In this particular also of a wife the resemblance holds; for though Raphael had nothing in commission relating to Sara, yet he happily crowned his journey by concluding a match for his master's son, who sent him in quest of money only.

So they went forth, and the young man's dog with them.] This clause is wanting here, both in Munster's Hebrew copy and in the Vulgate. The latter, indeed, inserts it, vi. 1. It is most probable that the dog went with them, as it is mentioned in all the Greek copies, the Syriac, and Fagius's Hebrew, as going and returning with them, xi. 4. This circumstance of the dog, though of no great moment, is neither absurd nor unusual, as it is according to the simplicity of ancient times. But it may be the more necessary not to pass over this incident of the dog without some farther remark, since no less a critic than Mr. Pope has passed some raillery upon it. As he very ingeniously entertains himself and his friend (see letter to Mr. Cromwell), in satirizing some of the follies and failings of men, by setting forth the contrary virtues and good qualities of dogs; in the flow of his wit he observes, with relation to the book of Tobit, that there was no manner of reason to take notice of the dog, but the humanity of the author. Now, to call the introducing the dog an instance of the author's humanity, is certainly a very odd conceit; so odd, that it seems plain we are to consider it as a hasty stroke of fancy, not the result of Mr. Pope's judgment; indeed, were he serious, there is as little truth as candour in this censure. Tobias was to take a long journey into a strange country, and to bring a large sum of money back with him, attended only with one other person, who, though an angel, was not discovered by him to be such; and does not the reason of the thing speak itself, that the dog was thought a proper guard under these circumstances, and therefore taken by Tobias, *Comesque viæ dominique satelles?* Pliny thinks it worth his while to remark this use of dogs, and gives an instance of a master preserved in his journey from thieves by his dog. (Nat. Hist. lib. viii. cap. 40.) And this we apprehend is sufficient to shew, that the mentioning the dog at the entering upon their journey was not impertinent. As to the significancy of introducing him again at their return, there is no reason why we should admire such a circumstance as natural and beautiful in Homer, and yet low and trifling in our author. Take the two passages together: "Tunc præcucurrit canis qui simul fuerat in via, et quasi nuncius adveniens, blandimento suæ caudæ gaudebat:"

Δὴ τότε γ' ὡς ἐνόησεν Ὀδυσσέα ἐγγὺς ἐόντα,
Οὐρῇ μέν ῥ' ὅγ' ἔσῃνε. (Odyss. P.)

It would indeed argue great want of taste to put these two cases quite upon a parallel: Ulysses was in disguise, and entirely unknown to every human creature; yet the sagacity of this animal at once discovers him under all the changes that twenty years' absence and fatigues, together with all that art and design could contribute farther to his concealment, had brought upon him. This is a very beautiful and striking circumstance in the poet, and though we find nothing in the historian to correspond with it, yet there remains likeness sufficient to secure him from ridicule. To which we may add, that, after the eagerness and impatience of the parent for the return of her son, we are affected with a very sensible pleasure to see it removed at once, and changed into joy by the appearance of that faithful guard, which, upon his master's approaching home, ever naturally hastens to be the harbinger of it. It may not be amiss to observe, that the passage quoted above from the Vulgate, receives great confirmation from the Syriac version, which makes Anna see the dog first, before she saw her son, (xi. 6.) upon which she flies to Tobit, to tell him they were coming. Nor does the Greek disagree with this; for it says, not that she saw Tobias himself, but προσενόησεν αὐτὸν ἐρχόμενον, *i. e.* knew it, or perceived it by some token, *to wit*, this of the dog. We should not have dwelt so long upon a circumstance seemingly so trifling, nor have been induced to have taken so much notice of it, had not this circumstance been represented as if the dog was introduced into the history foolishly, and without any sort of reason for it.

Ver. 17. *Is he not the staff of our hand, in going in and out before us?*] This is a Hebraism. We meet with the like phrase, Numb. xxvii. 17. The sense here is, Is he not the staff of our age, in managing our affairs, and taking care for us? And thus the Geneva version, *Is he not the staff of our hand to minister unto us?* And so Junius, *Nonne scipio manus nostræ est, res nostras agens arbitratu nostro?* Fagius's Hebrew copy has, *Promus et condus est domus nostræ; i. e.* He is the proveditor or steward of our family; and the Vulgate, *Baculum senectutis nostræ.* Terentius Christianus well expresses the sense of this and the following verse:—

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——— "Multæ simul
Concurrunt suspiciones, quæ meum animum diversum trahunt:
Viæ crepidines periculosæ, adolescentis parum
Circumspecti imperitia: tum hospes, cujus fidei creditus est,
Ignotus —— saltem spectatæ fidei viro
Commisisset, cum ipsi salute filii pecunia
Prior esset. O insaturabilem habendi sitim!
Quasi non multo satius fuisset, paululum
Perdere pecuniæ, quam filium, unicam
Nostræ senectutis requiem, vitæ subire periculum."
(In Tob. act. iii.)

Ver. 18. *Be not greedy to add money to money.*] Ἀργύριον τῷ ἀργυρίῳ μὴ φθάσαι. The sense of the English version is clear and easy, but the Greek is not so intelligible. The meaning of the different translators in their several expressions, probably may all be brought nearly into one sentiment. *Let not money be added,* margin; *i. e.* Let not the value of it be enhanced above what it is. *Would to God we had not laid money upon money,* Geneva; *viz.* we had not doubted the price of it in our estimation. *Nanquam fuisset ipsa pecunia pro qua misisti eum,* Vulgate; I wish there had not been any such money; or, *that* money should never have been the consideration of sending away thy son. *Utinam argentum huic argento non antecessisset,* Junius; I wish the desire of money hath not overprized this money in Media. *Argentum ad argentum non perveniat,* Syriac; The silver or money there loses its value, if my son's life is to be the price of it. As it is generally agreed that Tobit was wrote originally in Hebrew or Chaldee, it may perhaps contribute towards understanding this passage, to inquire what word it probably was that is here translated by φθάνω. As to the two Hebrew copies of Fagius and Munster, they are comparatively modern things, and depart too widely from the more authentic versions, to give us any assistance here. There are two Hebrew words, and, as far as I find, those only, which in the LXX. are thus translated, if they may be thought to reach the point. The first is נגע, in *hiphil, pertingere fecit, adduxit;* in this sense, ἀργύριον τῷ ἀργυρίῳ φθάσαι, is to add money to money. The other word, which they translate by φθάνα, is אמץ, in *hithp. roboravit,* and, by a common Hebraism, to hasten a thing, or to do it with all one's might. (1 Kings xii. 18.) In any of these senses, and supposing either of these words to have been the original one in this passage, the meaning clearly is, to hasten or accumulate money on money. They are both Chaldee words likewise, and bear a meaning perfectly suitable to what we have deduced from the Hebrew ones. It will be proper likewise to consider the Greek word itself, which will be found not incapable of the same meaning. Φθάνω, amongst its other significations, is, by Stephens, Budæus, &c. explained, *Voti compos esse, propositi summam attingere,* and so may be interpreted here, *to get money to money.* There remains, however, still a difficulty, which is, to account for the construction, and fill up the sense, for to what shalt we refer φθάσαι? Grotius, to make out his own meaning, would have ἔδει, or something equivalent, to be understood, which would also answer as well to complete ours, without any such liberty as altering the text: but possibly there may not be occasion even for this here; may not γένοιτο, in the second clause of the verse, be referred or extended to the first also? ἀργύριον τῷ ἀργυρίῳ μὴ φθάσαι γένοιτο, let it not be our business to get money to money, but let the money be περίψημα τοῦ παιδίου, *i. e.* either ἕνεκα τοῦ παιδίου, as filth and dirt for the sake of our child; let us lose it rather to save him: so Galat. vi. 17. στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, are not the marks properly of the Lord Jesus, but the wounds and marks suffered, ἕνεκα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, for his sake: or else we may suppose περίψημα to refer to those propitiatory sacrifices among the heathens, when, in the time of any great calamity, some vile wretches were sacrificed for the purgation and atonement of the whole people; and such sacrifices were περικαθάρματα, περιψήματα: and the sacrifical form was, as Suidas tells us, upon such occasions, *Be thou our* περίψημα: in this view the meaning of our passage is, Let us sacrifice our money to the welfare of our son.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 2. *A FISH leaped out of the river, and would have devoured him.*] According to Bochart, it was the *silurus;* this some call the sheat-fish, and which, as described by Ray, "Ad octo et amplius cubitos longitudine excrescit, pondere 150 libras superat, rictus oris amplissimus, estque piscis admodum vorax." Johnston says farther of it, calling it *glanis,* another name for the *silurus,* that "Non minoribus duntaxat pisciculis ventrem implet, sed et in majores, immo homines grassatur," and gives instances of human limbs found in the belly of this fish. Again, Tobias's fish was eatable; so is the *silurus,* and is in some places esteemed, "Pinguis, bonique saporis." Bochart gives the same account from the ancients, and goes on with the parallel,—Was Tobias's fish found in the Tigris? Pausanias, in like manner, makes the *glanis* or *silurus* to be an inhabitant of the Euphrates, from whence the excursion into the Tigris is easy, as those two rivers join: and Diodorus expressly tells us, that fish of the belluine kind are found in the Tigris, especially about the dog-days. He proceeds farther to shew from Galen, and other writers, that the liver of the *silurus* was in great fame for the cure of suffusions and dimness of sight; and, from some Greek and Arabic authors, that even its smell was effectual in expelling demons; but possibly this very history of Tobit might originally give occasion to these notions. If it should be objected that the *silurus* is a fish of a very smooth and slippery skin, destitute of scales, and therefore not to be supposed to be held by the bare hands of Tobias, it is sufficient to answer, that the head is disproportionably big to its body, and the gills vast and open, so as to offer easy and firm hold; there is, therefore, in the Latin version, where Tobias is ordered *prehendere branchiam,* very great propriety, from the singular form and structure of this fish. But whether the eating this fish, as mentioned ver. 5. is quite agreeable to Lev. xi. 10. is a difficulty that hath not been fully considered. Against the *callionymus,* which the greater part of the interpreters suppose to be the fish here meant, from the sanative virtue said to be in it by Pliny and other naturalists, there lies this very material objection, That it is a fish of so small a size as is utterly inconsistent with the story. "Longitudine est (says the most accurate Mr. Ray, with whom Johnston agrees), dodran-

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tali, rarius pedali," and therefore can never be supposed to attack, much less able to devour, a man.

Ver. 7. *Touching the heart and the liver, if a devil or an evil spirit trouble any, we must make a smoke thereof before the man or the woman, and the party shall be no more vexed.*] Those who are of opinion that demons were invested with certain material forms, wherein they snuffed up the perfumes and feasted themselves upon the odours of the incense and sacrifices that were offered to them, have an easy way of solving this difficulty, by supposing that the smell of the burnt heart and liver of the fish was offensive to Asmodeus. The Chaldeans, among whom the book of Tobit was wrote, and the Israelites, for whose use and instruction it was wrote, might both be of this opinion, that demons, as not absolutely divested of all matter, were capable of some sensations and impressions that belonged to corporeal substances; and therefore, in accommodation to the vulgar idea and prejudice of the people, the author of this history might express himself as though the expulsion of this evil spirit was effected by a natural cause, the smoke of the fish, even though at the same time he sufficiently intimates, that it was through the merciful help of God, obtained by prayer, that it came to pass, (ver. 17.) But if this demon was incorporeal (and this is the supposition which generally prevails), we may safely conclude, that the smoke of the fish's entrails could have no direct nor physical effect upon him; that his fleeing away, therefore, was occasioned by a supernatural power, in the exercise of which this angel appointed to attend Tobias was the principal instrument, and that he ordered the fumigation as a sign only when the evil spirit, by his superior power, should be chased away. Others have been disposed to consider Asmodeus not as any real demon, but only as expressive of the great power of lust, and that the fumigation in no other sense drove away that evil spirit, than as its virtue contributed to check and suppress such an extravagant and brutal passion as was predominant in her other husbands, the efficacy of which (ver. 7) is said to be so powerful and general, as that it would cure τινὰ, *any other person* tempted in the like irregular manner. But, allowing this fumigation to have some physical effect, like other fœtid medicines, yet it would, I conceive, be more proper to consider this as a lower and secondary instrument only in the cure, as prayer and abstinence are, in the history itself, set forth as the principal means by which so powerful an effect was produced. And this seems to be a more likely way to hinder the return of Asmodeus, *i. e.* of any base lust again, than the power of natural fumigation, which has not escaped censure, as having some appearance of magic.

Ver. 8. *The gall is good to anoint a man that hath whiteness in his eyes, and he shall be healed.*] Whether the gall of this or any other fish has such a natural virtue to restore sight, naturalists can best determine. Pliny, indeed, speaking of the *callionymus*, mentions something like this:— "Fel cicatrices sanat, et oculorum carnem superfluam consumit." (Lib. xxxii. cap. 4. 7.) But I have before shewed (see note on ver. 2.) that this is not the fish here mentioned. It seems best in this case, likewise, not to rest the cure in the mere natural liniment, but to understand the outward application as somewhat similar to our Saviour's spreading clay upon the eyes of the man that was born blind, and ordering him to wash in the pool of Siloam, not as the cause, but as the proof, of the cure. It was the power of God in both instances; and Tobit, sensible of this, returns devout thanks to God accordingly, xi. 14, 15.

Ver. 12. *I know that Raguel cannot marry her to another, according to the law of Moses, but he shall be guilty of death.*] According to the precept in the Mosaical law, Numb. xxvii. 8. a woman ought to marry her nearest kinsman, who, having no brother, succeeded to the inheritance of her father; but the penalty of death, mentioned in our version, the Syriac and Greek text, seems very particular, and is not to be met with any where in the law, either as denounced against the father, who would not give his daughter to his nearest kinsman, or against the nearest kinsman himself, if he would not espouse her. The Geneva version, which qualifies the expression, is therefore preferable: *I know that Raguel cannot marry her to another according to the law of Moses, else he should deserve death.* But I think the words ἢ ὀφειλήσει θάνατον may be better rendered, *ἢ, or* (if he does) that other to whom he gives her, ὀφειλήσει, will be obnoxious to death, or in great danger to be slain by the power of Asmodeus. For it has been thought not very unlikely, that the true reason why the seven husbands were given up to be slain by the wicked demon, was because they unjustly claimed the right of marriage to this heiress; the attempt to lie with whom was a sort of attempt to ravish a virgin already betrothed, and belonging to another by their law; and by the slaughter of these, Providence preserved her pure and unspotted for her rightful and legal husband, Tobias. (See Whist. Auth. Records, vol. ii.) Nor is the sense which Terentius Christianus gives of this passage to be despised:

> "Non denegabit, sat scio: nec si velit
> Maxime, jure poterit: nam præter jus tuum
> Nil postulas; tibi enim debetur: utpote
> Qui ei cognatione ac genere proximus
> Es. Nec eam, contra præceptum Mosaicum,
> Alienigenæ nuptum locabit conjugi,
> Nisi crimen capitale velit incurrere."
>
> (In Tob. act. iii.)

The Vulgate and Hebrew copies wholly omit the threatening clause, and indeed the sense is as complete without it.

Ver. 14. *For a wicked spirit loveth her, which hurteth nobody but those which come unto her.*] Calmet observes, that this demon, being incorporeal, could not possibly love Sara on account of her youth or beauty, or any bodily accomplishment; much less did he respect, as he was an unclean and impure spirit, her chastity and virtue. Tobias, therefore, must be understood to speak here according to popular prejudice and opinion. The vulgar supposed demons to be corporeal, and to be enamoured, like mortals, with the love of women; hence it became a notion that Asmodeus, through a motive of jealousy, killed those that went in unto Sara. The Vulgate and Hebrew copies only mention the bare fact, but the Greek and Syriac assign love, or rather brutal lust, as the cause of this cruelty. The rabbins and latter Jews, it is certain, supposed that evil spirits were enamoured of handsome women, from misunderstanding perhaps Gen. vi. 2. And there are many authors that pretend evil spirits are not only capable of, but often indulge and satisfy, a criminal passion with women; and particularly that the demons called *incubi* and

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succubi carry on shameful and abominable intrigues with both sexes. Stories of this sort are not wanting even in writers of good note and authority. (See August. de Civit. Dei, lib. xv. cap. 23. and S. Bern. lib. ii. cap. 6.) But the opinion that demons and angels are corporeal, though countenanced by the Platonists, Origen, and others of the fathers, is now generally exploded. And if one examines the accounts in history which mention such an unnatural commerce of demons with mortals, male or female, it is generally represented as transacted during sleep, and therefore is to be looked upon rather as the effect of the disordered imagination of such persons, than any sensible or corporeal act of any real demon. Had Raphael himself said this, That the demon had slain the seven husbands through his own love for Sara, it had been a difficulty indeed; but, as it was Tobias only, he might do it according to the received opinion of his countrymen. We may therefore here justly call this an error of Tobias, but it is no reflection on the history.

Ver. 17. *And the devil shall smell it, and flee away, and never come again any more: but when thou shalt come to him, rise up both of you, and pray to God which is merciful.*] This account of driving away the demon by fumigation, reminds one of what Josephus mentions, de Bell. Jud. lib. viii. cap. 2. that one Eleazar, before Vespasian and a great number of persons, freed several, who were possessed with evil spirits, from the power of them, by putting to their nose a certain ring, having a specific root under it, which quickly expelled the demon out of their bodies, so as never to return again; and that this method of cure was at that time successfully made use of against evil spirits: if this relation is to be depended on, it shews the power of smell upon evil genii, and the effect here ascribed to fumigation may from thence receive some countenance. But I do not build much upon this narrative, which carries in it the appearance of magic; much less can I pursuade myself to run the parallel between ejecting the demon here by the ashes of the perfume, and those undoubted miracles recorded in the Old and New Testament, Numb. xxi. 9. Josh. vi. 20. 2 Kings ii. 21. iv. 41. Matt. ix. 20. John ix. 6, 7. Acts v. 15. xix. 12. with which the popish expositors, out of an implicit regard to authority, and a zeal for their canon, have presumed to compare it. Without straining the point so far, the history itself seems to afford light enough to account for the supposed miracle, without recourse to, or any way relying upon, the virtue of the burnt entrails; for as prayer to, and faith in God was, according to the angel's direction, to accompany the use of the outward means, to which, according to the Vulgate, was added matrimonial continence for a season likewise; these have that known and sovereign virtue in them, as to supersede the necessity of any less powerful means. Especially if this demon was like that which went not out but by prayer and fasting, Matt. xvii. 21. This rich and holy perfume was an incense more precious and available with God than any secret of nature, or invention of art. Joint prayers, from persons so well-disposed, had, as it were, the efficacy of an evening sacrifice.

Fear not, for she is appointed unto thee from the beginning.] *i. e.* She belongs to thee according to the constitution of the law; or is thine by Divine appointment and designation. Ἑτοιμάζειν is taken in this sense to signify what is ordered by Divine appointment, Matt. xx. 23. xxv. 34. 1 Cor. ii. 9. Heb. xi. 16.

And thou shalt preserve her.] *i. e.* By maintaining, protecting, and defending her; and be a saviour to her, as the term is used on the like occasion, Eph. v. 23. Munster's Hebrew copy is more explicit, *Et per manum tuam dominus liberabit eam de manu dæmonis;* see xii. 3. where Sara is mentioned as made whole, or freed from that plague of the possession of the demon; and, iii. 17. where Raphael is mentioned as sent to heal Sara, by giving her for a wife to Tobias.

I suppose that she shall bear thee children.] He might express himself thus doubtfully, either as the man Azarias, whose appearance he assumed, or in his own person, as the angel Raphael. For angels too, though called intelligences, however desirous they may be to look into, are certainly ignorant of things future, (see 2 Esd. iv. 52.) unless God is pleased to reveal them to them, or commissions them to declare them to others. As when the angel foretells unto Zechariah the birth of a son, he mentions his authority and commission, *I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.* (Luke i. 19.) Calmet renders, *J'espere qu'elle vous donnera des enfans.*

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 3. *To whom they said, We are of the sons of Nephthalim, which are captives in Nineveh.*] This passage, which has been too hastily misrepresented by some writers, as containing a notorious falsehood, (see Raynold's Præl. tom. i. Præl. 46.) is capable of being very consistently explained; for it does not appear from the text, that the angel gave this answer rather than Tobias; secondly, as Raphael assumed the person of Azarias, it might very properly be spoken in both their names, as Ananias, from whom Azarias descended, was of that tribe, (v. 12, 13.) The like answer will account for the angel's saying, that he was of the captivity of Nineveh; for so Azarias, whom he personated, really was.

Ver. 7. *When he heard that Tobit was blind, he was sorrowful and wept.* Ver. 8. *And likewise Edna his wife, and Sara his daughter, wept.*] Tobit's blindness only is mentioned here as the cause of this great concern; the Vulgate and Munster's Hebrew copy omit the occasion. It is probable that the tears which Raguel, his wife, and daughter, shed, had a mixture of joy as well as sorrow, arising from the eclaircissement or first discovery of Tobias to be their near relation; the former, from the agreeable reflection, that they had now with them the only son of a father, whom the ties of nature and birth had endeared to them; and the latter, from a sense of their sad captivity, which had kept persons so nearly related so long at a distance from one another. And the additional circumstance of Tobit's blindness, which must greatly add to his affliction, must in proportion also increase their concern.

Ver. 10. *For it is meet that thou shouldest marry my daughter, nevertheless I will declare unto thee the truth.*] Καθήκει σοι παιδίον μου λαβεῖν. In this and the three following verses, the terms used with respect to the marriage-ceremony are both proper and usual on the occasion. Παιδίον λαβεῖν is the same with παραλαβεῖν, Matt. i. 20. which

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is the technical term for taking one to wife, and so it is used, Deut. xx. 7. and hath respect and relation to διδόναι, which belongs to the father of the spouse, (see ver. 11. 13.) because he, after the example of God in Paradise, (Gen. ii. 22.) delivers her into the bridegroom's own hands, who was called *petitor*, or the suitor. St. Ambrose commends the great openness and frankness of Raguel in dealing so ingenuously with Tobias, in a matter of such consequence, whilst others, upon a like occasion, are equally as careful to conceal an objection. "Being a just man (says he), he chose rather that his daughter should continue unmarried, than to expose a husband to imminent danger for her sake. Though he was greatly importuned to give her in marriage, yet neither his parental tenderness, nor the great inclination which he must be supposed to have to settle his only child well, could prevail on him to conceal an accident from her lover, which he could not but imagine must contribute to break the match; however, he chose rather sincerely to declare to him the whole truth, than to appear to have an intention to deceive him by concealing the matter. *Quam breviter absolvit omnes quæstiones philosophorum, dum nec filiæ vitia celanda arbitratus est!* How has he decided at once, in a compendious manner, all the disputes of moralists and philosophers on this head! with great gravity they can debate the question, and are at some loss to determine it, whether a person intending to sell a house, or any moveables, ought himself to discover the faults and imperfections of them; but this good man thought he could not in conscience conceal that which he knew would be an objection to his daughter, even from him who was at that time making court to her, but advises him for his own sake to lay all thoughts of her aside, and to be easy and satisfied without her." (Ambros. lib. iii. Offic. cap. 14.)

Ver. 12. *Take her from henceforth according to the manner, and the merciful God give you good success in all things.*] As God was the first institutor of marriage, and joined our first parents in that holy state, so he still presides over it, and all marriages ought to be concluded in his fear, and with a petition for his blessing on the undertaking. Thus Abraham comforts himself with relation to his son's marriage, that *the Lord God of heaven would send his angel to choose a wife for his son Isaac.* (Gen. xxiv. 7.) And his servant, who was sent on that important commission, prays unto the Lord God, *to send him good speed that day, and to shew kindness unto his master Abraham,* in a particular that so nearly concerned his welfare. (See Prov. xix. 14. Ecclus. xxvi. 3.) Betrothing among the Jews was commonly performed about six months or a year before the wedding: but as Tobias's marriage was agreed on, and consummated on the spot, it may be asked, how Sara's parents came to comply so soon, as to give their daughter to Tobias the very same day that he arrived; the reasons probably were,—1. Her parents' desire of having her well married, and their hopes of seeing issue from her. 2. The circumstances and condition of her spouse. 3. His near relation, and legal right to her. 4. Raphael's importunity and persuasion. Some questions may also pertinently be asked concerning Tobias, as, why he married on a journey, at a distance from and without the knowledge or consent of his parents: such a procedure seems not agreeable to the opinion which one entertains of his piety, and rather an instance of want of duty, and a proper deference to them; for is there any affair more important, or wherein children are more obliged to consult their parents, and to receive their directions and advice, than in the great concern of marriage? To this it may be replied, that Tobias knew perfectly the intentions of his father on this head; that good old man had recommended to him before his journey to take a wife of his own tribe and family, (iv. 12, 13.) And it is observable, that Raphael reminds him (vi. 15.) of the instruction which his father gave him, to marry a wife of his own kindred: and, indeed, the law itself was sufficiently clear in this matter; for had he been indifferent, or so particular as to have refused what the known custom of the law required, Raguel could have compelled him to it, or obliged him to have renounced the right which he claimed of succession to his inheritance. Nor do we find that Tobit was at all surprised or troubled when his son, returning from his journey, brought with him a wife. After this it will be almost needless to inquire, whether Tobias was not guilty of some rashness and imprudence, in being so eager after a match, as solemnly to resolve neither to eat nor drink till it was concluded, which his intended father-in-law had kindly warned him against, and apprized him sufficiently of the danger attending it. But, besides the reason before given, that the nearness of the relation required this from him, Raphael assured Tobias that he had provided a remedy, effectually to secure him against the like accident, and to prevent his sharing the others' fate.

Ver. 13. *Then he called his daughter, and he took her by the hand, and gave her to be wife to Tobias.*] In the Vulgate it is, *Raguel, the father of the bride, took her by the right hand, and joining it to Tobias's right hand, said, May the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, be with you, and unite you by the sacred ties of marriage, and fill you both with his blessings.* To this custom of giving away the bride by the hands of the father, or some relation or friend, St. Paul seems to allude, 2 Cor. xi. 2. and the Psalmist, Psal. xlv. 13. The reason of this, says a very judicious writer, was, "that in ancient times all women, which had not husbands or fathers to govern them, had tutors, without whose concurrence and authority there was no act which they did warrantable, and for this cause they were in marriage delivered unto their husbands by others. Which custom retained, hath still this use, that it puts women in mind of their duty, whereto the very imbecility of their sex doth bind them, *viz.* to be always guided and directed by others." (Hooker's Eccles. Pol. b. v.) Whether this, or whatever be the cause of this custom, it is certainly most decent, that a woman, whose chiefest ornament is modesty, should rather be led or presented by the hand of another, than offer herself forwardly before the congregation to any one in marriage; and therefore the discretion of our church is herein much to be admired, which enjoins it to be asked, *Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?*

Ver. 14. *And called Edna his wife, and took paper, and did write an instrument, of covenants, and sealed it.*] Here we have a contract between Tobias and Sara, drawn up, not by a public notary, as was generally usual, but by Raguel the woman's father. We may farther observe, that before the writing this contract, there was a formal giving

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of the woman unto her husband by her own father; and that a particular and express form of words was used upon the delivery of her. It appears from hence, that a contract and marriage were anciently all one in effect, and the like may be gathered from the law, Deut. xxii. 24. where an espoused woman is called a wife, and if she be convicted of unchastity, is reputed as an adulteress, worthy of death. By which it is manifest, that a contract *de præsenti* differeth not in substance from a marriage, though for decency's sake solemn ceremonies are required by positive laws. The Jews usually drew up the contract of matrimony, and agreed about the dowry before the wedding; after that they read this contract or deed over, and lodged it in the hands of the bride's relations, and then they put the ring upon her finger: but in Tobias's marriage things were ordered otherwise, for Raguel immediately consents to give him his daughter, and at the same time joins their hands; then he calls for paper, writes down the contract, and hath it signed by two witnesses, according to the Hebrew, after which the feast began. All this is pretty different from the custom of modern Jews, though they look upon Tobias's wedding, and the ceremonies attending it, as a pattern of the happiest and most regular marriage. "One cannot but admire (say Messieurs of Port-Royal) the simplicity of those early times. Raguel gives his daughter in marriage to Tobias, and troubles not himself about settlements or covenants as they are here called, till the ceremony was over. Such openness and confidence is scarce to be found in the present times, and would be thought little less than carelessness. But it ought, however, to remind all those, who enter upon the like holy state, sincerely to renounce all sort of disguise and overreaching in an affair, where integrity, candour, and disinterestedness, are its best and principal security." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 16. *Raguel called his wife Edna; and said unto her, Sister,* &c.] See v. 20. This term is only a word of tenderness and endearment, used by husbands to their wives. Tobias, in the next chapter, ver. 4. 7. calls Sara by the same name after he had married her. (See also x. 12.) An instance of this we have in Solomon's Song, chap. iv. where the words, *my sister, my spouse,* come three times together in four verses. And hence, if solutions were wanting, we may justify Abraham calling his wife Sarah, *sister,* (Gen. xii. 13.) which some free-thinkers have endeavoured to expose as an equivocation. For as sister is a name of tenderness, love, and affection, it was very properly applied to his wife; but indeed Sarah was so near a relation, as to have a natural right to be so called, being, as Abraham acknowledges, his half-sister, the daughter of his father, but not the daughter of his mother. (Gen. xx. 12.)

Prepare another chamber, and bring her in thither.] *i. e.* Into another bedchamber, different from that where Sara lay before, in which her seven former husbands were killed. This thought was just, and the exchange proper, as the very room inspired horror.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 2. *AND took the ashes of the perfumes, and put the heart and the liver of the fish thereupon, and made a smoke therewith.*] This story of driving away the demon by the ashes of the perfumes, possibly took its rise from the account of the smoke of Aaron's incense, staying the destroying angel from the surviving Israelites, superstitiously depraved. Some footsteps of this mystery the Hebrews seem to retain, when they say, that all hurtful and destroying spirits will flee away at the odour of the incense of sweet spices. Tobias here literally follows Raphael's directions, vi. 16. but perhaps the meaning principally may be, that Tobias, by the direction of the angel, offered the incense of prayer, or put up fervent prayers to God to drive away this fiend. Munster expressly understands it in this spiritual sense, *Per illam suffumigationem designatur oratio, quæ instar vaporis cœlos penetrat.* And then he concludes, *Virtute ergo orationis Tobiæ et Saræ, fugatus est Asmodæus, et non efficacia aliqua odoris corporalis.* (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 3. *He fled into the utmost parts of Egypt.*] *i. e.* Into the deserts of the upper Egypt, for so Pliny and other writers describe them. That deserts and solitary places were the dwelling and resort of unclean spirits, the canonical Scriptures inform us. Thus the demoniac, Luke viii. 29. is said to abide in no house, but to be driven of the devil into the wilderness: and thither was our Saviour led, as being the devil's residence, to be tempted by him. (Matt. iv. 1.) And accordingly the unclean spirit is described, Matt. xii. 43. *as walking through dry or uninhabited places, seeking rest and finding none.* See Baruch iv. 35. and Rev. xviii. 2. where Babylon the great city, when turned into a wilderness, is said to be, *the dungeon of every foul spirit, and a cage of every impure and ill-boding bird,* or rather the abode or residence of them; for φυλακὴ here has the sense of κατοικητήριον, and so it is often used by the Hellenistic writers. But the prophet's description of the same desolation, (Isa. xiii. 21.) is still more strong, for *in it shall dwell, not wild beasts merely,* as our version, nor *Fauni* and *Silvani* only, as Castalio renders, but, according to the LXX. Δαιμόνια ἐκεῖ ὀρχήσονται, καὶ ὀνοκένταυροι ἐκεῖ κατοικήσουσι.

And the angel bound him.] Not bodily with any visible chain, as the words seem to imply, and as is the custom among men, but by a superior power and command which he had received over him, he confined him to that desert part of Egypt he took shelter in, and where indeed he could do least mischief: for demons being incorporeal, and not having parts or members like men, act on each other in a manner wholly spiritual and invisible. The angel Raphael, indeed, appeared to the sight as with a human body, but it was only an assumed or borrowed appearance, and useless as to all natural functions; and therefore it was not by any bodily power or force of his own, nor by the efficacy of natural means, that he drove away Asmodeus, but he acted in this matter as one pure spirit acts on another, and, by the mighty and unseen power of him who commissioned him, he chained or confined the impure spirit to the place and in the manner it was appointed him, that he should do no more hurt, at least in the house of Tobias and Sara. Something like this we read in Scripture, Rev. xx. 1—3. that the angel which came down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, laid hold on the dragon, which is the devil, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him. But it may be asked, to what purpose then was the burning of the heart

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and liver of the fish? or why was it enjoined, if there was no efficacy in them, or God has not given to some natural things a secret and wonderful power, opposite to that which the devil occasionally makes use of to the mischief of men? To this it may be answered, first, in general, That the angel Raphael did not want any spells or natural means to subdue this demon; for the least of the angels, when invested with God's authority, and acting by his commission, is able to vanquish the power of the devil, and to overthrow his wicked machinations. Secondly, There are the following particular reasons for the outward use of these means; *viz.* that is was very proper that Raphael should conceal, under the appearance of a mere natural remedy, the supernatural power he had received from his Divine Master, that it might not be discovered who he really was, till he had completed and finished the whole service for which he was sent: it was also necessary, that Tobias, by burning the entrails, should give some proof of his belief of what Raphael assured him, and of his compliance with the direction given by him. And, lastly, The burning of the entrails might be designed, and therefore enjoined, as a sign only when the evil spirit, by his superior power, should be chased away.

Ver. 6. *Thou hast said, It is not good that man should be alone, let us make unto him an aid like unto himself.*] Ποιήσωμεν αὐτῷ βοηθὸν ὅμοιον αὐτῷ; one that should be as his second self, like him in nature; one in whom he might see himself reflected, as it were, and revived. The Greek writer of this history follows here the LXX. which has in the place referred to, Gen. ii. 18. Βοηθὸν κατ' αὐτὸν, *adjutorem secundum eum*, a help-meet for him, or one suited to his wants and inclinations, one agreeable to and fit for him, by a similitude of temper and manners: or it may be rendered, An aid from himself, one taken from his own rib, for so Eve was formed. And this way of formation was designed probably to intimate that close love and reciprocal affection, which ought to be between man and wife. I shall only observe the agreement between the account here and that in the LXX. that the manner of expression in both is plural, ποιήσωμεν, as if there was a consultation about the formation of his second self also, as at the first creation of man; which the Vulgate likewise retains.

Ver. 7. *And now, O Lord, I take not this my sister for lust, but uprightly; therefore mercifully ordain, that we may become aged together.*] Ἐπίταξον ἐλεῆσαί με, καὶ ταύτῃ συνκαταγηράσαι: the construction is somewhat singular, like that iii. 15. (see note.) Grotius thinks the true reading to be, Ἐπίταξον ἐλεήσας με ταύτῃ συνκαταγηράσαι, omitting καὶ, which I think, being emphatical here, might be better continued; *i. e.* In mercy grant that *even with her*, who hath buried so many husbands, and whom an evil spirit pursues to the destruction of all her lovers, I may grow old, and escape the common fate of the others. According to the Vulgate, Sara puts up this prayer, and that version puts into her mouth the very same, iii. 14. *Virum cum timore tuo, non cum libidine mea, consensi suscipere.* Calmet admires the delicacy of this sentiment in a young man and a Jew, one educated amongst a gross and carnal people; and proposes it to the consideration and imitation of all that enter upon the conjugal state, as does St. Austin, de Doctr. Christ. cap. 10.

Ver. 9. *Raguel arose, and went and made a grave,* Ver. 10. *saying, I fear lest he also be dead.*] When Raguel gives his daughter to Tobias, almost immediately after his arrival, and consents so suddenly to the marriage, the Vulgate observes, that it seemed as if God had influenced his heart to listen to the proposal of Raphael, a stranger to him, whom he considered only as a man. It was such a strong persuasion that made him say, that he doubted not but his prayers and tears were accepted before God for the removal of the disgrace which lay upon his family, and that the arrival of Tobias was by the appointment of Providence to espouse Sara his nearest kinswoman, and therefore of right belonging to him: *Non dubito quin Deus preces et lacrymas meas in conspectu suo admiserit, et credo quoniam ideo fecit vos venire ad me, ut ista conjungeretur cognationi suæ secundum legem Mosis;* but it appears from the account here, that Raguel's faith and confidence in this match, and in what Raphael assured him for his encouragement, was but faint, or was shaken afterward; for had not the apprehension been strong in him, that the same fate which befel the others would happen to Tobias in the same manner, he would never have given such hasty orders to his servants to rise at cock-crowing, according to the Vulgate, to dig a grave for his interment. Though had he considered that the present marriage was made in the fear of the Lord, and founded upon legal right and equity, and that the former husbands were probably killed by the evil spirit, either because they unjustly claimed the right of marriage with this heiress, or that lust was their principal motive, he needed not to have had such foreboding apprehensions about the event of it, or provided for a funeral before it happened.

Ver. 19. *And he kept the wedding-feast fourteen days.*] Rejoicings at the Jewish weddings were esteemed so absolutely necessary, that the husband could not any ways be excused from them, but was obliged to have them for at least seven days; and even the sabbath-day itself, according to Calmet, was accounted no hinderance to the feastings and entertainments usual on such occasions. From many passages in Scripture it appears, that the time of the marriage-feast was usually seven days. *Fulfil her week,* was Laban's injunction to Jacob, Gen. xxix. 27. (See Judg. xiv. 10. 12. Tobit xi. 19.) "Septem dies ad convivium et septem ad luctum," was a proverb among the Jews; Lamy says the feast was for eight days together, and of the third day of such a feast he understands those words of St. John, ii. 1. *on the third day there was a marriage,* &c. which he says should be translated, *on the third day of the marriage which was in Cana;* and that this probably was the reason why, upon the coming of our Lord and his apostles, they wanted wine. (Introd. to Scrip. vol. i. p. 317.) It is to be observed, that though the time was usually limited to a week, yet parents of the espoused were at liberty to make the continuance of the wedding-feast last as long as they thought fit. They could not shorten the days, as the Jewish doctors say, but they might considerably lengthen them. (See Buxtorf. Syn. Jud. cap. 35. Selden's Uxor Heb. lib. ii.) But Raguel, from the satisfaction of his son-in-law's escape from the power and evil intentions of Asmodeus, doubles the usual number, or keeps the nuptial-feast fourteen days; though, as she was a widow, it ought to have continued no longer than three days, according to the rabbins. The Vulgate mentions an invitation given on the occasion to all friends and neighbours, and sets down some

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particulars of the entertainment, *Uxori suæ dixit ut instrueret convivium . . . duas quoque pingues vaccas, et quatuor arietes occidi fecit, et parari epulas omnibus vicinis suis, cunctisque amicis.*

Ver. 20. *For before the days of the marriage were finished, Raguel had said unto him by an oath, that he should not depart till the fourteen days of the marriage were expired.*] According to the sense that at first hearing offers itself, it seems as if Raguel had said to Tobias, before the time was expired, that he should not depart before the time was expired. This is too insipid to be the meaning; for if Raguel said this at all, he must of course be supposed to say it before the time was expired. Calmet seems aware of this objection, and makes the sense to be, That before the end of the seven days, the usual time allowed for such rejoicings, (Gen. xxix. 27. Judg. xiv. 12.) Raguel had solemnly insisted upon his stay with them a longer time, full fourteen days. It is uncertain from the Greek, whether Raguel swore that Tobias should not go, using this expression, ἐνόρκως μὴ ἐξελθεῖν αὐτὸν, or whether he obliged Tobias, ἐνόρκως, by an oath, to assure him, that he would not go. In the Hebrew, Raguel swears; according to the Vulgate he makes Tobias swear; but that it was Raguel, appears very plainly from ix. 3. x. 7.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 2. *AND go to Rages of Media to Gabael.*] According to the Vulgate, Sara, with whom they now were, lived at Rages, *Sara filia Raguelis in Rages civitate Medorum.* (iii. 7.) How, therefore, does Tobias ask Raphael to go to Rages? I answer, That this is either a mistake, or all the country or province about Ecbatane was called Rages; and accordingly, where our translation has *Rages, a city of Media,* (i. 14.) the marginal reading is, *in the land or country of Media;* and the Geneva version has expressly in the text, *in the land of Media;* or Gabael might live in the city particularly called by that name, answering to the great or county town of one of our shires. But the truth is, Raguel lived at Ecbatane, (iii. 7. vii. 1.) which was at a distance from Rages, (vi. 9. vii. 1.) and Raphael and Gabael are represented as returning from a journey to Raguel's house, ver. 2. 6. As to the objection which is founded on the Vulgate rendering, iii. 7. it is to be observed, that the Greek has there, ἐν Εκβατάνοις τῆς Μηδίας; as also our version. (See note on iii. 7.)

Ver. 5. *So Raphael went out and lodged with Gabael, and gave him the hand-writing, who brought forth bags which were sealed up, and gave them to him.*] Tobias, seeing himself pressed by Raguel his father-in-law, to stay with him fourteen days, was unwilling to refuse him, on account of the handsome manner in which he had been received and entertained by him, and especially his new relation to him; but as it was absolutely necessary to send to Gabael, and to exhibit to him the note or hand-writing, in order to receive the money, the fear he had of disobliging his own parents, if he deferred his return too long, and his desire of testifying his grateful acknowledgments to his father-in-law, by continuing with him the time requested, made him contrive a method to satisfy at once both these obligations. He applies to, and prevails upon, Raphael, the holy companion of his journey, of whose wisdom, affection, and fidelity, he had had sufficient experience, to undertake the management of this commission himself, and to set forward without him, but sufficiently authorized to receive this money, which he speedily and happily accomplishes. The Vulgate adds, that Tobias's regard for Raphael was so great and extraordinary, for having conducted him through the journey so successfully, and brought about a match so advantageous to him, and for delivering him from the jaws of the voracious fish, and the fury and malice of the demon Asmodeus, that he professed to him, that if he was for the future to be his slave in return, he could not sufficiently repay the obligations. It has been a matter of much inquiry among the commentators, whether this money was deposited and lodged only with Gabael at Rages, as a place possibly of greater security at that time, as the Greek and Hebrew copies mention, or was really lent to him, probably to traffic with occasionally, as the Vulgate represents it; be this as it will, Gabael shewed himself an honest and punctual man, by returning the ten talents instantly on a proper demand; and Tobit proved himself no less a good man, as St. Ambrose observes, by asking only the principal, without any consideration for the greatness of the sum, or the length of the time.

Ver. 6. *And Tobias blessed his wife.*] Various are the senses given of this passage; *Uxorem suam gravidam fecit,* says Badwell, and the Geneva version expressly has, *Tobias begat his wife with child.* Grotius conjectures, from the authority of St. Jerome, that the reading of the Greek formerly was, καὶ εὐλόγησε (Ῥαγυὴλ) Τωβίαν, καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, i. e. *abeuntibus bene precatus est;* but it does not appear that they were then setting forward, the fourteen days were not yet near expired. His blessing them on their departure follows after, (x. 11.) Junius's rendering, inserted in the margin, seems more probable, *Benedixit Gabahel Tobiæ et uxori ejus:* That Gabael, at his arrival with Raphael, wished Tobias and his wife all possible joy and happiness in their new condition. Fagius's Hebrew has, *Ad quorum adventum adhuc magis benedictus fuit Tobias cum Sara uxore sua,* That upon the coming of these guests to the wedding, Tobias and Sara were more pleased and happy. Calmet, lastly, makes the sense to be, That Tobias blessed, or was the cause of blessing and happiness to his wife, by the advantage which he received from this marriage, particularly his freeing her from the tyranny of the evil demon, and taking away the reproach which before had attended her; instead whereof it would now be said, as a common form of benediction at future weddings, to the bride, "May you be as happy as was Sara, the wife of Tobias."

CHAP. X.

Ver. 5. *NOW I care for nothing my son, since I have let thee go.*] Οὐ μέλει μοι τέκνον, ὅτι ἀφῆκά σε. It is generally agreed that the reading of the Greek here is corrupt. Various conjectures have been proposed for restoring the true one, ὡς μέλει μοι, and οἳ μέλει μοι. The last seems preferable, as being confirmed by Fagius's Hebrew copy, the Syriac, Vulgate, and Junius's version, all of which render to this effect; *Ehen! Pœnitet me, fili, quod dimiserim te.* And thus Coverdale, *Woe is me, my son: O what ailed us to send*

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thee away into a strange country? To this great concern of his wife, occasioned by his long absence and an apprehension of his death, Tobit calmly and tenderly replies, that he would not have her be so discouraged and dejected; he was persuaded, through a strong faith and trust in God, that her son was safe; that the person he had entrusted him with might be depended upon for his care; and that some unforeseen accident on Gabael's part, and not any misfortune, had occasioned this delay. One cannot but admire the exemplary patience of Tobit on all occasions; who, though poor, blind, old, and almost childless in every sense, yet never desponds, or charges God foolishly.

Ver. 10. *Then Raguel arose, and gave him Sara his wife, and half his goods, servants, and cattle, and money.*] The dowry which the Jewish brides brought to their husbands, which was different according to the circumstances of their parents, was called by the rabbins *nedunia*. As Sara was an only child, and disposed of in marriage according to her parents' wishes, and agreeably to the appointment and determination of the Mosaical law, Raguel gives her half his substance in present, and engages to bestow the remainder at his death, (viii. 21.) Amongst the goods mentioned here as given to Tobias are, σώματα, or *servants*, for so such as were altogether at the beck and will of their lords were called both by Jews and heathens. The sale of the captive Jews, by Nicanor, is called ἀγορασμὸς Ἰουδαίων σωμάτων· 2 Macc. viii. 11. so all the servants of the men of Shechem are expressed by πάντα τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν, Gen. xxxiv. 29. (See also Apoc. xviii. 13.) Munster's version enumerates the particulars of her fortune, *viz. Famulos et ancillas, oves et boves, asinos et camelos, vestimenta linea et purpurea, vasa argentea et aurea.*

Ver. 12. *And he said to his daughter, Honour thy father and thy mother-in-law, which are now thy parents.*] Sara was shortly to leave her abode with her natural parents, and by marriage to be placed, as the civilians term it, *extra familiam;* this precept therefore was very properly and affectionately inculcated, as the duty of honour and reverence did not cease, but was transferred, or rather divided. "How happy (says the Port-Royal comment) is a family when the sentiments of love are reciprocal; where those in the family, whereunto the bride enters, treat her with the affection due to a daughter, and the daughter-in-law in like manner regards them as her parents, and behaves in the same respectful and dutiful manner towards them! where such an undissembled fondness reigns, there is great reason, doubtless, to bless and pronounce happiness to a union, which affection, as well as the ties of relation, has so closely joined: but as it too often happens, that relations so united in time discover different views, and act by separate motives, springing either from jealousy or interest, there is the less reason to be surprised at seeing so many heart-burnings and differences in families, and so little of true love between persons who look upon each other with distrust, instead of shewing that tenderness which a mother ought to have for a daughter, and a daughter for a mother." (Com. in loc.) After this injunction to Sara to honour her new adopted parents, the Vulgate adds, that she was directed and instructed farther, *Diligere maritum, regere familiam, gubernare domum, et seipsam irreprehensibilem exhibere.* Duties of the utmost importance in the conjugal state, the observance of which comprises and finishes the character of a good and accomplished wife. The direction is not unlike that of St. Paul, 1 Tim. v.

Edna also said to Tobias, The Lord of heaven restore thee, my dear brother.] *i. e.* Grant thee a prosperous journey, (see xi. 1.) and a safe return. And thus Calmet expounds, *Que le Seigneur vous fasse heureusement arriver chez vous,* which I presume is the sense of Munster's version, *Mi fili, Dominus cœlorum conducat te in pace.* Junius's rendering is obscure and indeterminate, *Constituat te Dominus cœli.* It may perhaps seem strange and unusual that Edna should call her son-in-law, *brother:* but this is to be considered only as an appellation of tenderness. (See more instances in note on vii. 16.)

I commit my daughter unto thee of special trust, wherefore do not entreat her evil.] Edna, the mother of Sara, consenting to part with her to Tobias, and that she should accompany him home to his house, gives him a strict charge to take great care of her, as of some important and valuable treasure committed to his trust, and to give her no occasion of uneasiness, or of complaint against him. Fagius's version adds a very moving and substantial reason for this request, *nam in locum peregrinum, ubi hospita erit, ipsa proficiscitur;* and that upon saying this, *Sauciatum quodammodo fuit cor ejus intra eam.* St. Paul has enjoined the like, where he orders *husbands to love their wives, and be not bitter against them.* (Col. iii. 19.) For the sorrow which bad husbands occasion their wives though ill treatment, renders them the more inexcusable in the sight of God, as the weakness of their sex calls rather for protection, and obliges them according to St. Peter, *to render honour and esteem to them.* (1 Pet. iii. 7.) This they have in charge, not only from the parent, who gives them away, but from God himself, whose ordinance and institution marriage is, and as he has made it an emblem of that Divine love and union which he bears to his church, will avenge all harshness and injustice, that is at any time offered in violation of it. The Alexandrian and most copies conclude this chapter with the verse succeeding, which our translation, following the Roman or Complut. makes the beginning of the next.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 3. *LET us haste before thy wife, and prepare the house.*] As Tobias's parents were uneasy at his long stay, and did not expect that a wife would accompany him in his return, it was seasonable advice of Raphael's, that they should go before, as well to satisfy his father and mother, and to free them from their anxious solicitude about him, as to prepare the house to the best advantage, and dispose all things for the reception of the bride, and the lodging and accommodating so many servants and cattle as came along with him, and were part of her dowry. The Vulgate makes Tobias to arrive seven days before his wife; *Ingressa est etiam post septem dies Sara uxor filii ejus, et omnis familia sana, et pecora, et cameli, et pecunia multa uxoris, sed et illa pecunia quam receperat a Gabelo.* The Greek takes no notice of this, but intimates rather her arrival on the same day. It seems as if there was no foundation for such a surmise; Tobias now bringing his wife home as a bride, would never be so uncomplaisant and unkind, as to leave her on the road for so long a time as seven days only to servants, and with such a great charge of money with

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them. It is more probable that Sara, though she did not make such haste as her husband, through the impatience of seeing his parents, and acquainting them with his success and happy change of condition, may be supposed to have done, as being fatigued with so long a journey, and unaccustomed to travel, at least so far, and hindered too by the long train of servants and cattle accompanying her, and therefore obliged often to stop and refresh herself,—notwithstanding these remoras, I say, it is more probable that she arrived happily on the evening of the same day. When it is said in our version, that they went on their way till they drew near unto Nineveh, the meaning may be, that they all went together, till they approached so near that place, as to be within a day's, or a few hours' journey of it, and that then Tobias and Raphael, seeing them so far safe, and as it were in their own neighbourhood, set forward to give notice of and prepare for their coming.

Ver. 5. *Anna set looking about towards the way for her son.*] Vulgate, *Anna sedebat secus viam quotidie in supercilio montis.* (See x. 7.) This shews her great eagerness and impatience, which is well expressed by περιβλεπομένη, and προσενόησεν, which follows, implies more than εἶδεν, *viz.* her seeing him at a distance, and knowing him, "vidit a longe et illico agnovit;" for as love is said to be blind upon occasion, so it is quick-sighted, ὀξυδερκὴς, in espying and discovering the beloved object. This is finely represented in the parable of the prodigal son, where the father is described as seeing him, *when he was yet a great way off, and upon his approach falling on his neck, and kissing him.* (Luke xv. 20.) As his mother expresses the like tenderness to Tobias, ver. 9. Horace feelingly describes the uneasiness arising from the absence of a favourite child, when he says,

> "Ut mater juvenem, quem Notus invido
> Flatu Carpathii trans maris æquora
> Cunctantem spatio longius annuo
> Dulci distinet a domo,
> Votis ominibusque hunc et precibus vocat,
> Curvo nec faciem littore dimovet."
> (Carm. lib. iv. Od. 5.)

And it is very observable, that a learned annotator on the passage illustrates this by the very instance of Tobias and his mother. (Desprez. in loc.)

Ver. 10. *Tobit also went forth towards the door, and stumbled: but his son ran unto him,* Ver. 11. *And took hold of his father, and he strake off the gall on his father's eyes.*] Tobit's hurrying out, or, as the Vulgate has it, *running to meet his son* upon notice of his arrival, or probably hearing his voice, and in his haste forgetting his blindness, and stumbling at the threshold; and Tobias's running to him, not merely to pay his duty to him, but to catch hold of him to prevent his falling, and to support him while he embraced him, are circumstances extremely natural: his impatience likewise for his father's cure, whose blessing he had just received, and instantly putting the gall on his eyes, from a confidence in what Raphael assured him of its sovereign efficacy, without asking or staying for his leave, and postponing the relation of his journey and the success attending it, to administer to the help of a blind and aged father, are uncommon instances of filial tenderness.

Ver. 13. *And the whiteness pilled away from the corners of his eyes; and when he saw his son, he fell upon his neck.*] See Acts ix. 18. where St. Luke, the beloved physician, speaking of Saul's recovering his sight, says, that, upon Ananias's putting his hands upon him, *immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith.* The Vulgate is very particular in the description of this cure: *Sustinuit quasi dimidiam fere horam, et cœpit albugo ex oculis ejus, quasi membrana ovi, egredi; quam apprehendens Tobias traxit ab oculis ejus, et statim visum recepit.* It is a matter of dispute, whether Tobit recovered his sight by the natural effect of the medicine, or by a miracle. Many assert the cure to be purely natural. It does not appear that Tobit's eyes were hurt inwardly, or that the pupil or optic nerve was damaged, or the humours any way altered: the accident is supposed to consist in a white speck, pearl, or film, that was formed on the cornea, or the outward coat of the eye (through an inflammation arising from the dung of swallows, which is of a hot and caustic quality), which hindering the rays of light from falling on the retina, suspended the use of that organ. Now the gall of some fishes being very good, say they, against distempers in the eyes, and especially to remove whiteness or pearls in them, in the opinion of many naturalists and physicians, there is no necessity to have recourse to a miracle to account for this cure, as the gall of this might have that virtue: indeed there is an objection as to the time, it being scarcely possible that the gall of any fish should naturally produce such an effect in about half an hour, the time assigned by the Vulgate. But if we consider that the prescription was communicated by the angel Raphael, who taught Tobias the virtue of the remedy, and the method of applying it, unknown, perhaps, before; if it be not miraculous on that account, it may at least intimate, that some supernatural power or blessing went along with the use of the natural means, and principally effected the cure; as the mere washing in the pool did not of itself cure the impotent, but the angel that attended and first troubled the waters. (John v. 4.) There is an instance of as great a cure, and mentioned to be founded on this of Tobit's, recorded by Gregory of Tours, concerning his own father: "Florentius redivivo calore captatus est, accenditur febris, intumescunt pedes, dolor pessimus intorquet: perendinata pestis hominem contriverat, jam pene conclamatus jacebat. Interea puer (filius Gregorius Turon.) vidit iterum in somno personam, sese, utrumne librum Tobiæ cognitum haberet, interrogantem. Respondit, Nequaquam. Qui ait, Noveris hunc fuisse cæcum, atque per filium ex jecore piscis, angelo comitante, curatum. Tu ergo fac similiter, et salvabitur genitor tuus. Hæc ille matri retulit, quæ confestim pueros ad amnem direxit: piscis capitur, quæ de extis jussa fuerant, prunis imponuntur; non fefellit virum eventus, ut enim primo fumus odoris in naribus patris reflavit, protinus omnis ille tumor, dolorque recessit." (De Gloria Confess. cap. 40.) If this has the appearance of the marvellous in it, yet doubtless the relation of a son, and of such a son, concerning his own father, deserves some credit; and as it is grounded manifestly on the history of Tobit, it is no small testimony of the reality and worth of it. And perhaps his design, as well as that of the writer of Tobit, might be to advance the belief of angelic visions and communications with good and holy men.

Ver. 18. *And Achiacharus, and Nasbas his brother's son*

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came.] Ὁ ἐξάδελφος αὐτοῦ. Drusius thinks the true reading is, οἱ ἐξάδελφοι αὐτοῦ, from the authority, I presume, of the Vulgate, which has *venerunt Achior et Nabath consobrini Tobiæ.* Grotius's conjecture seems preferable, ὁ καὶ Νασβᾶς, *i. e. he who was called also Nasbas;* for it was not unusual for a person to have two names, especially in a time of captivity. It is certain that Achiacharus was ἐξάδελφος αὐτοῦ, Tobit's brother's son, *i. e.* his brother Anael's son, i. 21. and it appears from the singular number here being used, that only one person is spoken of. Junius is of the same opinion, as the margin acquaints us.

Ver. 19. *And Tobias's wedding was kept seven days with great joy.*] It is improperly here called γάμος, which was celebrated at Raguel's house fourteen days, (viii. 19.) This rather refers to the τὰ ἐπαύλια, or, as the Latins term it, *repotia,* an entertainment made at the bride's return, or bringing home. It is no wonder that the wedding was kept with uncommon joy, considering the advantage arising to Tobias by marrying such an heiress, and the many concurring agreeable circumstances which fell out at this time—as, his son's safe return, his receiving the ten talents by him, and, which was of greater consequence, and more acceptable to him, the recovery of his sight at his age, after being deprived of it eight years, (xiv. 2.) As weddings were attended with extraordinary demonstrations of joy, the Hebrew word, which signifies a wedding, is sometimes rendered by the LXX. δοχὴ, a banquet, (Gen. xxvi. 30. Esth. i. 3. v. 4. 8. 12. 14.) sometimes a feast, and once χαρὰ, joy itself. (Esth. ix. 17.) And in the gospel the partaking of the marriage-feast, or supper, is called entering into the joy of the Lord. The wedding-house was called *Beth-Hillula,* the house of praise, and the marriage-song, *Hillalim,* praises. And so Psal. lxxviii. 63. the words, *Their maidens were not given to marriage,* are by the Chaldee paraphrase rendered, *are not celebrated with epithalamiums,* and by Aquila, οὐχ ὑμνήθησαν.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 3. *FOR he hath brought me again to thee in safety, and made whole my wife, and brought me the money, and likewise healed thee.*] The Vulgate reckons up seven good offices which Raphael brought to pass:—1. Carrying Tobias into Media, and reconducting him safely. 2. Providing him with a good and virtuous wife. 3. Chasing away the evil spirit Asmodeus, and preventing his hurting Tobias. 4. Occasioning great joy to the parents on both sides. 5. Delivering Tobias from the jaws of the great voracious fish. 6. Restoring sight to Tobit. 7. Instructing Tobias by wise counsels, and enriching him with things spiritual. The extraordinary care which the angel Raphael took of the person under his guidance and direction, is generally understood as a figure of the invisible care which the angels take of good men, and as a pattern of the zeal and diligence wherewith the ministers of God ought to watch over the souls committed to their charge.

Ver. 5. *So he called the angel, and he said unto him, Take half of all that ye have brought, and go away in safety.* Ver. 6. *Then he took them both apart, and said unto them, Bless God, and praise him for the things which he hath done unto you in the sight of all that live.*] Tobit would have acted like a just man in paying only the wages at first agreed on, *viz.* a drachm or two drachms a day; but as Tobias was thoroughly convinced that he could not do too much to recompense the services done him by Raphael, he moves his father for a much greater allowance; and he could not certainly testify his acknowledgment in a more generous manner, than in offering him the half of what they had brought back, and he had been chiefly instrumental in procuring, and to divide the inheritance with him like a brother. After this great offer made him, both by father and son, he immediately takes the opportunity privately to make himself known to them, and to acquaint them that he had no occasion for any part of their substance; that he was pleased with this proof of their gratitude, and the sense they had of the great mercies shewed them, but that the acknowledgment and praise were due only to that great God which sent him, who hath power over unclean spirits, can give sight to the blind, and bring about the great purposes of his will by means seemingly the most unlikely and improbable.

Ver. 7. *It is good to keep close the secrets of a king; but it is honourable to reveal the works of God.*] The counsels of princes should be inviolable and impenetrable, and the secrets of the soul locked up both in themselves and ministers; without this caution their enemies will have a great advantage against them, and the wisest and best-concerted schemes will fail of success. Where the great affairs which pass in the cabinets of princes are suffered to transpire, and get abroad through weakness or treachery, in vain does the politician lay schemes, or the general receive orders; foreign courts soon get the intelligence, and the design proves abortive. The emperor Tiberius, being asked why he was so reserved and cautious in consulting with friends in matters of importance relating to the state, wisely answered,—"That a prince's mind should be known to none, or but a very few; for the generality of persons consulted with had not the gift of secrecy, and could not refrain talking of what was under agitation, whereby a prince was disappointed of his aims, and his counsels frustrated." (Dio in Tiber.) Nor was Metellus's answer to an inquisitive friend less to be admired: "I would burn my very shirt, if I thought it was privy to what passed in my breast." (Pliny, cap. 61. de Viris illustr.) But the works of God, the more they are made manifest and revealed, the more they promote his honour and glory. Neither the malice, power, nor evil designs, of men can frustrate his intentions. He would not be jealous or uneasy lest any should discover his designs, or penetrate into his views, even though the human spirit was capable of entering into and searching the deep things of God. He rather encourages a modest inquiry into his works; and the more they are understood the more they proclaim his glory, and call for a larger tribute of praise and thanksgiving. And accordingly the saints, both of the Old and New Testament, as Moses, Deborah, David, Hezekiah, Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, devout old Simeon, and the blessed Virgin herself, have left behind them eternal monuments of their praise and acknowledgment, in the exalted songs composed by them. In ver. 11. following, this apophthegm, *It is good to keep close the secrets of a king, but honourable to reveal the works of God,* is repeated. If it was there enclosed in a parenthesis, the sense would be better con-

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nected. It is observable that the Vulgate, Syriac, and Munster's version omit it in that place.

Do that which is good, and no evil shall touch you.] The sentiment is somewhat like that of St. Paul, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* (Rom. viii. 28.) To the same purpose the wise son of Sirach, *There shall no evil happen to him that feareth the Lord.* (Ecclus. xxxiii. 1.) Tully comes near these writers, when he says, "Nunquam viro bono quicquam mali evenire potest, nec vivo, nec mortuo; nec unquam ejus res a Diis immortalibus negliguntur."

Ver. 8. *Prayer is good with fasting, and alms, and righteousness.*] Not that prayer is indifferent or unavailable without fasting and alms, but the meaning is, that prayer is better, or more prevalent, when joined with the other. St. Austin says, that fasting and alms are like two wings to prayer, wafting it up to heaven. Our Saviour joins all three together, Matt. vi. as duties equally to be observed, and helping one another. Δικαιοσύνη, or righteousness, seems to have come in here, either from the following sentence or from the margin; it is omitted by St. Cyprian and other fathers quoting this passage. Ἐλεημοσύνη and δικαιοσύνη, are often in the Greek exegetically put, the one to expound the other, and so we find it in this and the following verse: but in the Hebrew there is but one word for both. Thus in that known place of Dan. iv. 27. where the Vulgate reads, *Peccata tua eleemosynis redime, et iniquitates tuas misericordiis pauperum* (and the rendering of the LXX. is in the same manner), our version, following the Hebrew, has, *Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor.* And so in the Syriac and Arabic translation of the New Testament, alms is expressed by a word signifying righteousness; and the Latin interpreter renders it by *justitia.* See also Matt. vi. 1. where the Vulgate has, "Attendite ne justitiam vestram faciatis coram hominibus;" *Take heed that you do not your righteousness, i. e.* alms, *before men;* and some Greek copies favour this rendering. For this acceptation of righteousness, see Psal. xxxvii. 21. 25, 26. cxii. 6. Prov. x. 2. xi. 4. xxi. 26. and Mede's Works, b. i. disc. 22.

Ver. 9. *For alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin: those that exercise alms and righteousness, shall be filled with life.*] Though life eternal is not mentioned, yet it is here meant, and is the true sense of the passage. The Vulgate accordingly expresses it, *Facit invenire misericordiam et vitam æternam.* Alms certainly are not a natural means to procure a long and happy life, though God, by blessing the charitable man, is pleased often so to order it. Tobit himself is an instance of the poverty to which those are sometimes reduced, who shew most zeal in exercising works of charity. The verse following confirms this sense, *They that sin are enemies to their own life, i. e.* they bring upon themselves death and destruction; or, they expose themselves to eternal misery. If we understand this of the natural term of life only, or of the certain happiness of it, the observation is not just, as the wicked and undeserving often enjoy a longer and more prosperous state of life than the righteous; as the Psalmist and holy prophets frequently complain in their writings, and even expostulate with God upon the occasion. When it is here said, that alms shall purge away all sin, we are not to understand these words in so extensive and absolute a sense, as if they implied, that charity shall purge away or cover all manner of sins and transgressions, how gross and heinous soever, but in such a limited sense, as that passage, 1 Pet. iv. 8. is generally interpreted, *Charity shall cover the multitude of sins; i. e.* it shall cover many lesser failings and neglects, many sins of infirmity, surprise, and daily incursion, which are properly enough for their number styled *the multitude of sins.* Solomon has the like observation, expressed almost in the same words, *That by mercy and truth iniquity is purged:* (Prov. xvi. 6.) and the son of Sirach explains the great efficacy of charity, by a very apt comparison, *As water quencheth flaming fire, so alms maketh an atonement for sins,* Ecclus. iii. 30. (See also Dan. iv. 27.)

Ver. 12. *When thou didst pray, I did bring the remembrance of your prayers before the Holy One.*] The notion that the angels, as ministers of God, presented to him the supplications of mankind, was very ancient; the heathens themselves thought, that the office of angels was to serve as messengers between the gods and men, to present to the former the prayers and sacrifices of men, and to bring back to them orders from above, and to return the fruits of their petitions. The Platonists in particular held, that demons, or angels, were of a middle nature betwixt gods and mortals, that they brought our prayers and offerings to them, and their commands to us. (Plato in Convivio.) "Inter homines (says Apuleius) cœlicolasque vectores hinc precum, inde donorum, qui ultro citro portant hinc petitiones, inde suppetias, ceu quidam utriusque interpretes et salutigeri." (De Deo Socrat.) So Lucian describes Mercury as attending upon Jupiter for the like purpose, τῷ Διὶ παρεστάναι, καὶ διαφέρειν τὰς ἀγγελίας, τὰς παρ' αὐτοῦ, ἄνω καὶ κάτω. Philo gives us the sentiments of his nation on this subject, describing them as messengers of good things from God to his creatures, and carrying back to God their exigencies and wants. (De Gigant.) Indeed all among the Jews, except the Sadducees, embraced this notion, and from this opinion probably sprung that θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων, or worship of angels, condemned by St. Paul, Col. ii. 18. And not only the fathers, but even the Scriptures seem to represent the angels as thus commissioned and employed. When Gabriel tells Zachariah that his prayer was heard, (Luke i. 13.) and the angel Cornelius that his prayers and alms were come up for a memorial before God, it seems no improbable conclusion that they have some knowledge at least of the success of the prayers of the saints. But St. John's vision, if we may argue from thence, and the angel there mentioned was indeed one merely of their order, most strongly countenances what Raphael here mentions of himself: *I saw another angel standing at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.* (Rev. viii. 3, 4.)

Ver. 13. *And when thou didst not delay to rise up, and leave thy dinner, to go and cover the dead, thy good deed was not hid from me; but I was with thee.*] Something farther must be contained in these words than what is expressed, or else the sense will be the same with the end of the foregoing verse. St. Cyprian (de Mortalitate) reads,

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Quia non es cunctatus derelinquere prandium tuum, abiisti, et condidisti mortuum, missus sum tentare te. The Vulgate renders in like manner, or rather more fully, *Quando mortuos abscondebas per diem in domo tua, et nocte sepeliebas eos, ego obtuli orationem tuam Domino; et quia acceptus eras Deo, necesse fuit ut probatio tentaret te.* Munster reads yet more explicitly, *Because of your good deeds in burying the dead, therefore God has tried you by this blindness, for so God chooses to prove his faithful servants.* The Syriac version is to the same purpose. What makes this interpretation the more probable is, that after the mention of Tobit's great zeal in burying the dead, (ii. 7, 8.) immediately follows the account of his blindness, as if by the infliction of it a farther proof was required from him of his faith and patience under afflictions. And it should seem from the context, that his blindness was not by mere accident, but by God's order and appointment, and perhaps through the ministry, and by the hand of this very angel. This interpretation, at least, has some countenance from the beginning of the next verse.

Ver. 14. *And now God hath sent me to heal thee, and Sara thy daughter-in-law.*] *i. e.* God having visited you with blindness, hath sent me now to restore you; or, having proved you by this great affliction of blindness, and found you perfect, has sent me again to heal you; for so St. Cyprian reads the passage, *Iterum me misit Deus curare te,* as if the copy he used had καὶ πάλιν instead of καὶ νῦν, the present reading. With respect to Sara's cure, the Vulgate is very explicit, *Ut Saram uxorem filii tui a dæmonio liberarem.*

Ver. 15. *I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.*] This expression, like that Matt. xviii. 10. seems only to signify their intimacy in the court of heaven, and their attendance upon God, as his retinue, servants, or messengers, to do his pleasure. Munster's Hebrew copy makes no mention of seven angels. Some interpreters maintain, that we are not to understand the passage of seven distinct angels precisely, but that seven is put for an indefinite number, as in some places of Holy Scripture. For it is certain, that there are infinitely more than seven angels before the throne of God. In Dan. vii. 10. Rev. v. 11. mention is made of thousand thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him. Others are of opinion, that there are seven principal angels, the most exalted, most glorious, and chief of the heavenly host, that hold the first rank in the hierarchy of angels, and are as princes in the court of the sovereign Lord of the universe. That some angels were under the command of others, seems probable from Zech. ii. 3. The Jews have an ancient tradition, that there are seven principal angels, which minister before the throne of God, and are therefore called archangels, some of whose names we have in Scripture; as Michael, whom Daniel styles one of the chief princes, x. 3. Gabriel, ix. 21. Luke i. 19. here we have Raphael, and 2 Esd. iv. 36. mention is made of Uriel, or, as others read, Jeremiel, the archangel. Clemens Alexandrinus says expressly, ἑπτά μέν εἰσιν οἱ τὴν μεγίστην δύναμιν ἔχοντες, πρωτόγονοι ἀγγέλων ἄρχοντες, i. e. *Principes primarii, seu primogeniti angelorum principes.* There are several passages in the book of Revelation, which seem to confirm this tradition, i. 4. iv. 5. v. 6. but the most express is, viii. 2. *I saw the seven angels,* οἳ ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἑστήκασι, an expression very much resembling this of Tobit, *I am Raphael, one of the seven angels which stand and minister before the Holy Blessed One,* i. e. *God.* For this, according to a very learned writer, is the true rendering. The Greek indeed hath, οἳ προσαναφέρουσι τὰς προσευχὰς τῶν ἁγίων, κ. τ. λ. but neither St. Jerome, who translated it out of the Chaldee, nor Fagius's ancient Hebrew copy, perhaps translated from the same Chaldee original, hath any such reading; and therefore it seems an addition or liberty of the Greek translator, who thought their ministry to consist in presenting the prayers of the saints, and translated accordingly. (Mede's Works, disc. 10.) The notion of seven supreme angels, Grotius conceives to be drawn from the seven chief princes of the Persian empire: and indeed the number seven has given rise to some other conjectures—as, that they have the charge over the seven principal parts of the world, as some are pleased to divide it; that they preside over the seven planets, and direct the influences of them, &c. which are speculations rather curious than useful. One of the considerable objections against the authority of this book is, the representing the angel Raphael here, as offering up the prayers of the saints before the throne of God, which has been thought an invasion upon Christ's mediatorial office: but if we allow guardian angels, that they pass from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, and make a report of their charge to the Deity, as our Saviour's own words seem to intimate, the passage may then be defended, so that we attribute to the angels such offering of the prayers of good men, as is merely ἱστορικὴ, not ἱλαστικὴ.

Ver. 16. *Then they were both troubled, and fell upon their faces, for they feared.* Ver. 17. *But he said unto them, Fear not, for it shall go well with you.*] It is easy to imagine their fright upon hearing so surprising a relation, and probably seeing, upon their eyes being opened and rightly disposed, that he, whom they had hitherto took for a man, and had entertained as a hireling, was a quite different sort of being, and that it was an angel of God whom they had so long conversed with. Upon this discovery, the text says that they fell on their faces; and no wonder that they were so affected, as it was an opinion among the Jews in those days, that if they saw apparently an inhabitant of the other world, he came to call them away from this; as appears fully from the story of Manoah and his wife, Judg. xiii. 22. (See also Gen. xxxii. 30. Exod. xxxiii. 20.) But the angel comforts them, by bidding them fear no harm, or, as others explain it, by wishing them all manner of happiness; as another does Gideon, who cried, *Alas, O Lord God, for I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face;* by saying, *Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die.* (Judg. vi. 23.) It is an observation of some of the fathers, that good angels comfort those in the event, whom at first they frightened by their appearance; but evil angels, on the contrary, fill those with horror and trouble whom they appear to.

Ver. 18. *For not of any favour of mine, but by the will of our God I came; wherefore praise him for ever.*] The notion of angels presenting prayers to God, has given rise to the invocation of them, (see Chemnit. Exam. p. 3. de Sanc. Invoc.) and, amongst other passages, the foregoing

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verse is brought to countenance this error. But what Raphael here says of himself, that he came not out of any favour of his own, but by the will of God, the God of angels and of men, who sent him on this commission, seems to destroy what has been wrongfully built upon it. For though he mentions his high dignity and office, at the same time he acknowledges himself but a servant; that the commission he was now executing was not by his own choice; neither his affection nor power had any concern or direction in it, but God's good pleasure. He seems to guard against their paying him any tribute of religious thanks, as being only a messenger in the court of heaven, and by directing them to praise God only for the mercies received; not unlike that exhortation to St. John, who fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, *Worship God,* Rev. xxii. 8, 9. It may be presumed, indeed, that, in that state of blessedness which they enjoy in the heavenly Jerusalem, from which we are at a great distance, these loving spirits look upon us favourably, as persons travelling thither; that they are touched with a concern and compassion for us, and, by the will and appointment of God, aid and assist us in our return towards our common country, that we may be blessed and happy with them in the communion of the saints triumphant; but we are no where warranted to pray to them to conduct us thither. Thus St. Austin, "Attendunt nos peregrinos, et misereantur nos, et jussu Domini auxiliantur nobis, ut ad illam patriam communem aliquando redeamus, et ibi cum illis fonte Dominico veritatis et æternitatis aliquando saturemur." (In Psal. lxxii.)

Ver. 19. *All those days I did appear unto you, but I did neither eat nor drink, but you did see a vision.*] The Geneva version seems preferable, *I did neither eat nor drink, but you saw it in vision.* The Vulgate here renders, *Videbar vobiscum manducare et bibere, sed ego cibo invisibili et potu, qui ab hominibus videri non potest, utor.* See Gen. xviii. 8. xix. 3. where, though the text says of the angels, which were guests unto Abraham and Lot, that they did eat, that must be, and is generally understood by interpreters to be done only seemingly, or in appearance. And thus also some would understand Luke xxiv. 43. ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν ἔφαγεν, but it seems most probable, that our Saviour did really eat before them after his resurrection, to prove to them that his body was truly raised, and that he was not a phantom or spirit. St. Austin indeed says, "That we ought not to believe that angels eat only in appearance, when we read of their being entertained hospitably; though it may be true that men are often deceived in supposing them to eat out of necessity, like themselves, as Tobias was in supposing Raphael to eat through necessity like others, and for the support and nourishment of his body. The bodies of the just, when they shall be raised, will have no need of bodily nourishment, as they will have no hunger nor thirst, and though they may have the power to eat, yet will they not be forced to it by any necessity. After this sort we are to conceive of angels eating, when at any time they have appeared under the sensible and visible figure of a human body; not that they then eat through any necessity or want, but because they chose to do it to familiarize and ingratiate themselves with those for whose service God sent them. The difference between them and mortals in this respect (continues he) may be exemplified by water drawn up and exhaled by the sun, or sucked in by the parched and thirsty earth; the former does it wholly by his power, the latter through necessity and the want of such a refreshment, *aliter absorbet terra aquam sitiens, aliter solis radius candens; illa indigentia, ista potentia.*" (Epist. 99.) But this explanation will not prove the point it was brought to illustrate: for if by eating we understand either the putting meat into the mouth, chewing it, and its going into the stomach, or else the nourishing and turning into the substance of the body what is eaten; in either of these senses, it is certain angels do not really eat, for it is inconceivable how they can perform the first, as what they assume is only an aerial appearance of a body, not gross or carnal, or having any parts proper for mastication or digestion. Secondly, Allowing that angels have no occasion for nourishment, as they perceive no decay of their substance, nor want to repair their strength, as bodies do, through the loss by exercise and perspiration, yet, upon the supposition that they eat, what becomes, it may be asked, of the viands which they partake of? Calmet therefore, as if sensible of these objections, supposes Raphael to make, what he seemingly carries to his mouth, to vanish in an instant, and to disappear to the eyes of all present. And, indeed, though it may with some carry the suspicious air of legerdemain, yet how shall we account for what the Scripture affirms on this occasion, without supposing some *deceptio visus,* or *illusion on the senses?*

Ver. 20. *Write all things which are done in a book.*] It is commonly believed, that Tobit and Tobias wrote their own history. This opinion is principally founded upon the angel's commanding them to *write all things that were done in a book.* In the Vulgate it is only, *Narrate omnia mirabilia ejus;* but in the Hebrew, Greek, and the older Latin version it is, *Ye shall write,* &c. A second argument is, because in the Greek, Syriac, and Hebrew copies, they speak of themselves, αὐτοπροσώπως, or *in the first person.* (See Du Pin's Prelim. Dissert. p. 120.) Huetius thinks the twelve first chapters were wrote by Tobit the father; the whole thirteenth chapter and part of the fourteenth, all but the last two verses, by Tobias the son; and that these, as mentioning his death, were added by some uncertain author, probably one of the family. (Demonstr. Evangel. prop. 4.) After this eclaircissement and explanation, the ordering what passed to be noted in a book, was doubtless to advance and propagate the belief of angelical visions and communications with holy men, according to the received Jewish notions; as what follows in the remainder of the chapter, of future glorious times and of the last and most distinguished state of the church in the new Jerusalem, built as of God with precious stones, was to comfort the afflicted and persecuted Jews, with a prospect of the approaching ruin of their persecutors, and their certain deliverance and exaltation.

Ver. 22. *Then they confessed the great and wonderful works of God, and how the angel of the Lord had appeared unto them.*] The rendering of the Vulgate here is very observable; *Tunc prostrati per horas tres in faciem benedixerunt Deum.* I shall conclude this chapter with a fine reflection from the Port-Royal comment, upon the devout behaviour of these persons for mercies purely temporal: "How ought the consideration of this to affect such who know and are persuaded that not one particular angel, but the Lord of all those blessed spirits, hath conversed with

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them, not for the space of a few months, but for thirty-three years; and during all that time laboured by the example of his life, words, and sufferings, not to cure one or two particular persons only, but to save a lost world! How great ought their tribute of thanksgiving to be, and with what prostration of soul and body should they appear before his throne, from a sense of the far greater things done for them; when they consider this surprising mystery, this most exalted instance of love and philanthropy, God emptying himself of his majesty for the redemption of his creatures!" (Com. in loc.)

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 2. *FOR he doth scourge, and hath mercy, he leadeth down to hell, and bringeth up again.*] We meet with the like sentiment, Wisd. xvi. 13. *Thou hast power of life and death, thou leadest to the gates of hell, and bringest up again.* The expression in both places seems to be taken from 1 Sam. ii. 6. *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.* "What consolation do these words administer to one of sound faith; and how refreshing is it to the afflicted servants of God, to be assured that the chastisement by which he proves their virtue tendeth to their good, and will end happily at the last! To murmur at God's dispensations is a sure mark of a weak faith, since the same hand that leadeth down to the gates of death, is as mighty to save, and to bring from thence him that is ready to perish. A consideration that should induce us under all afflictions to cast our care upon him who careth for us." (Port-Royal com. in loc.) This prayer of Tobit's, in which he foretells not only what should happen to Israel, and to the holy temple at Jerusalem, but also the future triumphant state of God's church, was probably inserted by his son Tobias, who, from the beginning of this chapter, continues the history to the two last verses. Munster's Hebrew copy has at the entrance of it, *In tempore illo scripsit Tobias omnes sermones istos cum gaudio, dixitque Tobias, benedictus Dominus,* &c.

Ver. 3. *Confess him before the gentiles, ye children of Israel, for he hath scattered us among them.*] The Jews were carried away from their own land by Shalmaneser and Tiglath-Pileser, kings of Assyria, and dispersed in all the provinces of the kingdom of Babylon, (Esth. iii. 8.) and through various parts of the east; this was done, says the Vulgate, that they might publish the wonderful works of God in the land of their captivity, and convince the heathen, "Quia non est alius Deus omnipotens præter eum." As the wisdom of God knows how to raise his own glory from events seemingly indifferent, so the captivity of the Israelites contribute to spread his honour among the nations in several respects. First, They were, or might be, convinced of the power and justice of God, in that they saw almost an entire nation delivered over to captivity, and reduced to a state of slavery and bondage, as a punishment for their sins, even by the confession of the captives themselves. Secondly, Hereby the law of the Lord, the Scriptures his word, and the prophecies contained in them, were spread and propagated through all Asia, which would one day dispose that people to know and return to the Lord God, and embrace his true worship: which was the more probable, as many of the captives were likewise persons of great note and authority. (See i. 13. 21, 22.) And that they wanted neither care nor diligence to improve every opportunity to recommend their religion, we may learn from the books of Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. Thirdly, God wrought special miracles in favour of his people, in countries where his name was unknown, in order to affect the minds and senses of the heathen, and to render them inexcusable in their excesses, which were so many witnesses and arguments in behalf of true religion against error and idolatry. Fourthly, The Almighty, in thus dispersing his chosen people, thereby fulfilled the prophecies which he had pronounced by the mouth of many of his prophets, that he would thus deal with them if they persisted in their iniquities. (See also Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii. 2.) Lastly, The firm attachment of the prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel, to the law of their God, and the solid piety of Tobit, Mordecai, Esther, the companions of Daniel, and many others, in their captivity, as it did credit to their religion, so was it as signal a rebuke, and a public condemnation, of the reigning vices of the Assyrians and Babylonians.

Ver. 6. *Therefore see what he will do for you.*] The Vulgate has, *Aspicite ergo, quæ fecit nobiscum;* to which agrees the Syriac. The Greek, καὶ θεάσασθε ἃ ποιήσει μεθ' ὑμῶν, *sed contemplabimini quæ facturus est erga vos;* i. e. *If you turn to him with your whole heart, then will he turn to you, and ye shall see what great things he will do for you.* Fagius's Hebrew copy has, *Adeo ut demiremini multitudinem miraculorum, et rerum mirabilium quas faciet vobiscum;* μεθ' ὑμῶν may mean, *Ye shall see what he will do with you;* i. e. he will shew his power in gathering you out of all nations, and bring you back to your own country. Our version here is flat, and wants the spirit of the other. That of Geneva is preferable, *If you deal uprightly before him, he will not hide his face from you, and ye shall hear what he will do with you.*

In the land of my captivity do I praise him, and declare his might and majesty to a sinful nation.] Whom are we to understand by *a sinful nation,* either the Israelites or Assyrians? The Vulgate seems to point out the Israelites, now captives on account of their sins. According to this acceptation, Tobit blesses God, and magnifies his justice and power, not for favours to, but his chastisement of, an ungrateful people, laden with iniquity, who had rendered themselves unworthy of his mercy. Herein Tobit acted agreeably to the character of the true servants of God, who bless him even in and for the afflictions he is pleased to visit them with, and acknowledge the justice of his conduct towards them, though he distinguishes not between them and sinners by any particular exemption. If they are fellow-sufferers with the ungodly in any national calamity, they are not so conceited of their own righteousness, as to complain of any hard lot, or to think that their innocence ought to have protected them from sharing the common fate with the rest. As applied to the Assyrians, the meaning either is, That he took a pleasure to *publish the noble acts of the Lord, and to shew forth all his praise,* amidst that idolatrous people with whom he was in bondage; or he here refers in particular to that signal overthrow of the Assyrians some few years before, when the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand; (2 Kings xix. 35.) an event, in which the Divine Majesty and Omnipotence most

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conspicuously appeared, by the uncommon vengeance taken on that sinful nation. Or Tobit may be considered as speaking here prophetically, as he does in several parts of this hymn, regarding the future as if it was the time past, and foreseeing that which would come to pass a long time after, when God, taking pity upon his people, shall cause them to return to their own land. He blesses God even in his captivity, as if the restoration was already accomplished, and, anticipating his mercy, blesses God for the greatness of it. See Lee's Dissert. on the second book of Esdr. who makes the two last chapters to be both prophetical and cabalistical, p. 21. and observes farther, that there is such an agreement in several particulars between the two last chapters of Tobit, and the two last of the Revelation, (chap. xiii. xiv. to the end, and xiv. 5—8. comp. Rev. xxi. 10. to the end, and xxii. 10. to the end, and xxii. 3—6.) as it is not easy to know which hath been taken from the other, or alludeth to the other, p. 64.

Ver. 10. *Praise the everlasting King, that his tabernacle may be builded in thee again with joy.*] If this is to be understood literally of the destruction of the city and temple, as all the interpreters expound it, it must refer to that in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and took it, and burnt it with the temple. (2 Kings xxv.) Now this did not happen till above a hundred years after the history here related: to prevent, therefore, so great an anachronism, it will be more consistent to understand Tobit here as speaking prophetically, that the ruin of the house and kingdom of David should precede the coming of the Messias, but that the breaches thereof should be repaired and built again at his coming. The captivity of Zedekiah by the Chaldeans perfected the fall of David's kingdom, which could not rise before the return from that captivity, and was to rise, as seems to be implied, before a new captivity began. But after the Babylonian captivity was over, none of David's race was of any great account: this, therefore, most probably relates to the days of the Messias; and the meaning seems to be, That God would restore the kingdom to the house and family of David in the person of the Messiah, and recover that family, which, for several years before his coming, was reduced to a mean and obscure condition, (Micah v. 2. Luke i. 48.) to its ancient splendour and dignity. Tobit here seems to refer to Amos ix. 11. *In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David which is fallen down;* and, keeping to the metaphor of a tabernacle or building, prays, that God would raise up this tabernacle or building, and close up the breaches of it; that at a certain future time he would again exalt David's kingdom, which, for awhile, had lain in a desolate and forsaken condition; or, in other words, he prays for or foretells the happy days of the Messiah, when, the time of that age they were then under being fulfilled, the miserable and captive Jews, whose condition answered to the ruinous materials in the prophet, will have great reason to rejoice in the blessed change, (see Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 175, &c.) and that the accomplishment of this long-wished-for event, *viz.* another and more complete return, than that from Babylon, made a part of their prayer, whilst the sacrifice was consuming. (See 2 Macc. i. 26, 27. 29. ii. 17, 18.)

Ver. 11. *Many nations shall come from far to the name of the Lord, with gifts in their hands, even gifts to the King of heaven.*] This relates to the calling of the gentiles, as does xiv. 7. who shall embrace the true religion, that of Jesus Christ, as should seem from the mention of *gifts*, by way of homage, which probably has a distant glance at the offering of the wise men, Matt. ii. 11. Or thus, God shall call the gentiles to enter into covenant with him, and make those of them that shall be called by his name to become his people and possession, (see Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 112.) and to be part of the restored kingdom of David, to supply the many families that were lost from his heritage, and the place of the ten tribes that fell off first from David's kingdom, and of many of the two tribes that never returned from their dispersion. This Amos expresses by the *remnant of Edom and of all the heathen* being possessed by the Lord, and called by his name, Amos ix. 12. It is very observable, that in Fagius's Hebrew copy, the very words of Psal. lxxii. 10. to which likewise Tobit may probably allude, are inserted at length. Calmet understands this, as connected with the two foregoing verses, of the great respect paid to the holy city after the captivity by the greatest princes of the world, Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, Alexander the Great, the kings of Egypt and Syria, and even some of the Roman emperors testified their value for it and the temple, by great presents and offerings sent thither; that since the establishment of Christianity, the great regard for this holy place has not diminished; many emperors and kings have contributed to enlarge its beauty or privileges, and have prided themselves in being styled its protectors. Hence the several crusades and holy wars which catholics have engaged in, to rescue the holy land from the possession and profanation of infidels: hence those many voyages and pilgrimages, which Christians of all ranks have taken, merely to have the pleasure to see that holy city which Jesus Christ honoured with his presence and miracles: hence the great care to preserve its venerable remains, and to consecrate even the very dust; (see August. de Civit. Dei, lib. xxii. cap. 8.) but the first sense is most natural.

Ver. 16. *For Jerusalem shall be built up with sapphires, and emeralds, and precious stone: thy walls, and towers, and battlements, of pure gold.*] Tobit having prefigured, under the image of rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem after the captivity, the far more glorious establishment of the Christian church, immediately passes on to the description of the new and heavenly Jerusalem, or the church triumphant above. The magnificence and pompousness of the expressions leave no room to doubt that this is not to be understood literally, but of that spiritual building, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. (Eph. ii. 20.) This description very much resembles that, Rev. xxi. 10. 18. 23. of the new Jerusalem, so called to distinguish it from the earthly city of that name, and is there described as coming down from God, and adorned with all those gifts and graces which can render it glorious and durable, which are metaphorically represented under the figure of a solid, four-square, and beautiful structure, consisting all of gold and precious stones; having the glory of God upon it, and appearing with so remarkable a difference, that as that to the Israelites was like devouring fire, terrible to behold; this should have nothing of terror in it, but only a pleasing, delightful splendour, like unto that of the most beautiful jasper, clear as crystal, whose glory and lustre should be

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so constant, as not to need either the sun or moon to enlighten the said city. To this the writer to the Hebrews probably refers in those words, *τὴν τοὺς θεμελίους ἔχουσαν πόλιν*, (Heb. xi. 10.) i. e. *the city which hath* THE *foundations*, or the new Jerusalem, the foundations of whose walls were garnished with all manner of precious stones. Plato seems to have borrowed these figures, when he sets forth the beauty and felicity of the paradisiacal earth, by the stones of several colours and brightness which it abounded with: "In this pure earth (which he supposes to be quite different, as well as far removed from this of ours), the true light is always to be seen, and the appearance admirable and surprising; all things there shine with the glistering lustre of gold, jaspers, sapphires, and emeralds, and those that inhabit it enjoy a long life, free from accidents or afflictions." (In Phæd.) Who does not discern the style of the prophets in this passage, or can any way doubt that this notion of his was borrowed from their lofty description of the glorious Jerusalem, and that the names of the precious stones are particularly taken from Isa. liv. 11—13. where God promises to lay the foundations of his future church in the latter times with sapphires, and all her borders with pleasant stones; or from Ezek. xxviii. 13. where the glory of Eden is represented by the plenty and joint lustre of gems of various kinds? From these fine images of the prophets, which Tobit adopts into this hymn, he encourages his nation in the hopes and expectation of the Messias, when great shall be the peace of the once afflicted children. (See Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 52.) St. Austin alluding to and charmed with this glorious description, in pious rapture breaks forth, "Felix anima mea, semperque felix in sæcula, si intueri meruero gloriam tuam, beatitudinem tuam, pulchritudinem tuam, portas, et muros, et plateas tuas, et mansiones tuas multas, nobilissimos cives tuos, et fortissimum regem tuum in decore suo. Muri namque tui ex lapidibus pretiosis, portæ tuæ ex margaritis optimis, plateæ tuæ ex auro purissimo: in quibus jucundum alleluja sine intermissione concinitur: mansiones tuæ multæ quadratis lapidibus fundatæ, sapphiris constructæ, laterculis coopertæ aureis. In quas nullus ingreditur nisi mundus, nullus habitat inquinatus." (Medit. cap. 25.)

Ver. 18. *And all her streets shall say, Hallelujah, and they shall praise him, saying, Blessed be God which hath extolled it for ever.*] In Fagius's Hebrew copy it is, *Blessed be God who hath exalted the horn of his kingdom for ever; i. e.* made the horn of David to bud forth. And accordingly the streets did sing *Hallelujah*, when the blessed Jesus, as the Messias, was conducted triumphantly into Jerusalem; for then the multitude cried aloud, *Hosanna, Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.* (Mark xi. 10.) See Isa. lx. 18, &c. from whence this verse, at least the beginning of it, seems to be taken.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 2. *AND he was eight-and-fifty years old when he lost his sight, which was restored to him after eight years.*] The Vulgate has only fifty-six years, and that he recovered his sight when he was sixty, being blind only four years. There is the like disagreement in the versions about the time of Tobit's death; the Vulgate makes him one hundred and two years old, the Greek one hundred and fifty-eight, fifty-six years difference. And so with respect to Tobias; the former supposes him ninety-nine at his death, and our version, following the Greek, one hundred and twenty-seven. This uncertainty makes it difficult to fix the determinate time of Tobit's age, when he prophesied of Nineveh's approaching ruin, or to ascertain the particular year of its destruction, as happening just before Tobias's death. And, indeed, that great event is a point far from being agreed and settled among chronologers; Archbishop Usher placing it fourteen years earlier, in the fifteenth year of Josiah; Newton, Prideaux, Whiston, &c. fourteen or fifteen years later, about the twenty-ninth of that prince's reign, which was the twenty-third of Cyaxares, in the kingdom of Media. What is most certain, says Calmet, is, that there is a mistake crept into one or both the texts, with respect to the years of Tobit and his son; and the diversity of the versions confirms this.

Ver. 4. *I believe those things which Jonas the prophet spake of Nineveh, that it shall be overthrown.*] Grotius contends, that both here and ver. 8. the true reading of the Greek is, Ναουμὸς ὁ προφήτης, and Junius seems of the same opinion. That prophet, indeed, (chap. ii. iii.) did foretell the revenge which God would take of the Assyrians for their repeated provocations, and for all the wrongs done to the ten tribes whom they had carried away captive, by making an utter end of Nineveh, that once famous city of three days' journey; but there seems no necessity for such an alteration of the text, if the prophecy of Jonah did really extend to and include the destruction of Nineveh by the Medes and Babylonians; and that it did so, seems probable from the following reasons:—First, Though it is well known that, upon the humiliation and repentance of the inhabitants, the first prediction of Jonah against Nineveh, that it should be destroyed in forty days, was not at that time fulfilled, yet it seems necessary to infer, that the like judgments hung over that city, to be executed at such a time hereafter, when the people were equally wicked and abandoned. The sentence, therefore, against it seems only suspended, and its destruction, as St. Jerome observes, (Præfat. in Jon.) deferred, till those who before had found mercy, should, by a relapse into the like vicious courses, make it necessary for God to bring upon them those judgments, which had been only respited for a time, and lay, as it were, dormant, till the increase of their wickedness should again make them ripe for destruction. Secondly, and more particularly, It seems not improbable, that a clause in the present copies of Zephaniah, (ii. 13—15. iii. 1.) which foretells the destruction of Nineveh, does not belong to that prophet, but to the prophecy of Jonah, though now dropped, in which he foretells afresh the final destruction of that city; and to this Tobit, as having another and better copy of Jonah's prophecy, may probably allude: see Whiston's Authen. Record. vol. ii. Appendix iv. and indeed his reasons for this suspicion, from Zeph. iii. 1. where woe is denounced against Nineveh, called, according to the LXX. *the famous redeemed city*, and by the Syriac, emphatically, *the city of Jonah;* and from ver. 6. as referring to the destruction of Nineveh as already past, are strong arguments in favour of his opinion. The like interpolation of a prophecy, and upon the very same occasion, he suspects to be, 2 Esd. ii. 8, 9. 20—23.

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Jerusalem shall be desolate, and the house of God in it shall be burned.] This passage, as it occurs in the Vulgate and most of the Latin versions, has been objected to as a mistake in point of time, as making mention of the temple of Jerusalem as then burnt, which being inconsistent with the times in which it is placed, has given occasion to some to overthrow the authority of this book. But the Greek version, and the English which is taken from it, speak prophetically of it, as an event which was still to happen, and not historically, as of that which was already done. But there is no necessity of supposing with some, that Tobit had the gift of prophecy, he rather grounds his observation on the prophecies of others, Jer. xxvi. 18. Micah iii. 12. which expressly foretold this desolation of Jerusalem, and the house of God, in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and so it continued for fifty-two years after; till, by the favour of Cyrus, the Jews being released from their captivity, and restored again to their own land, repaired these ruins, and built again their holy city. (2 Kings xxv. 8. Jer. lii. 12.)

Ver. 5. *And that again God will have mercy on them, and bring them again into the land, where they shall build a temple, but not like to the first, until the time of that age be fulfilled; and afterward they shall return from all places of their captivity, and build up Jerusalem gloriously; and the house of God shall be built in it for ever, with a glorious building, as the prophets have spoken thereof.*] Tobit here prophesies of three periods, which should fall after his time. First, The rebuilding of the temple, which should continue to the conclusion or the consummation of the age, *i. e.* the Jewish state; for the words, ἕως πληρωθῶσι καιροὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος, are here to be rendered, *till* or *when the seasons of the age be fulfilled*, called, Matt. xxiv. 3. συντέλεια αἰῶνος, *the consummation* or *conclusion of the age*, or, as Fagius's Hebrew copy has it, *till the first age was out*. For the Jews were wont to distinguish their state under the law, which they called *the present age*, from the period of time after the coming of the Messiah, which they called *the age to come*. Thus Daniel seals his prophecy to the time of the end, or consummation, as the Greek renders it, not the end of all time, but of the Jewish economy. And so the destruction of the Jewish state may be styled the consummation, fulfilling, or the shutting up that age, which is the second period. And then after, in the third period, follows the state of Christianity, the glorious Jerusalem, that building spoken of by the prophets, and in the Apocalyptical visions, xxi. 18, 19. and described here, ver. 6. by the turning of the nations, converting of the gentiles, serving God truly, and burying their idols, which clearly is the state of Christianity. The learned Mr. Mede conjectures from the words, *and afterward they shall return from all places of their captivity*, that the sense is very imperfect, and that there is an hiatus here of a whole sentence both in the Greek and Jerome's version: for, according to the present reading, he says there is no connexion of the parts, mention being made of a return from captivity, different from the former, and yet their going into that captivity is omitted. From the authority therefore of Fagius's Hebrew copy, he would have this sentence inserted, *And they shall go again into another very grievous captivity, beyond all the former in its greatness and duration;* and then what follows comes in very naturally, *And afterward they shall return from all places of their captivity;* (de duplici Judææ Captiv. p. 580.) for the mention of a return cannot be sense, without a preceding one of a captivity. And that it belongs to the destruction of the Jews by the Romans, appears by another passage added also in that Hebrew copy, and directly parallel to Matt. xxiv. 31. for as there after the destruction of Jerusalem, v. 29. mention is made of the angels sent to gather the elect Jews from the four winds, so it follows in that Hebrew copy, *But God, holy and blessed, shall remember and gather them from the four corners of the world.* (See Dan. xii. 1.) We have in Jeremiah an eminent prophecy of the restoration and final happy state of all the twelve tribes, with the mention of the horrible distress they were in before. (Jer. xxx. 1—24. xxxi. 1—14. 23—25. 27—40. l. 4—7. 19, 20. li. 5—10. 15—19.) This is also agreeable to what the prophet Micah says, v. 3, 4. "Although God will send his ruler or Messiah into Israel, yet he will let Israel remain in captivity till Sion hath gone the full time of her travail, and then her sorrows shall have a joyful issue; then the remnant of his brethren shall return with the children of Israel, and he (the Messias) shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, &c. and they shall be converted, and he (the Christ) shall be great unto the ends of the earth, and he shall be the peace." (See Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 158.)

Ver. 6. *And all nations shall turn, and fear the Lord God truly, and shall bury their idols.*] The learned prelate above quoted says, that in this, and the foregoing verses, Tobit mentions four great events which he took from the prophets; *viz.* The end of the Jewish age or state, and a long captivity of his nation ensuing it. Secondly, A general return from the captivity. Thirdly, The rebuilding of the city and temple gloriously: and, lastly, The conversion of all the gentile nations from idolatry, when the horn or kingdom of his people should be exalted. (Ibid. p. 50.) With respect to this last particular, we may in general take notice, that the destruction of idolatry is often mentioned in the prophets as a principal circumstance in their description of the flourishing state of the church, which should come to pass in aftertimes; see Isa. i. 29. Jer. iii. 17. xvi. 19. Zech. xiii. 2. But that of Micah, v. 12—14. is most clear and full, *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off all witchcrafts out of thine hand, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers. Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands. And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee,* &c. And it appears to have been the sentiment of the ancient Jews themselves, that the utter abolishing of idolatry should attend the happy times of the Messias.

Ver. 10. *Remember how Aman handled Achiacharus that brought him up; how out of light he brought him into darkness, and how he rewarded him again: yet Achiacharus was saved, but the other had his reward; for he went down into darkness. Manasses gave alms, and escaped the snares of death, which they had set for him; but Aman fell into the snare, and perished.*] Ἐκ τοῦ φωτὸς ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σκότος, *i. e.* He endeavoured, according to Drusius, to take away his life, or, from a flourishing condition, to bring him into poverty or banishment. Who Achiacharus was, is uncertain; probably it is Tobit's nephew, mentioned i. 21. xi. 18. Much less do we know who Aman or Manasses is.

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There is no reason, but the mere name, to suppose the latter to be Judith's husband; it is more likely to be, as Junius conjectures, another name for Achiacharus, and that Nasbas should be inserted in the text instead of it. (See note on xi. 18.) Nor is Aman here, that Haman who was Mordecai's and the Jews' enemy, whose history we have in the book of Esther; for this is utterly incompatible with the time which Tobit is supposed to live in. The elevation of Mordecai to his great dignity, and the fall and disgrace of Haman, happened after the captivity of Babylon was ended, and after the time of Darius the Mede. This, therefore, is either an interpolation, as some suppose, in the history, and indeed it is wholly omitted by the Vulgate, or it refers to some accident or charge against Achiacharus, which Tobias was acquainted with, possibly brought against him by some haughty ungrateful courtier whom he had contributed to raise. However, from his happy escape, through God's blessing on his deeds, from the perfidiousness and treachery of Aman, we are furnished with a fresh instance of the power and reward of charity, and of the truth of Tobit's observation, iv. 10. *That alms deliver from death, and suffer not to come into darkness;* the very phrase used here.

Ver. 15. *But before he died, he heard of the destruction of Nineveh, which was taken by Nabuchodonosor and Assuerus.*] Usher, in his Annals, A. M. 3378. Prideaux, Connex. p. 47, 48. and other learned men, understand this of Nabopolassar, father to Nebuchadnezzar (called in the Greek Nabuchodonosor), and Cyaxares, king of Media, called by Daniel Ahasuerus, ix. 1. This remarkable transaction is generally placed in the twenty-ninth year of king Josiah, and the fixing it to this time, exactly agrees with the account given by the heathen historians, Herodotus, Strabo, Alexander Polyhistor, and others. Eusebius places the time of the taking of Nineveh in the twenty-second year of Cyaxares, and the Hebrews in the first of Nabuchodonosor, both which accounts agree; for according to Eusebius, this twenty-second year of Cyaxares falls in with the first of Nabuchodonosor. These two princes entering into an alliance together, by means of a marriage between Amyitis, daughter of Astyages, and Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, marched with their combined forces against Nineveh, and besieged Chiniladanus in it; and after the city was taken, his dominions were shared between the two conquerors; Nabopolassar became master of Nineveh and Babylon; and Cyaxares, of Media and the bordering provinces. Some learned men have started an inquiry, how Cyaxares and Assuerus can be the same person? Sir Isaac Newton gives the following solution of it, "That Assuerus is the same name with Achsuerus, *Oxyares, Axares,* and *Cy,* in the Persian language, signifying a *prince* or *ruler,* Cyaxares means prince Axares." (Chronol. see also Drusii Quæsit. p. 17, 18.) It is uncertain who inserted the two last verses of this book; Tobias is generally supposed to have continued the history from the end of the twelfth chapter to ver. 14. of this, but he could not write the account of his own death. It was added probably by one of the family, as what relates to Moses's death, at the end of the Pentateuch, was inserted by Joshua his successor, or some other hand. I shall only observe, that though the Syriac concludes as our version, yet Munster's and Fagius's Hebrew copies omit the mention of the death both of father and son.

THE

BOOK OF JUDITH.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *IN the twelfth year.*] How is this consistent with what is mentioned ver. 13. where it is said that he marched in battle-array in the seventeenth year? Vatablus and others, to avoid this difficulty, suppose the war to have begun in the twelfth year of Nabuchodonosor, and to be finished in the seventeenth. But this is more than they have authority for; the account being rather of a particular battle, than of a continued war. Possibly this is one of those various readings which Jerome professeth to have cut off, as corruptions of the text; for it does not occur in his translation. And agreeably his version placeth the expedition of Holofernes, that was the next year after this battle of Ragau, in the thirteenth year of Nabuchodonosor, which Dr. Prideaux says is the truth of the matter. (Connex. vol. i. p. 29.) It is remarkable that the Greek text of this book precedes the Latin one five years, as appears from the instance above, and from ver. 1. of the next chapter, where the Greek has the eighteenth year, which in Jerome's version is only the thirteenth. Some account for the difference this way, that Nabuchodonosor, the adopted son or grandson of Asar-haddon, reigned jointly with him five years, and sole thirteen years, to the time of his army being cut off with Holofernes before Bethulia, (chap. xv.) In the last year but one of his reign Nabuchodonosor overcame Arphaxad, and destroyed Ecbatane, and in his last, Holofernes was beheaded by Judith. The Vulgate begins this book with, *Itaque Arphaxad,* &c. which looks as if this was a continuation of something preceding. Calmet says, "It may be joined to the history of Tobit without any great inconvenience, or much breaking in upon the regular series of events. For the building of Ecbatane, and the war between Arphaxad and Nabuchodonosor mentioned here, follow closely enough the taking of Nineveh by Assuerus,

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i. e. Cyaxares, or Astyages, which Tobias lived long enough to hear of, and the taking of Nineveh is the last event mentioned in the book of Tobit." But it cannot be inferred from this connective particle, that Judith is a continuation of the preceding history, because these two do not synchronize, if that of Judith is rightly placed, A. M. 3348. and the taking of Nineveh, according to Usher, be in 3378. Nor ought this to be joined to Tobit, or necessarily to follow it, because so placed in most editions, the placing thereof probably being accidental and arbitrary: nor do their subjects agree, the history of Tobit being the memoirs of a private family, and Judith that of the Jewish nation. It seems more probable, as Calmet conjectures, either that this history made a part of, and was taken from, some public registers, wherein the most remarkable events are entered and recorded, in a regular series and order; or that the particle here is superfluous, as a like one, *et*, is placed at the head of several books of Scripture, where it has nothing to do with the sense. But the best way to solve this is to observe, that the Greek and other more correct versions wholly omit it.

Of the reign of Nabuchodonosor, who reigned in Nineveh the great city.] The Medes, after subduing several of the neighbouring nations, under the conduct of their second king Phraortes, invaded Assyria. Saosduchinus, or Saosduchius, called here Nabuchodonosor, raised a powerful army to oppose them, summoning the whole force of his wide-spreading dominions, and inviting all the nations of the east to his assistance. Most of those which were summoned received his ambassadors with contempt, upon which he resolves on nothing less than being avenged on the whole earth, and choosing Holofernes for the instrument of his vengeance; as he was commander-in-chief of his forces, he orders him to put all to the sword who should oppose him, (ii. 11.) As to the cruelty with which these orders were executed, the dread and terror that merciless general struck into the countries through which he marched, the courageous resolution taken by the Jews to withstand the mighty conqueror, the great strait to which the city of Bethulia and their whole nation were reduced, and their miraculous deliverance; and, lastly, the great slaughter of the Assyrian army: these particulars we have a distinct and minute account of in the following chapters. Herodotus confirms the main of this history, telling us, that Phraortes, the Mede, made war against the Assyrians, "Those I mean, (says he, lib. i. cap. 102.) who lived at Nineveh, who had formerly been the chief of all, but now were deserted by their friends or vassals, though nevertheless in a good condition to defend themselves." No two historical pieces can, so far as they are concerned together, more illustrate each other than Herodotus and this book of Judith. (See Montfaucon, Hist. Ver. Judith.) It hath been objected, that the king of Nineveh is here called Nabuchodonosor, which is the proper name of the kings of Babylon; to this it may be answered, That we find not only in writers of different characters, the Greek and Hebrew, the sacred and profane, but even in writers of the same nation, the same person under different appellations: though therefore in strictness of speech it may be counted an error in history, to call the king of Nineveh by the name of Nabuchodonosor, yet, as it was the style and manner of the Jews to denote any prince who lived beyond the Euphrates by that name, (see Tobit xiv. 15.) we need not wonder to find this writer, who wrote either at Babylon or in Chaldea, and lived in an age when the fame and reputation of *Nabuchodonosor the Great* had quite eclipsed the name of all his predecessors, calling another prince, who lived at a far distance, *viz.* Saosduchinus, the king of Assyria, by the name of the king of Babylon, which perhaps at that time might be the standing name of every great and distant monarch. Others say, that this Nabuchodonosor, then king of Assyria, sprang from the royal line of the kings of Babylon, and that he chose to retain the Chaldee name of the kings of Babylon, *viz.* Nabuchodonosor, as a standing memorial of his extraction, and that it might appear he was king of Babylon as well as of Assyria and Nineveh.

In the days of Arphaxad, which reigned over the Medes.] Arphaxad seems to be a common name of all the kings of Media, as Merodach was of those of Babylon, and Pharaoh or Ptolemy of those of Egypt. The question is, what Arphaxad is here meant? As Arphaxad is said to be that king who was the founder of Media, Prideaux contends that Deioces must be the person. (Connex. vol. i. p. 28.) But Calmet and many others are of opinion, that by Arphaxad is not here meant the Deioces in Herodotus, but his son Phraortes, who succeeded him in the kingdom of Media; which seems more probable, as the history informs us, that this Arphaxad was overcome by Nabuchodonosor, or Saosduchinus, king of Assyria, and slain in the mountains of Ragau, by the Assyrian archers, (i. 15.) which even Herodotus himself makes to be the fate not of Deioces the father, but of his son Phraortes, (lib. i. cap. 97.) who, having subdued the Persians, as he tells us, and made himself master of almost all Asia, was not content therewith, but coming at last to attempt Nineveh and the Assyrian empire, was himself defeated and killed in the bold attempt.

In Ecbatane.] This city is by the ancients constantly called Ecbatan of Media, to distinguish it from another in Syria, bearing the same name. For beauty and magnificence it was little inferior to Babylon or Nineveh. In compass it is said to have been near two hundred furlongs. It was the metropolis of all Media, and the seat both of the Median and Persian monarchs, their ordinary residence in the heat of summer, as Susa was in the winter-time. The royal palace was about seven furlongs, or a mile in compass, and built with all the cost and skill that a stately edifice did require. (Polyb. lib. x.) Some of its beams are said to be of silver, and the rest of cedar strengthened with plates of gold.

Ver. 2. *And built in Ecbatane walls round about of stones hewn three cubits broad and six cubits long.*] Prideaux says of Deioces, that having repaired, beautified, and enlarged, the city of Ecbatana (which, according to Diodorus, lib. ii. had been built from the times of Semiramis, one thousand three hundred years before), he made it the royal seat of his kingdom, and reigned there with great wisdom, honour, and prosperity, fifty-three years; during which time, it growing to be a great city, he is for this reason reckoned by the Greeks to have been the founder of it: (Connex. vol. i. p. 20.) but as the writer of this history does not mention the founding of this city here, though the Vulgate, without authority, does, but the adding new and magnificent fortifications to it, it is probably to be understood of Phraortes

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his son, who being a prince of warlike spirit, and having many forces under his command, may not improperly be supposed to delight in works of this nature. His father indeed might lay the foundation of some great designs, and during his lifetime carry on the buildings, and leave the completion of them to his son, as undertakings of this kind are not so soon completed; and in this sense he may be considered as a joint founder, and what is here said of Arphaxad be applied to him. Particular mention, we may observe, is here made of the largeness of the stones employed in the works, as the ancients placed a great part of the magnificence of their buildings herein, as appears from the description of old monuments in history, and from the ruins of such antique buildings as have in some measure escaped the injury of time and the rudeness of past ages.

And made the height of the wall seventy cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits. Ver. 3. *And set the towers thereof upon the gates of it a hundred cubits high, and the breadth thereof in the foundation threescore cubits.*] The walls of this city are much celebrated by the ancients, and minutely described by Herodotus. (Lib. i. cap. 98.) They were seven in number, all of a circular form, and gradually rising above each other by the height of the battlements of each wall. The situation of the ground, rising by an easy ascent, was very favourable to the design of building them, and perhaps first suggested it. The royal palace and treasury were within the innermost circle of the seven. The first of these walls was equal in circumference to the city of Athens, *i. e.* according to Thucydides, (lib. i.) one hundred and seventy-eight furlongs, and had white battlements, the second black, the third of a purple colour, the fourth blue, and the fifth of deep orange. But the two innermost, as serving more immediately for a fence to the royal person of the king, and within one of which was his palace, were embellished above the other; the one being covered or gilt with silver, and the other with gold. Each of them being higher than the other, and distinguished by the colour of their several pinnacles, gave unto the eye a most agreeable prospect. (Herod. ibid.) This description indeed of Herodotus savours somewhat of romance, but the uncommon height and superb magnificence of the walls are confirmed by other good authorities. It should seem as if the walls of Ecbatane were each of them seventy cubits high, fifty cubits broad, and the towers upon the gates a hundred cubits higher; but this is to be understood only of the innermost wall. And this is the more probable, because the description in these verses is of the height and breadth, τοῦ τείχους, *the wall*, not *walls*, as if a particular one was only meant. The Vulgate is faulty in rendering, *Fecit muros ejus in latitudinem cubitorum septuaginta, et in altitudinem cubitorum triginta.* St. Jerome's version agrees with our translation, and understands the seventy cubits of the height, which seems the true rendering, and is confirmed by the Greek and Syriac.

Ver. 4. *And he made the gates thereof, even gates that were raised to the height of seventy cubits, and the breadth of them was forty cubits.*] It is to be presumed, that this extraordinary height takes in all the embellishments over and about the doors, and not that the gates themselves opened to such an exact height. We shall the less wonder at the extraordinary grandeur of the towers and gates here mentioned, if we reflect upon what is related of Nineveh,—that it had fifteen hundred towers upon the walls of it, each of them a hundred feet high: and on what Josephus says of the gates of the temple of Jerusalem, that they were sixty cubits high and twenty broad.

Ver. 5. *In the great plain, which is the plain in the borders of Ragau.*] The plains of Ragau are very probably those which lie about Rages, a town of Media, standing upon the mountains of Ecbatana, and distant about a small day's journey from that city.

Ver. 6.] There is a great difference between the Greek and Latin version of this book, particularly as to the proper names. Probably both the great plain itself and the rivers had different names. What is called here and in the Greek, *Hydaspes*, is styled *Jadason* in the Latin versions. Calmet observes, that the Syriac is most exact as to the names of places; it reads here, that Nabuchodonosor engaged with Arphaxad in the plains of *Dura*, mentioned Dan. iii. and instead of the river Jadason, it puts *Ulai*, which occurs likewise in Dan. viii. 21.

Ver. 7. *Sent unto all that dwelt in Persia.*] The mention of the Persians as a distinguished people at the time of this transaction has been thought inaccurate, as the name of the Persians was hardly if at all known before Cyrus, at least they were till then an obscure people, and included under the name of Elam, or Elamites. (See Boch. Geogr. lib. iv. cap. 10.) But this objection, supposing it well grounded, is not particular to this writer. Inaccuracies in geography and chronology are found in almost all ancient writers; and even the sacred text is not free from them, at least according to our version.

Ver. 10. *Until you come beyond Tanis and Memphis, and to all the inhabitants of Egypt.*] The Vulgate only mentions *terram Jesse*, which Calmet expounds *the land of Goshen*, in the lower Egypt, called *the land of Gesem*, I presume, in the preceding verse. Probably by synecdoche a part was designed for the whole. It should seem from this and ver. 12. that Nabuchodonosor did command in Egypt before the conquest of Judea, which yet was a necessary passage for the invading of Egypt: what is mentioned therefore here of Egypt, has been condemned by Diodate and others, if not as false, at least as premature. But allowing this, might not such an imperious and conceited prince as Nabuchodonosor is here described, send his orders to those beyond Tanis and Memphis, and to all the inhabitants of Egypt, though he had no power or command in Egypt, to attend his summons, and to accompany him to the battle? which indeed appears from the following verse to have been the very case. He who expected the whole earth should submit to him, might easily flatter himself that Egypt, a small part of it, would not dispute his orders. The like answer may serve for his message into Persia, ver. 7.

Ver. 11. *But all the inhabitants of the land made light of the commandment of Nabuchodonosor, neither went they with him to battle, for they were not afraid of him: yea, he was before them as one man, and they sent away his ambassadors from them without effect, and with disgrace.*] It may seem surprising and strange, that the inhabitants of the land should dare to behave in the manner here related, except they thought that Nabuchodonosor could not stand against Arphaxad, a valiant prince, and at the head of a numerous and powerful army. The truth is, after the destruction of Sennacherib's army by the destroying angel in

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Judea, the power and credit of the kings of Assyria began to dwindle; and among others who broke from that government was Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon, who before was tributary to the king of Assyria. Or probably, the nations mentioned in the foregoing verses, instructed by the misfortunes of others, and seeing that their submission served only to render the conqueror more fierce and insolent, might take the resolution here mentioned, though seemingly rash and imprudent. It seems most probable that this message and invitation to the inhabitants of the several places here mentioned to come to his assistance, was before the engagement with Arphaxad, as our version, following the Greek, represents it; but the Vulgate makes it to be after that battle, to induce them by a sense of his conquests, and the terror of his arms, to submit to his dominion and empire; or whether he sent to the same people twice, as some have conjectured, both before and after the engagement: however this be, it is certain that his pride was very sensibly piqued at the disappointment, when he found so many people, whom, in his own mind, he looked upon as already vanquished and subdued, daring to dispute his orders, and affronting him in the person of his ambassadors. They regarded him, says the text, only as one man, *i. e.* as a private man, without respecting his public dignity or character, as one that had no right or business to command them to attend, and, therefore, as their equal, ὡς ἀνὴρ ἴσος, as some copies have it, or being but a man, no better than themselves.

Ver. 12. *Therefore Nabuchodonosor was very angry, and sware by his throne and kingdom.*] This was anciently esteemed a most solemn, sacred, and inviolable oath. Herodotus says, that the Scythians, whom the older Latin version mentions here instead of the Syrians, particularly used this form, when a more solemn oath than ordinary was to be taken, (lib. iv. cap. 68.) It appears from the gospel, (Matt. v. 34. xxiii. 22.) that the Jews sometimes swore by heaven, or God's throne, which was virtually swearing by God himself, who sat upon it. And the Persians use it to this day. (See Tavern. Voyag. b. i.) And may not Nabuchodonosor, in like manner swearing by his throne and kingdom, be conceived as swearing by himself, as he owned no superior either in heaven or on earth? Homer introduces Achilles swearing by his sceptre. (Il. Δ.) And it is observed by Aristotle, that when princes swore, they usually held up their sceptre.

That he would slay with the sword all the inhabitants of the land of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and all Judea . . .] In judging of Nabuchodonosor's behaviour, a great difference is to be made between those who were subject to him, and those whom he intended to make so. The former, in refusing to obey his orders, and send their troops to his assistance against the Medes, were doubtless rebels to their sovereign, and deserved his sharpest resentment: but such as were free and unsubdued, were at liberty to act as they pleased; as they were under no ties of duty, policy and prudence alone were to direct them. This seems to have been the case of the Jews in particular, they were independent of him, nor had he any right over them or their country. It does not appear that they owed him either services or tribute; or if some small acknowledgments of this sort were due from them, they did not imply such vassalage as to oblige them to be auxiliaries upon every occasion. The justice of their refusal will appear yet farther, if we consider that Nabuchodonosor, besides his scheme of universal dominion, intended likewise to oblige the several nations to acknowledge him only to be God, (iii. 8. vi. 2.) which the Jews could not submit to without a renunciation of their religion. And God seems to have approved the conduct of his people by the miraculous deliverance wrought in their favour.

Ver. 15. *Mountains of Ragau.*] It is no improbable conjecture, that this city, the same with Rages, Tobit i. 14. was built by Reu the son of Peleg. For not only the descendants of Arphaxad (of whom came Peleg, the father of Reu) settled in these and the adjacent parts, but Reu is called by the LXX. *Ragau.* And as to the posterity of Arphaxad settling here, it is remarkable, that in the beginning of this book mention is made of Arphaxad, who reigned over the Medes in Ecbatane. This name being probably given to the said king, in memory and honour of their forefather Arphaxad, the son of Shem, and grandson of Noah, who, probably, upon the dispersion of mankind, settled himself in these parts of Asia, whence we find here a whole country retaining plain footsteps of his name, it being called Arrapachitis in Ptolemy, probably for Arphaxaditis. (See Well's Geography, vol. iii. p. 196.)

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND in the eighteenth year . . .*] The placing the expedition of Holofernes in this year seems to be in consequence of the former mistake, (i. 13.) and a continuation, says Prideaux, of the same blunder. (Connex. vol. i. p. 29.) Jerome's version has the thirteenth year here, the expedition of Holofernes being the year after the battle of Ragau, which, according to that version, was in the twelfth of Nabuchodonosor. And with this agrees Usher, in his Annals, A. M. 3348. It is said here to be in the two-and-twentieth day of the first month, *i. e.* in that part of the month Nisan, or in the beginning of spring, called in the Hebrew the return of the year; which the Scripture takes notice of, as the usual time when kings go forth to battle. (2 Sam. xi. 2.)

Ver. 2. *And concluded the afflicting of the whole earth out of his own mouth.*] Καὶ συνεκάλεσε τὴν κακίαν τῆς γῆς ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ. This verb seems to have crept in from the beginning of this verse, and to have no place here. Other copies have συνετέλεσε, which our version follows; but it will be difficult to fetch the sense given in it from the present Greek. As it now stands, it differs very little from what goes before, and what follows. Badwell's sense of the place is new and agreeable: "He declared to, and laid before his nobles whom he had convened, all the rudeness offered to him from the nations he had sent to, and the contemptuous treatment his ambassadors met with." The authors of the Geneva version manifestly understood it in this sense when they rendered, *He communicated with them his secret counsel, and set before them with his own mouth all the malice of the earth.* And Junius's rendering is to the same effect, *Colligens omne malum regionum istarum ore suo.* And so Calmet, *Nabuchodonosor representa lui même la malice de toute la terre.* When it is here said that he meditated revenge on the whole earth, this is not to be understood absolutely, but includes such people and nations only, as refused to attend his summons, those mentioned in the former

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chapter, ver. 7—10. γῆ and οἰκουμένη are both taken frequently in Scripture in a restrained sense to signify a particular country: Judea, especially, is often so denominated.

Ver. 4. *Called Holofernes . . .*] Some annotators are of opinion, that the word Holofernes is of Persian extract, in the same manner as Tisaphernes, Intaphernes, &c. but others imagine, that this general was a native either of Pontus or Cappadocia. Polybius makes mention of one of that name, who having conquered Cappadocia, soon lost it again by endeavouring to change the ancient customs of the country, and to introduce drunkenness, together with feasts and rites to Bacchus. Whereupon Casaubon conjectures, that this was the same Holofernes that commanded Nebuchadnezzar's forces; as it must be owned, that his riot and debauchery, as well as the rapidity of his conquests, make him not unlike him. (Polyb. lib. x. cap. 11. and Casaub. in Athen.)

Ver. 4. *The chief captain of his army which was next unto him.*] By Zonaras he is called *Archisatrapas*, by Tertullian and St. Austin, *Rex;* on account probably of the supreme power and command which he had. He seems to have been in the same favour, dignity, and power, with Nabuchodonosor, as Joseph was with Pharaoh in Egypt, and Haman with Ahasuerus in Persia, (Esth. iii.) and Achiacharus with Esar-haddon in Assyria. (Tob. i.)

Ver. 5. *And the number of horses, with their riders, twelve thousand.*] Here our translators have, with great judgment, followed the Alexandrian copy, which has χιλιάδας, instead of the other copies μυριάδων. No doubt μυριάδων δέκα δύω is a mistake here, and seems to have been the gloss to the number in the line above, χιλιάδας ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι, over against which some hand had put the usual way of expressing that number, *viz.* twelve myriads; and this by mistake afterward crept into the text in the line below.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt declare unto them, that they prepare for me earth and water.*] This, according to the margin, is *after the manner of the kings of Persia, to whom earth and water were wont to be given, in acknowledgment of their being lords of land and sea.* Thus Darius, to make trial which of the Grecians would submit to him, and which would not, sent heralds to all their cities to demand earth and water. On the arrival of these heralds, several of the Grecian cities, dreading the power of the Persians, did as was required of them; but when those who were sent to Athens and Lacedemon came thither with this commission, they flung them, the one into a well, and the other into a deep pit, and bid them fetch earth and water thence. But this being done in the heat of their rage, they repented of it when come to a cooler temper, and would gladly have made any satisfaction for the wrong that would have been accepted of; and the Lacedemonians sent a proper person on purpose to Susa to make an offer hereof. (Herod. lib. vii.) From the tribute here demanded, some have inferred, that it was a Persian monarch that gave these imperious orders, and they confirm this opinion from these farther reasons: 1. The Apostolical Constitutions mention what is here recorded to have happened ἐπὶ Δαρείου. (Lib. viii. 2.) 2. The name of Holofernes, the general of this army, and next in power to the king, like those of Tissaphernes, Artaphernes, Intaphernes, Barzaphernes, is known by its termination to be of Persian extraction. 3. It appears from Josephus, (Ant. lib. xi. 5.) that Joacim, mentioned in this history, iv. 6. was not high-priest till the end of Darius's reign. 4. The hymn of thanksgiving upon the wonderful deliverance God had vouchsafed his people, mentions particularly that *the Persians quaked at her boldness, and the Medes were daunted at her hardiness,* which seems to imply their having a principal share in this war. This history cannot be assigned to the times of Nebuchadnezzar, who carried the two tribes captives, inasmuch as it is declared therein, v. 18, 19. that it happened after the return of those tribes out of captivity, long after the death of that king. A learned writer, and a great stickler for this opinion, surmises, that the Jews changed the name of Darius into Nabuchodonosor, when they set up their spurious Messias, Bar Chocab, and that the true era of this history is in the thirty-sixth year of Darius. (Whiston's Hist. of the Old Test. vol. i. p. 369.) Others, without having any recourse to the corruption of the text, suppose, that some Persian king, who resembled Nebuchadnezzar in his designs and actions, is here called by his name, in like manner as any noted conspirator may be called a Catiline. Sulpicius Severus, from the likeness of the two characters, will have Ochus, the successor of Artaxerxes, to be the person, who was very cruel and fond of going to war. (Sacr. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 22.) Some have fixed upon Cambyses, particularly Eusebius, (in Chron.) St. Austin (lib. xviii. cap. 16. de Civ. Dei), and the Venerable Bede, and have assigned it as the reason why Cambyses opposed the building of the temple, (Ezra iv.) because the Jews killed Holofernes. But this history of Judith cannot fall in with the twelfth of Cambyses, (see ver. 1.) as that prince lived but seven years and five months; (Herod. lib. iii.) but whoever is fixed upon, there seems to lie this objection against the conjecture in general, that Nabuchodonosor here mentioned, is all along particularly characterized as king of the Assyrians, (i. 7. 11. ii. 1. 4, &c.) and his general, as chief captain of the army of Assur, (ii. 4. 14. v. 1. vi. 1, &c.) As this particularity therefore seems necessarily to confine it to a Babylonian or an Assyrian monarch, and as the times of Nebuchadnezzar suit not with those of this history, might we not rather imagine, if a change of names through any Jewish corruption of the copies is to be suspected or admitted, that they changed the name of the king of Assyria or Babylon, Saosduchinus, or some other, into Nabuchodonosor? Farther, if the demand of earth and water was not peculiar to the Persians, but in use among other nations, and is only a common form of acknowledging subjection; and if the Persians are to be considered here only as auxiliaries, as seems most probable from i. 7. and were, among others, summoned themselves to assemble at Nabuchodonosor's command,—then what is here recorded should seem to belong to the times before Darius, or even the very establishment of the Persian empire; for it cannot be supposed, that when that was in its glory, the Persians under Cambyses, Darius, or Xerxes, or indeed any of their kings, then lords of the east, should be so obsequious to the commands of the proud Assyrian, as to assemble at his summons; or so void of policy, as to join their forces to subdue the earth to him, to enlarge his power and dominion, and in effect to lessen and diminish their own; besides, "Did any of these Persian monarchs (says Calmet) reign at Nineveh? Did they declare war against a king of the Medes? Were they

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ever kings of Assyria? Did they conquer Cappadocia, Cilicia, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Phœnicia? Or, rather, did not all these provinces make part of the empire, which they received from their ancestors?"

Ver. 11. *But concerning them that rebel, let not thine eyes spare them.*] *i. e.* Either through a motive of compassion, or a principle of avarice, as Saul did, when, instead of obeying the commandment of God, to smite Amalek, and utterly to destroy all that they had, out of a false compassion he spared Agag, *and the best of the sheep and the oxen, and all that was good.* (1 Sam. xv. 3. 9.)

Ver. 12. *For as I live, and by the power of my kingdom, whatsoever I have spoken, that will I do by mine hand.*] When we consult that Divine light which teaches us, that men can do nothing but as God shall please to enable them, or shall allow to be done, one cannot help being surprised, and scarce forbear laughing, at the vanity of the Assyrian prince, who, flushed with the conceit of his victory over Arphaxad, and the advantages hitherto gained, resolves upon the vast attempt of subduing the whole earth, as if his power was invincible, and his project, founded either on pride, ambition, or resentment, could not fail of success. From the secrecy and well-concerted measures of his expedition, and the number of forces ready to engage in it, he assures himself of conquest, not considering, that success depends upon God's good pleasure, who often delights to defeat the unjust designs and unwarrantable enterprises of such princes, who aim at establishing their own glory and greatness upon the ruin of innocent and less powerful states. Especially such it is his will to bring low, who pride themselves in their own sufficiency and strength, (ver. 5.) and, without asking his leave, or seeking for his assistance or blessing, are confident of victory, that their counsels cannot be disappointed, nor their combined forces overthrown and defeated. From the authoritative manner and lofty language of this verse, one would have thought that it was God himself that was speaking, he who has the sovereign dominion over all creatures, and whose decrees and orders are always infallible and irresistible; who never commissions a Moses or a Joshua to go and fight their enemies with a promise of success, but the event is always answerable, and the attempt successful. But what a prodigious difference is there between the precarious resolutions of vain man, and the unerring decrees of an all-wise God; between a prince who has nothing of his own, but his pride, and an all-powerful Being, to whom kings, even in the summit of their fancied greatness, are subject and accountable! The event of this history in particular shews the vanity of such presumptuous boasting, in defiance of the Most High; that even weak and inconsiderable means shall have the power, by God's appointment, to stop the career, and confound the pride, of the mighty; and a Judith unarmed, if sent by the Lord of hosts, and inspired with resolution by him, shall perform wonders for the deliverance of his people, against the whole force of an insulting enemy, *who took not God for their strength, but trusted in the multitude of their hosts.*

Ver. 21. *Near the mountain, which is at the left hand of the upper Cilicia.*] It is probable that Taurus and Antitaurus are here meant, as these are large mountains bordering on Cilicia.

Ver. 23. *And destroyed Phud and Lud.*] *i. e.* Egypt and Lydia; for Lud cannot mean here Ethiopia, because the Ethiopians (i. 10.) had no concern in this affair, the Assyrian monarch had received no affront or contemptuous answer from them. If what Grotius observes of the geography of this writer be true, that it is παχυμερὴς, *crassoque filo*, one shall the less wonder, that Phud and Lud, *i. e.* Egypt and Lydia; Rasses and Ishmael, *i. e.* Tarsus and Arabia; Mesopotamia and Cilicia, are connected together, without a proper regard to the order or situation of places.

Ver. 27. *Then he went down into the plain of Damascus.*] If we do not suppose Holofernes to have been assisted in extending his conquests, and to have executed part of what is mentioned in this and the foregoing verses, by several large detachments from the general army, under the conduct of other generals and lieutenants, the rapidity of his conquests is almost incredible. He seems to conquer more places in less than two months, than another could even visit with so numerous an army as his in so short a time; for in about six or seven weeks' time he conquered Cappadocia, Lydia, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, from the river Chabor, which empties itself into the Euphrates, to the Persian Gulf; as likewise Arabia, and the country of the Madianites, towards the Dead Sea; and, last of all, Damascus: which makes it the more surprising, that, after having run through so many provinces, and subdued so many nations, by the mere terror of his name, a little insignificant town in comparison should stop his progress, and oblige him to stay before it a month or two without making any assault upon, or executing any thing considerable against it, except seizing on the aqueducts, and, by rendering them useless and unserviceable, depriving the inhabitants of Bethulia of the convenience of water. Our translators here scarce reach the force of the verb ἐξελίκμησε: it is an elegant expression, and means, that he *winnowed* their countries, *i. e.* he took their substance, and left the chaff.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *So they sent ambassadors to him to treat of peace.*] *i. e.* The inhabitants of the sea-coasts, mentioned in the last verse of the foregoing chapter, and people very remote, made solemn and respectful application to him to avert the danger and mischief that might otherwise befal them. Curtius mentions the like formal address made by the most distant nations to Alexander the Great, to intercede for peace, and to engage his favour. (Lib. x.) Thus the Gibeonites, knowing the success usually attending such dutiful and early application, to save themselves from danger, craftily said to Joshua, *We be come from a far country, we are thy servants, now therefore make a league with us.* (Josh. ix.)

Ver. 2. *We the servants of Nabuchodonosor the great king.*] These people surrendered themselves as vassals to the king of Assyria, called here *the great king* by way of eminence. This was the usual title given to this monarch. Thus Rab-shakeh, speaking of his superior power, addresses himself to Hezekiah, *Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is that wherein thou trusteth?* (2 Kings xviii. 19.) Daniel, speaking to Nebuchadnezzar, (ii. 37.) applies to him the like august terms of sovereignty, *Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and*

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glory. And Cyrus in his epitaph is complimented in the like manner as βασιλεὺς βασιλέων. (Strabo, lib. xv.)

Ver. 4. *Behold, even our cities, and the inhabitants thereof, are thy servants, come and deal with them as seemeth good unto thee.*] As nothing very material occurs in the literal sense of this chapter, Messieurs of Port-Royal have drawn the following allegorical one from the great power of the king of Assyria, represented above in all its terror on the one hand, and the vast panic and abject obsequiousness of the neighbouring nations on the other; "That by Nabuchodonosor, who had decreed to subdue the whole earth, and would be acknowledged and adored as a god by all the nations whom he had conquered, we may pertinently understand the devil, whose grand design is, ever since the withdrawing his own allegiance, and exalting himself as God, to seduce mankind, and to persuade them to desert the free and happy service in which they live under their great Creator, and to transfer their obedience to him, as their only lord and master." By Holofernes his general, they conceive, may be aptly meant, "all the agents and emissaries of the devil, who, in compliance with his suggestions or orders, labour through unjust means and wicked arts to establish his empire. Such were those idolatrous princes, who persecuted with fire and sword the true servants of God, to oblige them to submit to the power and dominion of the devil, and to renounce Jesus Christ. And to say nothing of the world itself, whose threats, as well as caresses, are alike successful in drawing men from their duty, such especially are all those, who, through the example of a bad life, or the poison and infection of evil principles, seduce others from their duty and steadfastness, to leave the true way of salvation, and to walk in the paths which lead to perdition and death." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 7. *So they, and all the country round about received them with garlands, with dances, and with timbrels: yet did he cast down their frontiers.*] *i. e.* Their frontier-towns, forts, and strong holds, which might otherwise give him opposition and disturbance. The Vulgate is more explicit in rendering the last clause, *Nec ista tamen facientes, ferocitatem ejus pectoris mitigare potuerunt, nam et civitates eorum destruxit.* It should seem, from this account, that it would have been more safe and glorious for these princes and people to have united their forces, and to have joined together to defend themselves against a barbarian, without any bowels of tenderness and compassion, and with whom the greatest submission was unavailable any ways to move or affect him. If their villages had been sacked and plundered, they would, however, have had the glory to have defended their liberties at the expense of their lives. But fear seldom reasons truly; (Wisd. xvii. 12.) and those who are seized with it, without weighing the consequences, follow implicitly what it suggests and dictates. The learned expositors above, here again strike out an allegorical sense, and apply it to the conduct of the wicked:—"The wicked (say they), when they surrender to and enter upon the service of sin and Satan, propose advantageous things to themselves; it is their aim and intention, like the people here mentioned, to procure safety and happiness to themselves in this life; but herein they are miserably deceived, since the devil in the end is really more cruel and mischievous to those that submit to him, than to those who have the virtue and resolution to oppose him. For should this evil spirit, like the enraged Holofernes, threaten to do all the evil imaginable to the latter, should he by violence take away their lives, a death so precious before God will be rewarded by an immortal life and eternal felicity; or should he aim at what is more dear to them, the subversion of the true religion, his attempt would be fruitless against its great Protector: but with the wicked it is not so; those who go out to meet this fiend, as these nations did Holofernes, and who willingly submit to his empire, and even rejoice and take a pleasure in his service, prove often unhappy, even in this life, and have a terrible prospect of ruin before them for the time to come: for they are in the service of a master, who, being, according to the account given of him in Scripture, a *murderer from the beginning,* continues his implacable hatred against mankind, and is so false a friend, that he gives the most deadly wound to the soul, at the same time that he outwardly appears to be the most kind and favourable; cunningly advancing the temporal interest and fortunes of those whom he means eternally to ruin. As he makes no account of riches, or any of the transitory goods of this life, he is disposed to give, if he had it in his power, all the kingdoms of the world, as he once pretended to offer even to our Saviour, provided he could induce any thereby to fall down and worship him, and, by so doing, to be eternal partners with him in misery and punishment."

Ver. 8. *Cut down their groves . . .*] Where they used to offer sacrifice to their gods or idols, under green trees for the greater solemnity and reverence, as well as the greater secrecy of their mysteries. That among the heathens, trees and groves were the temples of their gods, appears from innumerable passages in sacred and profane history. And in the Roman laws of the twelve tables, in the second law of religion, it was commanded to have groves in the fields. From this idolatrous use of them among the heathens, the Israelites were bidden in the course of their conquests to cut them down, and Deut. xii. 3. to burn them; and this law was executed by the good kings of Judah, in obedience to the commands of the true God. (2 Kings xviii. 4. xxiii. 6. 14.) They were also forbidden to plant any grove or tree near unto the altar of the Lord. (Deut. vi. 21.) Under *groves,* probably all other monuments of religious use are comprehended, as houses, high-places, temples, (see iv. 1.) pillars, statues, and the like. All of which Nebuchadnezzar ordered to be destroyed, as so many rivals of his majesty and greatness.

For he had decreed to destroy all the gods of the land, that all nations should worship Nabuchodonosor only, and that all tongues and tribes should call upon him as God.] The Assyrian princes, when they rose to the sublimity of empire, were not only despotic in their government, but affected even Divine honours, as may be seen in their history, and set themselves above all the gods of the people they vanquished; and not only presumed to pass sentence by the word of their mouth upon the whole world, but sometimes required that none other under heaven should be worshipped but themselves. We find in the account here given of Nabuchodonosor, that he was resolved not only to subdue the several nations from the Euphrates to Ethiopia, but intended likewise to oblige them to adore and acknowledge him only to be God. Accordingly his general, Holofernes, did not content himself with demolishing idols and false gods, but he would remove the true God

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likewise, and set up Nabuchodonosor in his stead. This appears to have been the avowed purpose of his sending his great armies, not merely from a spirit of resentment, but rather of ambition to be acknowledged the king among gods. And, indeed, as if he had been a professed atheist, as some have represented him, the sense of his great success in life had so intoxicated his reason, as to forget that he was a man, or that there was a God that could control him. But the king of Nineveh was not the only prince that we find infected with the folly and impiety of desiring to pass for a god; the flatterers of Darius, who reigned over the Medes and Persians in the time of Daniel, proposed to him to make a decree, under pain of being cast into the den of lions, that no one should dare to ask a petition of any god or man, but of him only, for the space of thirty days. (Dan. vi. 7.) Nor was Sennacherib less insolent, who boasted, 2 Kings xviii. 35. that he had not yet met with any god that could withstand his power, *Who are they among all the gods of the nations, that have delivered their country out of mine hand?* and from thence vainly infers, that neither would the Lord be able to deliver Jerusalem out of his hand; exalting himself above all that is called god, or is worshipped. Alexander the Great, and many of the Roman emperors, had the like ambition of passing for gods. Nor is it very surprising, that those whom the devil had thus taken possession of, should, like him, aspire to be equal with God. For that proud spirit, however jealous of his honour, is not averse for special ends to communicate part of it to his favourites, and willingly allows that they shall be looked upon and treated as gods, if he can by such superstition tempt any to leave the service of the true God, and by consequence become his slaves.

Ver. 9. *Over against the great strait of Judea.*] Called the *hill country*, Luke i. 39. It is particularly described ver. 7. of the next chapter.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 2. *THEREFORE they were exceedingly afraid of him, and were troubled for Jerusalem, and for the temple of the Lord their God.*] It is not to be wondered at, that the people of the Jews should be much afraid of, and tremble at, so great a force coming against them, to which so many nations, from an apprehension of greater evils, had submitted, and notwithstanding had been treated with great severity. Their fear therefore was the more excusable, and had this good effect, that through a distrust of themselves, and their own sufficiency, it put them upon applying to God for his assistance, and asking of him in their distress the help of his all-powerful arm. It is observable, that the Jews are not represented here as concerned for and afraid of their goods, their liberty, or lives; but the occasion of their uneasiness was the apprehension they were under, that the holy city of Jerusalem and the temple of the Lord should be profaned and treated as other the like places had been, where Holofernes with his army had passed. The Jews, it is well known, had a profound veneration for their temple, and on many occasions have shewed themselves ready to undergo a thousand deaths for the preservation of that holy place, which distinguished them from all other nations; and therefore their thoughts at this time were chiefly fixed, and their wishes and prayers confined to their beloved sanctuary. "What they did from a pure zeal and spirit of Judaism, and to preserve so glorious a monument of their religion, we should be equally zealous to do (say Messieurs of Port-Royal), from a truer principle, and a more excellent religion. It becomes us to be always more sincerely concerned for, and affected with, what any ways reflects dishonour upon or is injurious to the glory of God and the interest of his church, than for any thing that can happen to ourselves. We find that even the meek Jesus was affected with passion upon observing the sanctity of his father's house profaned by merchandize, and the place of prayer changed into a den of thieves: but one does not read of any resentment he expressed, all the time that he was in the hands of his bitterest enemies, and exposed to their outrageous insults; though his body was without comparison a temple far more glorious and precious than that material one, for which the Jews testified so much respect, and shewed so much concern for its safety."

Ver. 3. *For they were newly returned from the captivity, and all the people of Judea were gathered together; and the vessels, and the altar, and the house, were sanctified after the profanation.*] It is a great dispute among the learned, whether what is related here happened before or after the captivity, and where the date of this transaction is to be placed. Those who maintain the latter opinion, ground it chiefly upon this passage, wherein the author, according to the Greek version, says (for the Vulgate wholly omits it), that the Jews were newly returned from captivity, and the vessels, and the altar, and the house, were sanctified after the profanation. And v. 18, 19. it is farther affirmed, *That they were led captives into a land which was not theirs; that the temple of their God was cast to the ground, and their cities taken by the enemy; but now are they come up from the places where they were scattered, and have possessed Jerusalem again.* The bare reading of these passages, say they, naturally leads one to conclude, that what is here mentioned was not transacted till after the return from the captivity; which is confirmed by the opinion of many of the ancients, as well as moderns. (See Calmet's Pref. sur le Liv. Judith, and Stackhouse's Hist. of the Bib.) Those who maintain that this transaction happened before the captivity are divided, some placing it under Manasses, and others under Zedekiah; but the difficulties on either hypothesis possibly may be adjusted, if we be careful to distinguish the slight and particular dispersions and captivities of the Jews, from the long and more general one; and if we understand the captivity here referred to, not of the grand captivity of Babylon, but of one that was slight in comparison of it, that in the time of Manasseh seems most probable to be meant. When that prince was carried captive to Babylon, what is here mentioned of the country being desolate, the people dispersed, and the temple profaned, really happened; and upon his return from thence with some of his subjects, and being restored to his kingdom through God's blessing upon his exemplary penitence, the temple by as great a zeal for the true religion was purified again, and the service of the sanctuary restored to its ancient dignity. (2 Chron. xxxiii. 12—14.) But it must be acknowledged, that in St. Jerome's version, made from the original Chaldee, as is supposed, this verse, on which the

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controversy is founded, is wholly left out; and it is no improbable conjecture of a very learned writer, that it was put into the Greek version (from whence the English is taken) from some of those corrupted copies of the original, which St. Jerome complains of. (Prid. Connex. vol. i. p. 32.) As the authority, therefore, of this, and that other passage, v. 18. is so dubious, nothing certain can be concluded from either, or both of them, as to the point in question.

Ver. 4. *Therefore they sent into all the coasts of Samaria, and the villages,* &c.] Nothing could have induced these two irreconcilable enemies, the Jews and the Samaritans, who had a mutual aversion to each other, (see note on Ecclus. l. 25, 26.) to act jointly, and to be confederates, but the sense of the common danger which threatened them from the expedition of Holofernes.

Ver. 5. *And possessed themselves beforehand of all the tops of the high mountains, and fortified the villages that were in them.*] As Jonathan the high-priest did against Apollonius, (1 Macc. x. 70.) being by the nature of their situation more tenable and less easy of access. During the captivity, and some time after, not villages only, but almost all the cities, lay defenceless, and even Jerusalem itself was without sufficient walls for its security, as may easily be imagined in such a time of desolation and distress.

Ver. 6. *Joacim the high-priest which was in those days in Jerusalem.*] He is sometimes called Eliakim; accordingly St. Jerome's version promiscuously uses both names for this high-priest. The Syriac also does the like: and indeed they are both names for the same person. And so Luke iii. 23. Some copies have Joiakim instead of Heli, which, according to Chemnitius, is Eliakim contracted; and Philo makes Joiakim, Heli, and Eliakim, to mean the same person. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 34. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 4.) It has been objected against this history, that none of the name of Joiakim or Eliakim is to be found either in the Scriptures or in Josephus, that was high-priest before the captivity. As to that part of the objection from the Scriptures, it may be answered, that the succession of the high-priests is so imperfectly recorded there, that Joacim might easily be omitted: for whoever examines the succession of the Jewish high-priests, as we have them delivered to us in the first book of Chronicles, and in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, will find them so intricate and perplexed, so many omissions and dislocations, such a diversity of names and numbers, and such seeming contrariety in the several accounts, as will cost no small pains to reduce them to any tolerable regularity. The reason is, because the Scripture no where professes to give an exact catalogue of all such as had been admitted to that office and dignity until the captivity. And in such catalogues as are delivered, several are inserted that never were high-priests, and several are omitted that were. The high-priests of the family of Eli are instances of the latter, for they are left out of that pedigree; and those of the true race who were excluded by them are instances of the former, for they are in it, though they never were high-priests. It is very likely, as Prideaux observes, that from the time of Solomon to the captivity, many more such instances might have happened to hinder that pedigree from being an exact catalogue of the high-priests. But it is not certain that Joacim or Eliakim is not named in Scripture; for several learned men are inclined to think, that what is said of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, Isa. xxii. doth very well agree with that part which Joacim is said to have acted in this book. (Connex. lib. i.) As to the catalogue of Josephus, that too is so imperfect and corrupt, that scarce five names in it agree with the Scripture account. For several are in his catalogue who never were high-priests, and several are left out that were; particularly Amasiah in the time of Jehoshaphat, Jehoiada in the reign of Joash, and Azariah in that of Uzziah: and therefore Joacim might have been high-priest at this time, though there be no mention made of him as such, either in the Scriptures or the history of Josephus.

Ver. 8. *And the children of Israel did as Joacim the high-priest had commanded them.*] One is surprised to find in this important juncture, and indeed throughout this history, the high-priest Joacim giving all the orders, and no mention in any respect made of the king, though this was an affair of state rather than religion, and the supreme power was doubtless in him; as if he had no concern in or for the event of this war, nor for the danger threatened to his people, and his duty did not call upon him more loudly to do and order what the high-priest is here represented as doing. But the conjecture of very many learned men is not at all improbable, that at this time Manasseh dwelt at Jerusalem, being just returned from the Babylonish captivity, and being deeply affected with that calamity, and with the mercy shewed to him in his deliverance, cared not to concern or interest himself with public affairs, being wholly intent upon serving God. And it is not unlikely, that from his long confinement and the miseries he underwent, he might so have impaired his health, as to be hindered from acting in a public sphere: or it is possible that he might then be engaged in the defence of some other part of his kingdom, and so devolved the care of public business upon the high-priest and senate, who had acted during his absence. Josephus informs us, Antiq. lib. x. cap. 4. from the time that Manasses returned from Babylon, he spent the whole remainder of his time in the service and worship of God with the greatest strictness, being a sincere penitent for the many abominations he had committed. And the Scripture intimates the same, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 13. where it is said of him, that he *humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and took away the strange gods, and the idol, out of the house of the Lord.* And though it is said, ver. 14. that he built a wall without the city of David for its defence, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah, yet in the general, after he was humbled by his great affliction, he committed the management of public business, and especially the fortifying frontier-places, to the high-priest and other great men. On the other hand it is said, that allowing him to be greatly intent on devotion, and not to concern himself with public business, yet, in such a case, the name and authority of the king had not been dropped, nor is usually, though the act was the act of the minister. And as to the possibility of Manasses being engaged in the defence of some other part of his kingdom, or in some foreign expedition, neither the concurrence of history, sacred or profane, nor Manasses's own circumstances, are thought to countenance such a supposition: and had it been so, might it not have been expected that the author of this very history should have dropped some notice of it, as

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the reason of Joacim's acting on this occasion with an absolute and independent power?

Ver. 9. *Then every man of Israel cried to God with great fervency, and with great vehemency did they humble their souls.*] It is not to be doubted but that the Israelites, by fortifying the hills, and guarding the passages, and the like necessary provision in a time of danger, used all the precautions possible to prevent any surprise from their enemies; but it is manifest that they did not place their whole confidence in human policy or foresight. They did all that was in their power for their security, because God allows his creatures to employ all lawful means for that purpose; but being convinced of the truth of David's observation, Psal. cxxvii. 2. *Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain,* they had recourse, according to the direction of the high-priest, to prayer, fasting, and humiliation, as to arms, which alone could render them invincible. And presuming these instances of mortification to be well-pleasing to and successful with God, they continued them for many days in all Judea and Jerusalem, (ver. 13.) waiting for God's protection and assistance at the time, and in the manner, he should please to send it; and it was this perseverance that at length procured them victory. The Vulgate puts the following speech into the mouth of Joacim the high-priest, *Scitote quoniam exaudiet Dominus preces vestras, si manentes permanseritis in jejuniis et orationibus in conspectu Domini. Memores estote Moysi servi Dei, qui Amalec confidentem in virtute et potentia sua, et in exercitu suo, et in clypeis suis, et in curribus et in equitibus suis, non ferro pugnando, sed precibus sanctis orando dejecit. Sic erunt universi hostes Israel, si perseveraveritis in hoc opere quod cœpistis.* One cannot but observe, how different the conduct and behaviour of the Israelites was upon this occasion from that of common armies. They thought the help of man was but vain, and therefore their trust was in the Lord of hosts. Instead of the sound of trumpets, and other warlike instruments, they poured forth their devout supplications to him that was able to save, accompanied with strong crying and tears. Instead of outward pomp and the pride of dress, they were distinguished by sackcloth and ashes, and lowly prostrations. And who among the proud Assyrians, seeing such instances of dejection, would not have despised and laughed at these Israelites, as a people half dead with fear, and even almost below their notice to engage with? and yet it was this profound humiliation that was alone available to oppose and subdue the haughtiness and pride of Holofernes. Other nations hastily submitted through the very terror of his name, but this people, providing better for their safety, humbled themselves under, and thereby obtained, the help of the mighty hand of God, and triumphed over him who threatened revenge upon the whole earth.

Ver. 14. *And Joacim the high-priest, and all the priests that stood before the Lord, and they which ministered unto the Lord, had their loins girt with sackcloth, and offered the daily burnt-offerings, with the vows and free gifts of the people,* Ver. 15. *And had ashes on their mitres, and cried unto the Lord with all their power.*] The Vulgate is more emphatical than our version, *Etiam hi qui offerebant Domino holocausta, præcincti ciliciis offerrent sacrificia Domino.* Only it is observable, that it omits the mention of the high-priest. And indeed the occasion must be more pressing and calamitous than ordinary, for the high-priest himself, if not to put off his glorious apparel altogether, at least to appear in the time of the public ministration in the habit of a mourner, who might not mourn, according to the law, for the death of his nearest kin; (Lev. xxi. 10, 11.) but public calamities, such as affected the very being of the state, admitted of an exemption from the ordinary rule. Accordingly the prophet Joel, in such a time of distress, exhorts that the *priests, the ministers of the altar, should gird themselves, lament, and howl, and lie all night in sackcloth,* (i. 13.)

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND had laid impediments in the champaigne countries.*] The word σκάνδαλον here used has many significations: it sometimes signifies, in general, any obstacle or hinderance laid in a man's way, by which a passenger is detained or stopped: here it is peculiarly taken to signify those sharp stakes, or other instruments, which in time of war men were wont to put in the fields, where the enemy was expected to follow, to wound their feet or legs with, and thereby to retard their passage, and therefore here properly called *impediments.* Against which accident, being so usual and ordinary in war, anciently they used greaves of brass to defend their feet or legs. (See 1 Sam. xvii. 6.)

Ver. 2. *Wherewith he was very angry, and called all the princes of Moab, and the captains of Ammon.*] He applied to these more particularly, says Calmet, as he presumed, that the Moabites and Ammonites, being neighbours to the Hebrews, could better inform him of the truth than any other persons.

Ver. 3. *Tell me now who this people is that dwelleth in the hill country.*] It may seem strange, and scarce to be credited, that a general of the Assyrians, such a one as Holofernes was, should be ignorant of the people of the Jews, and ask the questions which are here mentioned concerning them; but it is probable that Holofernes was not of the number of those captains of the king of Assyria, whom the Lord sent to carry Manasseh into captivity, and therefore possibly he might not understand either their constitution and discipline, or the situation and extent of their country, much less the genius of the people, their original and genealogy; since even Tacitus the historian, who had conferred both with Titus and Vespasian, who overthrew Jerusalem, seems unacquainted with their genealogy, when he affirms, that they came from Ida, a mountain of Crete. (Hist. lib. v.) The questions here proposed to the princes of Moab, and the captains of Ammon, seem not to have proceeded from any ignorance of this people, nor to have been really asked for information's sake; for, considering the trophies, and spoils, and number of captives, brought from Judea not very many years before, by those powerful kings of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, and Sennacherib, such particulars relating to the Jews could not but be known. But they are questions rather of a sneering and insulting general, despising the enemies he had to deal with, as of no note or consequence, and not worthy of any regard. Not unlike that expression of the proud Pharaoh, speaking of the God of Israel with great contempt, *Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice?* (Exod. v.) and that of Nebuchadnezzar, (Dan. iii.) *Who is that God that shall*

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deliver you out of my hands? But that of churlish Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. 10. comes nearest the point, *Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse?* But the more the Assyrians despised the Jews, the more must they be surprised, and the greater their confusion, when they beheld their proud and insulting general vanquished and killed, with the far greater part of his army, by the means of one single woman among that people, whom they would seem even not to know, in order to depress and undervalue them the more.

What king is set over them, or captain of their army?] The Vulgate has only, *Quis rex militiæ illorum*, without the distinction. The latter clause seems exegetical of part of the office of a king; *viz.* his leading out and going forth before his people to battle. (2 Sam. xxi. 17.) Holofernes might possibly ask the question, who was their king, as Manasses's captivity might be a secret to him, who was not carried to Nineveh or Susa, but to Babylon.

Ver. 5. *I will declare unto thee the truth; . . . and there shall no lie come out of the mouth of thy servant.*] Such instances as these are not to be considered as tautology; they are used to shew the earnestness of the speaker, and to gain an easier belief by a more vigorous manner of expression. There are many instances in Scripture of this manner of reduplication. See Deut. ix. 7. 2 Kings ix. 3. Matt. xxviii. 14. Mark xiv. 61. Luke i. 20. ix. 45. John i. 20. Acts xiii. 11. xiv. 8. xviii. 9. 1 Thess. v. 5. Apoc. iii. 16. and particularly 1 John ii. 27. which very much resembles the passage before us; as does that of Plato, ψεύδεσθαι, καὶ μὴ τἀληθῆ λέγειν, who has also, ἀπειθοῦντες, καὶ μὴ πειθόμενοι; and so Virgil, *Non adversata petenti Annuit;* and instances are still more frequent among the Greek poets, particularly Homer, Euripides, Sophocles, and Aristophanes.

Captain of all the sons of Ammon.] Under the general title of the *sons of Ammon*, some conceive to be comprised the Edomites, or Idumeans, who may be considered as brethren of the Jews, being descended from Esau, the brother of Jacob; and that they chose to pass under that name at this time, to avoid the odium of being engaged against and invading the Israelites their kinsmen. Achior, the chief of these people, it may be presumed, was an Idumean likewise, and, having a perfect knowledge of all that concerned the Jews, was the spokesman to Holofernes, and gave him all the light and intelligence concerning them that is mentioned in this chapter; and from the detail here given of them, it appears that he very well understood their history. One cannot but take notice of the open manner in which he speaks to the Assyrian general of the people of the Jews, and of the God of Israel's impartial and just dealing with them, according as their conduct deserved; an observation tending greatly to his glory, and scarce to be expected from this Ammonite. And there seems to be something providential in it, and not merely chance, that he should find admittance and protection among this people, and even be made one of them by the rite of circumcision, where in all human appearance he might rather have expected to have been evil-entreated, or to have suffered death as a spy, or an enemy in disguise.

Ver. 6. *This people are descended of the Chaldeans.*] We read, Gen. xi. 31. that Terah took Abraham his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. Hence the children of Israel are said here to be descended of the Chaldeans, as claiming Abraham for their father, who was a Chaldean: and probably it was with design to render Holofernes favourable to the Jews, that Achior represents to him, in the beginning of his speech, that they were descended of the Chaldeans, as Holofernes himself was a subject of the Assyrian monarch, the prince of that country.

Ver. 8. *For they left the way of their ancestors, and worshipped the God of heaven, the God whom they knew; so they cast them out from the face of their gods, and they fled into Mesopotamia, and sojourned there for many days.*] As these nations had been long infected with idolatry, and were under a government that established and supported idolatrous worship, the ancestors of Abraham and his family were expelled this land for worshipping the God of heaven, and leaving the way of their forefathers; a land so famous for superstition and idolatry, that Chaldeans and magicians were synonymous terms. From hence they passed into Mesopotamia, *i. e.* into a province so called from its situation between the two rivers, Tigris and Euphrates; and on account of their relation to Abraham, the Jews are said to sojourn with him there. For as they are mentioned in the foregoing verse to be descended from the Chaldeans, because Abraham, from whom their stock was derived, was a Chaldean, so are they here represented on the same account, as accompanying him and settling with him in Mesopotamia. St. Stephen, Acts vii. 2—4. greatly illustrates what Achior here adds; when speaking to the Jews, he says, *The God of glory appeared unto Abraham, and ordered him to depart this country*, &c. *Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran; and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed into the land of Canaan.* Abraham's stay at Charran is supposed, by the most exact chronologers, to be about two years; but Achior's expression, *He sojourned there many days*, seems to imply a much longer time, as appears from the same phrase, ver. 16.

Ver. 10. *But when a famine covered all the land of Canaan, they went down into Egypt.*] Calmet observes, that Achior, in his narration, seems to confound the going of Abraham into Egypt with that of Jacob's thither: but there is not much weight in this observation, as the account here is of the Jewish people and their concerns collectively, rather than of Abraham personally. However this be, it reminds me to illustrate a like instance, Acts vii. 16. where St. Luke, in reciting St. Stephen's speech, either puts Abraham for Jacob, (see Vitring. in Isai. Prolegom. p. 23.) or Abraham must be used here patronymically, for Jacob, his descendant; or possibly the name Abraham crept into the text, as Beza suspects, from a marginal annotation.

Ver. 16. *And all the Gergesites.*] The Gergesenes, or Girgashites, were an ancient people of the land of Canaan; their habitation was beyond the sea of Tiberias, where we find some footsteps of their name in the city of Gergesa, upon the lake of Tiberias. The rabbins inform us, that, when Joshua first came into the land of Canaan, the Gergesenes took a resolution rather to forsake their country than to submit to the Hebrews. They are also of opinion, that Joshua proposed the following conditions to the Canaanites, *viz.* flight, subjection, or war. The Gergesenes resolved to fly, and accordingly retired into Afric; and to this flight possibly that inscription in Phœnician characters,

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which Procopius mentions, may refer; "We are some of those people who fled before that robber, Joshua, the son of Nun." Though the tradition be very old, that the Gergesenes fled out of the land of Canaan when Joshua entered it, nevertheless it is certain, that a good number of them stayed behind; since Joshua himself informs us, that he subdued the Girgashites, (Josh. xxiv. 11.) and they whom he overcame were certainly on this side Jordan. It may be, therefore, that they who fled into Afric were the Girgashites, who dwelt beyond the sea of Tiberias, and that the others continued in the country; and both these may be meant and included in the expression here, *All the Gergesites.* By the Sichemites, mentioned just before, the Hivites seem to be intended.

Ver. 17. *And whilst they sinned not before their God, they prospered, because the God that hateth iniquity was with them.* Ver. 18. *But when they departed from the way which he appointed them, they were destroyed in many battles very sore.*] This observation of Achior's was framed according to the known experience of those times; for the rise and fall, the prosperity or adversity, of the Jewish people, was, in the apprehension of other nations, as well as their own, always proportionable to their own religious behaviour, and not to be measured by any rules of policy or the effect of it. The ground of this observation was God's first promise to Abraham, Gen. xii. 2, 3. which promise, as it principally concerned the temporal state of the Jews, was to be limited according to the tenor of Achior's speech, and did then only take effect, when they followed Abraham's footsteps, and lived in a faithful obedience to God's laws; or, having transgressed them, did turn again with their whole hearts to seek the God of their fathers. And it was their love of sin, so displeasing unto God, which brought them so often into subjection unto their enemies, according to that of the Psalmist, lxxxi. 14, 15. *O that my people would have hearkened unto me; for if Israel had walked in my ways, I should soon have put down their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries;* and that of Solomon, Prov. xvi. 7. *When the ways of a man please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him.* As the nations round about Judea waited all such opportunities to take revenge of the Jews, when God by their misery and calamities seemed to forsake them, so, for the same reasons, were the nations round about as earnestly bent to hinder the re-edifying of Jerusalem after their return from the captivity, as fearing lest this people's good fortune should rise again with their city walls, as Nehemiah expressly intimates, vi. 16. that *after the enemies had heard that the wall was finished, they were afraid, and their courage failed them, for they knew that this work was wrought of God.* (See Jackson's Works, vol. i. p. 86.) Hence did the wise men of Chaldea, upon the first notice of the Jews beginning to recover themselves, and fortune turning for them, read Haman's destiny, but too late, *If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.* (Esth. vi. 13.) See also Ezra viii. 22. which comes nearer this place. A very learned prelate observes of this speech of Achior's to Holofernes (whether truly uttered or feigned, says he, by the penman of the history), that it was framed and grounded upon the confessed observations of those times, and contained such advices as a faithful counsellor, well acquainted with the affairs of the Jews, should have given to his lord, who did not so well understand them. (Patrick's Com. on Esth. vi. 13.)

Ver. 18. *They were destroyed in many battles very sore, and were led captives into a land that was not theirs.*] Some would have the captivity here referred to, to be that under Nabuchodonosor, and the restoration from it here mentioned to be that under Cyrus: Plantin's Bibles manifestly take it in this sense, referring in the margin of this place to 1 Esd. i. 2. Others understand it of that under Shalmaneser; but it seems less liable to exceptions, to explain the place of the Assyrian captivity in the time of Manasseh, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11. when Judea was wasted by the Chaldeans, than of the Babylonish one, which happened after. The Vulgate seems to take it in this sense, rendering here, *Exterminati sunt prœliis a multis nationibus, et plurimi eorum captivi abducti sunt,* &c. If Achior had been here speaking of the Jews carried captive to Babylon by Nabuchodonosor, he would not have said, *many* of them, but *all;* nor that they were destroyed in battle by many nations; for in that grand captivity they were oppressed only by one nation, *viz.* the Chaldeans.

And the temple of their God was cast to the ground.] As this particular is not in St. Jerome's version, and probably was put into the Greek from some corrupted copy of the original, nothing certain can be concluded for or against this history, or the true time of it, from this passage of the speech of Achior. (See note on iv. 3. and Du Pin's Prelim. Dissert. p. 20.) Perhaps by the words as they now stand in the Greek and English versions, nothing more is intended or meant than a profanation of the temple, and its dignity being thereby brought low. That the temple may be said to be in a manner destroyed by a profanation of it, see 2 Kings xxi. 2 Chron. xxxiii. that it was destroyed actually by the Chaldeans in the time of Manasseh is not true, which happened in the reign of Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar, and so must be a great mistake if understood strictly: and besides, the whole tenor of this book intimates the temple then to be standing: (see iv. 2. viii. 24.) or these words may be considered as spoken by a stranger, an Ammonite, who might possibly without grounds allege the destruction of the temple, as Rabshakeh does, 2 Kings xviii. 22. with regard to Hezekiah's taking away the altar of the Lord.

Ver. 19. *Now they are returned to their God, and are come up from the places where they were scattered.*] As what is said in the foregoing verse seems best understood of the Assyrian captivity in the time of Manasseh, when the Jews were dispersed into different parts, and left their country desolate, so the return from their dispersion here mentioned seems better to be referred to the restoration of that prince, when Jerusalem, which had been for a time in the hands of the Assyrians, was restored to him, and the temple, which was desolate and in a manner destroyed, recovered its former lustre, being again frequented and purified, and its holy service re-established. There is nothing in this exposition but what is agreeable to the history of Manasseh, as far as can be collected from the short account which we have in the books of Kings and Chronicles, and it is liable to fewer objections, than understanding the place of the restoration of the Jews to their own land, after the Babylonish captivity, which happened later.

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Ver. 20. *If there be any error in this people.*] This is better expressed in the next sentence, which fixes and determines the sense of this passage. The Hellenists often express sins by *errors* or *ignorances:* see Numb. xii. 11. Ezra viii. 22. 1 Esd. viii. 77. Ecclus. xxiii. 2, 3. and many others in the canonical and apocryphal writings, where error and ignorance plainly mean sins and transgressions.

Ver. 23. *We will not be afraid of the face of the children of Israel; for, lo, it is a people that have no strength nor power for a strong battle.*] This boast of Holofernes's officers, and their contemptuous scorn of the Jews, as a people having no strength nor power for war, shews their ignorance of the true God, the God of Israel, who, to display his own almighty power, and what little stress is to be laid on the arm of flesh, often interposes in behalf of his chosen in a way not usual nor expected. To give peace to a favourite land he will enable five to chase a hundred, and a hundred to put ten thousand to flight. (Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 30. Josh. xxiii. 10.) The more unprovided the Israelites were of military strength, the more room was left for the invincible arm of the Almighty to appear with uncommon glory in their behalf; the less they knew of the art of war, the more their enemies ought to admire, in the victories gained by them, the all-powerful hand of Him who declared for them, and who supplied, in a manner so extraordinary, what was wanting either in strength or policy.

Ver. 24. *Now, therefore, lord Holofernes, we will go up, and they shall be a prey to be devoured of all thine army.*] Messieurs of Port-Royal conclude this chapter with the following fine reflection upon the abject obsequiousness of Holofernes's minions: "Such generally is the false wisdom and servile complaisance of those who think they cannot please their princes, or ingratiate themselves into their favour so well, as by telling them, not what is most agreeable to truth or right reason, but that which most sensibly flatters their pride, and soothes their vanity. For what in truth was more reasonable than Achior's whole harangue? he does not attempt or presume to compare, in any respect, the power and force of the Israelites with that of Nabuchodonosor, but, as if it was insignificant in itself, and not of consequence enough to be mentioned, resolves their whole strength, and the success they were occasionally blessed with, into the favour and protection of their God. Could any thing be conceived in less offensive terms, or even a Jew have expressed himself better? Or can there be a greater instance of presumption and wickedness, than to think an injury done to Nabuchodonosor, by setting God above him, or preferring him only before him?" (Com. in loc.)

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 2. *HIRELINGS of Ephraim.*] Calmet suspects from Achior being called, ver. 5. a *hireling of Ammon*, that this reading is a mistake; and indeed this conjecture seems confirmed from the Syriac version, which has *mercenarii Ammon* in both places. The expression implies great disrespect and contempt; but the sarcasm is much stronger upon the Jews, when Holofernes calls them, ver. 5. *The people that came out of Egypt*, intimating that they were a race of slaves.

Ver. 2. *And who art thou, Achior, and the hirelings of Ephraim, that thou hast prophesied amongst us as to-day, and hast said, That we should not make war with the people of Israel, because their God will defend them?*] Achior's speech in the foregoing chapter is much to be admired for the justness of the sentiments, and the generous disinterestedness with which he supports the cause of the God of Israel: though himself was one of the uncircumcised, he harangues like Moses or Joshua on the state of the Jewish people, their good or evil success, according as they continued faithful, or otherwise, in the service of the true God. To hear him thus speak of and extol the mighty power of the God of Israel, when he regarded, and would have all others likewise regard, Nabuchodonosor as the most high God, and only invincible, grated the jealousy and ambition of the Assyrian general; and one would have expected from his pride and fury, that he would instantly have ordered him to be put to death, for the freedom with which he expressed himself. But this was not in his own or master's power, how great an idea soever he had conceived of it; God had resolved to reward a declaration, so much to his honour, from the mouth of this alien, and to reserve him to become one at length of his chosen, whose cause he had so signally vindicated. The honest freedom of Achior, and the evil return it met with, are not without precedent in history; the following extract bears a near resemblance and affinity to it:—Darius being on the point of giving battle to Alexander, demanded of Charidemus, an Athenian captain, what he thought of his army: the stranger answered, That it might serve to frighten some neighbouring states, but it appeared to him not disciplined or strong enough to oppose the forces of Alexander, which he commended exceedingly, especially for their experience and discipline; "That to an army of Macedonians equal forces should be opposed, and the silver and gold which shone upon the arms of his soldiers, would be better disposed of to levy forces in Greece. *Pari robore opus est. In illa terra, quæ nos genuit, auxilia quærenda sunt; argentum istud atque aurum ad conducendum militem mitte.*" Darius, though naturally humane and good-natured, was vexed with so free an answer, and without any farther consideration ordered him to be killed on the spot; but he was soon sensible of the rashness of this step; he lost the battle, and lamented the hasty sentence pronounced upon one who had given him so good advice. (Q. Curt. lib. iii.) The speech of Holofernes here, conceived in the spirit of military pride, and expressed in domineering and insulting terms, and with a full confidence of victory, reminds one either of that of Goliath the Philistine, defying the armies of the living God, and threatening to give the flesh of David, whom he haughtily disdained, in comparison of his enormous self, unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field, 1 Sam. xvii. or that of Rab-shakeh, whom Sennacherib sent to reproach the living God; *Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria; hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The Lord will deliver us. Who are they among all the gods of the countries that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?* (2 Kings xviii.) But the event shewed, that the confidence

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of such profane boasters was but vain; their blasphemies drew down upon them God's judgments, and their overthrow made it appear, that the *Lord he is the God, the Lord he is the God.*

And who is God but Nabuchodonosor?] It was thus his sycophants flattered him. The truth is, if we will credit the account here given of this prince, he was a professed atheist: the sense of his success in life, and of the wonderful deeds performed by him, especially in a military capacity, had so intoxicated his reason, that the avowed purpose of his sending his armies under Holofernes was, that all nations should worship him only, and that all tongues and tribes should call upon him as God. In like manner a successor of his, Nebuchadnezzar the Great, upon the contemplation of his magnificence and greatness, grew so arrogant and elate as to think himself equal at least to God: *Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?* (Dan. iv. 30.) But they were both at length convinced, the former by the shameful death of his general and the defeat of all his forces, and the latter by being reduced to the condition of a beast, that *the Most High only ruleth in the kingdoms of the earth.* It is surprising to observe from this instance, that of Heliogabalus, and others, that such princes as have been worst and most abandoned, and have acted even below the very character of men, have most affected Divine honours, and to be acknowledged and complimented as gods.

Ver. 4. *For he said, none of my words shall be in vain.*] Οὐ ματαιωθήσονται τὰ ῥήματα τῶν λόγων μου. As Nabuchodonosor would pass for a god, so he affected to talk like one, his orders are absolute and uncontrollable, as if he was possessed of all power both in heaven and earth. As דבר signifies among the Hebrews both a word and thing, so ῥῆμα hath the same double meaning among the Hellenists; see particularly Deut. xvii. 1. Luke i. 37. Acts x. 37. accordingly ῥήματα τῶν λόγων, to avoid tautology, must signify the things, matter, or contents, of his speech.

Ver. 5. *And thou Achior, a hireling of Ammon, which hast spoken these words in the day of thine iniquity.*] *i.e.* Who hast been hired by the Jews to prophesy falsely, to discourage my soldiers, and hast this day betrayed thy perfidiousness and treachery. Junius accordingly has, *Qui prolocutus es sermones istos injustitiæ tuæ;* and the margin, *Quum perfidiam tuam, ut mercenarius improbus, retexisti.* It is a Hebraism, and means, that he had that day spoken words of iniquity, *i.e.* of baseness and falsehood, as would be proved by the event.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt fall among their slain, when I return.*] Ὅταν ἐπιστρέψω. *When I shall turn, or put my enemies to flight,* says Badwell; and so the Geneva version has it, *Thou shalt fall among the slain when I shall put them to flight:* or the meaning may be, which the words seem more naturally to suggest, *When I return victorious and in peace;* and in this sense it reminds one of what the king of Israel said to Micaiah the prophet, *Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace.* And the answer there given is equally applicable, *If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me.* And he said, *Hearken, O people, every one of you.* (1 Kings xxii. 27, 28.)

Ver. 9. *And if thou persuade thyself in thy mind, that they shall not be taken, let not thy countenance fall.*] See Gen. iv. 5. where the like phrase is used to signify Cain's grief and discontent; and Job xxix. 24. such a state of mind is expressed by the falling of the light of the countenance, as the lifting up of the face on the contrary was a token of comfort, joy, and confidence. (Job xi. 15.) The meaning here seems to be, "If thou art assured of the truth of what thou sayest, do not betray any, or so much concern and fear, nor let signs of conscious guilt and confusion appear on thy countenance: if thou art indeed a true prophet, there is no occasion for fear; but if by the event thou art detected to be a false one, thy perfidiousness will draw on thee, thou must expect, a more severe punishment."

Ver. 10. *Then Holofernes commanded his servants that waited in his tent to take Achior, and bring him to Bethulia, and deliver him into the hands of the children of Israel.*] Holofernes, transported with fury at Achior's open and free manner of speaking, says to him, "Since you have taken upon you to be a prophet, in telling us that the God of Israel would be the defender of his people, to shew you that there is no other god but Nabuchodonosor, my master, when we have put these people to the sword, we will destroy you likewise.—And that you may yourself experience the vanity of your own prophecy, I will have you carried to Bethulia, there to run the same risk, and undergo the same fate, with them, whom you believe and pronounce to be invincible." "Propelli Accitor (says Sulpicius, Sac. Hist. l. 2.) in castra Hebræorum jubet, ut cum his periret, quos vinci non posse affirmaverat." The insulting general hereby intended no favour to Achior; he spared his life only that he might at length take it from him in a manner that should most sensibly affect him; *viz.* after he had seen with his own eyes the entire ruin of a people, whose God he had so much extolled as their protector. But how unsearchable is the counsel, and adorable the conduct, of the Most High, who knows how to confound the blindness, and disappoint the ambition, of wicked enterprising spirits, and to procure mercy and deliverance for his chosen by those very means, which short-sighted wisdom had contrived most effectually to destroy them!

Bethulia.] From what quarter Holofernes attacked Judea is not certain, and much more uncertain where to fix this Bethulia, though it be the very seat of the siege itself. Many learned men think they see reason from iii. 9,10. iv. 6. vii. 3. to place it northwards in the tribe of Zebulun. But the following difficulties attend this opinion; Bethulia is said to be the frontier-town, and entrance into the hill country, vii. 1. but that the hill country lay at a distance from this tribe, is plain from St. Luke, chap. i. who tells us, the Virgin Mary arose from Nazareth (which was in the tribe of Zebulun, and neighbourhood of Bethulia), and went into the hill country; which plainly enough infers, the hill country was different from the tribe of Zebulun; divided indeed from it at the distance of many days' journey, being on the south of the tribe of Judah, "Initium sumpsit Mons Amorrhæus a Cadesh Barnea, limite terræ Israeliticæ Australi, ac se horrente gibbositate protrusit in Judæam, ultra Hebronem, mutato nomine tandem in montanum Judææ." (Lightfoot, Cent. Chorog. in Matt. p. 23.) Again, all the persons of Bethulia, whose tribe is distinguished, were of the tribe of Simeon; so Judith, Manas-

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seh her husband, and Ozias the governor, &c. the town itself therefore cannot but be supposed to belong to that tribe. How then shall we account for a town of the Simeonites in another tribe, and that not near, but at a great distance from, the tribe of Simeon? These inconveniences, I presume, have induced others to place Bethulia within the limits of the tribe of Simeon, which tribe reached the hill country. In favour of this opinion, we find a Bethul, Josh. xix. 4. within Simeon's division; and again, 1 Chron. iv. 30. Bethuel; both which names easily take the Greek form, Bethulia. Yet this situation seems not consistent with iii. 9, 10. and iv. 6. much less with its neighbourhood to Dothaim, which last, it seems pretty clear, was in the northern parts of the land. For when Jacob was at Hebron (which town is known to be in that part of the country which was afterward the tribe of Judah, with the tribe of Simeon to its south and southwest), his ten sons went out to feed their father's flock to Shechem, which lies several miles north of the tribe of Judah; thither he sent their brother Joseph to inquire after their welfare, who found they were removed farther into the country, even to Dothan; or, as it is called in the same verse, Dothain, which is the same with Dothaim, the difference only lying in the Chaldee termination. This is again about twenty miles north of Sichem, and brings us into the tribe of Zebulun; consequently, Bethulia, which was in the neighbourhood of Dothaim, that lay in one of the northern tribes, could not be in the tribe of Simeon, which was the farthest of all the tribes southward. Eusebius, de loc. Hebr. has a passage which confirms this, "Dothaim, ubi invenit Joseph fratres suos pecora pascentes, qui et usque hodie in duodecimo a Sebaste milliario contra Aquilonis plagam ostenditur;" *i. e.* Dothaim lay twelve miles north of Sebaste, which was another name for Samaria. Farther, if Holofernes attacked the Jews on the north side of the land, as has been inferred from some passages in the present history, then if Bethulia were in the tribe of Simeon, and south of Jerusalem, he must, which is absurd, have left Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom, behind him unsubdued, and be got to the end of the country, where the history represents him as but at the key or entrance into it. It seems better therefore to acknowledge, that this writer was inaccurate in his geography, which he has some excuse for, as being the general fault of his countrymen, especially after the captivity, than, from some difficulties about the situation of the place, to conclude against its existence at all; especially if we credit what Adrichomius affirms with much confidence, "Exstat etiamnum in monte hoc quoddam castellum, et multa pulchra ædificia, plurimæque urbis ruinæ; sicuti etiam in campo versus Dothain, castrorum Holofernis adhuc vestigia quædam restare scribuntur." (Theatr. Terr. Sanct. p. 137.)

Ver. 15. *Ozias of the tribe of Simeon.*] Whether Bethulia was a city of the tribe of Zebulun, or Simeon, Ozias probably was free of it; or when the ten tribes were carried away captive to Assyria, he was perhaps, by chance or design, carried to Bethulia; or possibly upon this expedition of Holofernes he was sent to Bethulia by king Manasses, or Joacim the high-priest, with a public character or commission, as one who was capable of giving orders, and commanding upon so important an occasion. By the Vulgate he is called the *prince of Judah,* chap. viii. and *prince of the people of Israel,* chap. xiii. which makes it the more probable, that, being a man of authority and consequence, he was sent to Bethulia to defend that place against the assault of Nabuchodonosor's army, and was for that time at least one of the governors of the place. They are called the *ancients of the city,* viii. 10. x. 6.

Ver. 19. *And look upon the face of those that are sanctified unto thee this day.*] There are different senses of these words. Some understand them, as if the Jews prayed to God at this melancholy juncture, in the following manner: "Look not upon our merit, which is as nothing, but upon the merits of thy faithful saints, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and others, who have distinguished themselves by continuing true and steadfast in thy covenant; that we, who labour under the burden of our sins, and are justly punishable for them, may, on their account, and in regard to their righteousness, be accepted by thee, and obtain the deliverance we at present stand in need of." Or they may be understood of the Jews in general, urging before God their near relation to him, as his peculium, thus:—"Regard, O Lord, the prayers of thy people, whom thou hast separated from all other nations, whom thou hast adopted in an especial manner, and chosen to be thine inheritance." Or the meaning may be, "Hear the supplications of those who have prepared and sanctified themselves in this time of calamity, to appear before thee, who join with most devout affections in the holy offices of fasting and praying, to implore thy help and mercy against an insulting and proud enemy, defying even thy almighty power." Or, lastly, we may, with Grotius, understand the words of the priests and such persons in particular, who are separated to a holy ministry and use, whose prayers and intercessions, in behalf of his distressed chosen, they beseech God most graciously to accept. The formidableness of Holofernes's army struck them with a panic: they saw themselves in the most imminent danger, and the defeat of all the adjacent countries, together with the cruelties exercised upon them, was to them a certain presage of what they might expect, and of the mischief intended against them, if the Almighty did not interpose in their behalf as their protector. On this account they fell prostrate before him with the profoundest humility; they fasted, they prayed, they passed whole nights in solemn supplications, to implore the aid and assistance of him whom they looked upon as only able to deliver them from so powerful an enemy.

Ver. 20. *Then they comforted Achior, and praised him greatly.*] It may seem a little surprising, according to all human appearance, that the inhabitants of Bethulia, and those that had the chief command among them, should so readily and easily give credit to what Achior told them; for they might with good reason have mistrusted him as another Sinon, a suspicious person sent by Holofernes, with an insidious design, to make observations to their disadvantage, or to betray them to their ruin. To this it may be answered, that though, according to the ordinary rules of judging, and the maxims of common prudence, they ought to have been more wary and cautious, and in the opinion of some to have proceeded rather by torture, yet possibly God might, in regard to the noble testimony which Achior bore, influence the hearts of this people to receive and to take care of him: or perhaps some among them might be affected with his story, and the circumstance of his being

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bound, or know and answer for the probity and integrity of this Ammonite chief. However that be, it is certain, that though they received him with humanity, and treated him with honour and respect, they were so careful as not to intrust him with any share of the administration of affairs, contenting themselves with having afforded him a safe retreat among them, and taking, without doubt, such wise precautions as not to be surprised through too easy a credulity.

Ver. 21. *Ozias took him unto his house.*] Not bound or under guard as a prisoner, but probably watched a little and observed. Hence, when Judith returned in triumph to Bethulia, bringing Holofernes's head, and all the people ran together to the sight, it is observable that Achior comes not till called and sent for, (xiv. 6.)

And made a feast.] How persons attacked by a power so formidable, and whom that fresh insult of the enemy, the sending Achior to be both a witness and sharer of their ruin, would rather, it should seem, have intimidated more than ever, should on the contrary be so fond of, and rejoice with, their new acquaintance, as to make a great feast for him at such a time, and in such circumstances, may probably be accounted for, without supposing, as some do, God to act upon and influence the hearts of the inhabitants thus to behave. For it would have been highly disgraceful to the people of God to have betrayed any sign of cowardice and fear in the presence of that stranger who was not himself afraid, even in Holofernes's hearing, to dwell upon and extol the power of the Almighty God of Israel, and his frequent interposition in their behalf. Nor could they better or more effectually testify to Achior their sense of God's former goodness, and their hopes and reliance upon his mercies at this perilous juncture, than by such an instance of unconcernedness, as if they were confident of his favour and assistance. And the entertainment itself was, according to the Vulgate, that of sober and well-disposed persons; for it was made after they had fasted strictly all the day, and they continued, after the ending of it, the whole night in prayer.

To the elders . . .] By *elders* we are here not to understand the priests only, nor ancient people as such, but certain appointed magistrates; for, according to Josephus, Moses appointed that every city should have a council of seven magistrates, men of exemplary virtue and lovers of righteousness; (Antiq. lib. iv. cap. 8. Seld. de Synedr. lib. ii. cap. 6.) and this perhaps was the determinate number in his time. But anciently there seems to have been more, because Boaz mentions ten elders, who were probably the same with the judges in the city of Beth-lehem. (Ruth iv. 2.)

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *To take aforehand the ascents of the hill country.*] The town of Bethulia is represented in the history as a place of prodigious strength, either by art or nature, or both, nor was to be attempted by assault, but by starving its inhabitants: what remains then or marks do we hear of from travellers of so wonderful a place? if time and wars have destroyed all the works of art, yet would not nature and situation still continue the same? its own natural strength, and the ever-memorable deliverance wrought at it, must, one would think, have distinguished it to posterity, and that there should have been some tradition at least among the inhabitants, or their neighbours, to lead us to it. The Phocian Thermopylæ, the Portæ Caspiæ, are known and distinguished now as heretofore; but has any man's curiosity found out, or remarked here the passes, which gave it the command of the country, and made it the gate or key of Judea, as represented in this history? the place has been visited, and yet nothing extraordinary this way is observed of it. Mr. Maundrell, who was upon the spot, and whose accuracy and fidelity may be depended on, says only of it, that it stands upon a very eminent and conspicuous mountain, and is seen far and near, (p. 115.) He takes not the least notice of any grand defile or particular passes which commanded the entrance into Judea, which, if it had been so, could never have escaped his observation, who attended to every circumstance relative to the descriptions or allusions in Scripture. On the other hand, his account rather supposes the country to have been more a plain, or flat all about it, than mountainous. To this it may be replied briefly, 1. That some works or remains of art, some vestiges of foundations and ruins of edifices, are, according to Adrichomius and others, still visible; and if there were none, this would no more conclude against the *quondam* being of such a place, than against the existence of Babylon, Nineveh, Persepolis, and other once famous cities, which have little or no traces now remaining. 2. That however the surface of the country about Bethulia was, which authors have represented in a different manner; yet, as Bethulia is acknowledged to have been situated upon a very high and conspicuous mountain, the very situation itself, still to be discerned and admired, points out not merely the probability of its being there placed, but the propriety and importance of such a choice, which, as it was more tenable by its natural strength; so, 3dly, That it had uncommon difficulty of approach and access, either by one grand defile, or very strait and dangerous passages, appears sufficiently from its foiling so great an army as one hundred and eighty thousand men so long before it; nor does there seem any necessity or occasion to transmit as particular what a rocky and perpendicular situation naturally suggests.

Ver. 2. *The army of the men of war was a hundred and seventy thousand footmen and twelve thousand horsemen.*] The number of warriors varies very considerably in the Greek and Latin editions. It is not improbable that there is some mistake in the numbers in the different texts. The Vulgate has, *Erant autem pedites bellatorum centum viginti millia,* &c. and indeed with so many only the army of Holofernes set forward from Nineveh; (see ii. 5.) but it had been increased by considerable reinforcements, which came from divers provinces of Assyria, and by an addition of auxiliary troops from the countries newly conquered, which might raise the number to that mentioned in the Greek, *viz.* one hundred and seventy thousand. There is also a difference between the Greek and Latin copies with respect to the cavalry. The Vulgate enlarges the number to twenty-two thousand, which probably is right; as Holofernes's cavalry at this time had been augmented by ten thousand Assyrian horse. The difference in both accounts seems, in short, to have arisen from the flux state of the army increasing and decreasing from many accidental causes.

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Ver. 3. *And they camped in the valley, near unto Bethulia by the fountain, and they spread themselves in breadth over Dothaim.*] There is some difficulty with respect to the posts which are here assigned to Holofernes's troops; the village of Dothaim, or Dothan, as it is sometimes called, was, it is objected, too far from Bethulia for them to extend to it in breadth, whether it is placed in the tribe of Zebulun or of Simeon. It is urged, that it was at least eight or ten leagues from the sea of Tiberias, and, by consequence, about an equal distance from Bethulia, in the tribe of Zebulun, and more than thirty leagues from Bethulia, in the tribe of Simeon. If this be so, and the distance of Dothaim from the place of the siege was indeed so great, it is probable, that as there are many villages in this history wrongly placed (for the geography of it, it must be confessed, is far from being exact), so this of Dothaim is here erroneously inserted; or perhaps, by mistake, one name is put for another, and it is difficult, says Grotius, *In Græcis adeo corruptis, ut est hic liber, locorum nomina restituere.* But, on the other hand, there are authorities which give some reason to think, that the situation of Dothaim was contiguous to Bethulia, as is represented in the history. Adrichomius makes Dothaim to be, "Oppidum quod a monte Bethuliæ milliario uno in terra campestri positum, utrinque montibus cingitur." (Theatr. Terræ Sanctæ, p. 139.) The writer of Itinerarium Scripturæ, p. 321. places Dothaim four miles from Bethulia, and at the like distance from the sea of Galilee. (See also Well's Geography of the Old Testament, vol. iii. p. 197.)

And in length from Bethulia unto Cyamon, which is over against Esdraelom.] Ἕως Κυάμωνος. Grotius conjectures the true reading here to be, ἕως Χελμωνος, which is confirmed by the Vulgate rendering. Esdraelon was a great plain extending itself from the cities of Megiddo and Aphec, to the sea of Gennesareth or Galilee. The camp of Holofernes was so great, that it took up all this plain, which contained sixteen miles in length. (See Itiner. Sac. Script. p. 320.)

Ver. 4. *Now the children of Israel, when they saw the multitude of them, were greatly troubled,* &c.] It may very pertinently be asked, why the Bethulians durst venture to oppose Nabuchodonosor. The truth is, that king was resolved not only to subdue the several nations from the Euphrates to Ethiopia, but intended likewise to oblige them to acknowledge him only to be God; (vi. 2.) and therefore the Bethulians, who could not without impiety and a renunciation of their religion, submit to the dominion of such a king, had good reason to hope for success against a prince who had declared himself an enemy to the God of heaven.

Ver. 5. *When they had kindled fires upon their towers, they remained and watched all that night.*] This signal was set up on the mountains, on the tops of which they made great fires. There were also large trees planted on purpose to spread and display some ensign or colour, that they might be seen at a great distance. Centinels also, or watchmen, were generally placed in towers and on the tops of mountains, to sound the trumpet, or make some signal at the top of a pole at the approach of the enemy, to give notice to the people to run to their arms. See Isa. xviii. 3. xxx. 17. Jer. vi. 1. where the prophet says, *Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-haccerem, for evil appeareth out of the north.*

Ver. 12. *Let thy servants get into their hands the fountain of water which issueth forth of the foot of the mountain.* Ver. 13. *For all the inhabitants of Bethulia have their water thence.*] The Idumeans, or children of Esau, as they are called, ver. 8. may be considered as brethren of the Jews, being descended from Esau the brother of Jacob; it may therefore seem not only very surprising but unnatural, that they should, by giving such pernicious counsel to Holofernes, betray the Israelites to the Assyrians, instead of protecting them as relations, and speaking, as Achior their chief did, in their behalf and favour. It should seem by this instance, as if they inherited Esau's spleen against his brother: but however to guard against censure, and to remain undistinguished and undiscovered, they chose to pass under the title of Ammonites. (See note on v. 5.) One may observe from hence, say Messieurs of Port-Royal, that false brethren, such as these proved to the Jews, are more to be feared than open and declared enemies, and that treachery is often more dangerous than force. As it does not seem probable that all the inhabitants of Bethulia should fetch their water at such a distance, or that this fountain at the foot of the hill should be sufficient for the general use of the city; and as neither the fountains mentioned ver. 7. could afford a competent supply, much less could their waters be conveyed up in any large quantity the steep sides of the hill, whose height is represented here to be very great; we must necessarily suppose cisterns for rain water likewise within the city; or probably they might be assisted also by some springs, as many high mountains are known to have, all of which were either rendered useless by the enemy, or at last failed through the length of the siege. The Vulgate supposes the city to have been supplied by an aqueduct, which to a place otherwise situated than Bethulia was, would have been a great convenience; but was it possible in so lofty a site to have received any advantage from thence, except water should have forgot its own nature, and move upwards?

Ver. 18. *Then the children of Esau went up with the children of Ammon, and camped in the hill country.*] The Idumeans, being the posterity of Esau, bare an ancient grudge against the Jews, upon account of their ancestor's losing his right of primogeniture, and the subduing of Edom by David afterward. (2 Sam. viii. 14.) Upon both these accounts they took hold of all opportunities of venting their spite towards the Jewish nation; particularly see 2 Chron. xxviii. 17. For this their behaviour, they were often reproved by the prophets. (See Ezek. xxv. 12. xxxv. 5.) The ill-will that they bore them, not only appeared by the mischievous advice given by them, ver. 10—12. but by their being amongst the foremost, and particularly instanced in here as such, to encamp against them in the hill country. But the spite that they shewed towards them was most remarkable at the time of their captivity, as appears by those pathetical words of Psal. cxxxvii. 7. *Remember the children of Edom, O Lord, in the day of Jerusalem; how they said, Down with it, down with it, even to the ground.* The Ammonites too, though related likewise in blood to the Jews, yet bore a constant hatred towards them, which they took all opportunities to shew when the Jews were under any distress, for which they are also often reproved severely by the prophets, and threatened with judgments. (See Ezek. xxi. 28. xxv. 2. 6. Zeph. ii. 8. 10.)

Ver. 20. *Thus all the company of Assur remained about*

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them four-and-thirty days.] The Vulgate has, *Cumque ista custodia per dies viginti fuisset expleta, defecerunt cisternæ:* making the time to be only twenty days. Another more ancient Latin version has, *diebus viginti et quatuor.* The Syriac makes the siege to last two months and four days.

Ver. 26. *Now therefore call them unto you, and deliver the whole city for a spoil to the people of Holofernes, and to all his army.*] Polybius mentions many cities, otherwise well provided for a siege, that were obliged to surrender, by being deprived of a supply of water; and adds, that when matters come to that extremity, that the people are necessitated to be stinted, and to have it delivered out in very small quantity, the anxiety is the greater, as the appetite generally craves most what is not allowed, or cannot be come at. (Lib. vii. cap. 5.)

Ver. 27. *For it is better for us to be made a spoil unto them, than to die for thirst; for we will be his servants, that our souls may live, and not see the death of our infants before our eyes.*] Josephus observes of the Arabians, that being in a miserable distress for want of water, four thousand of them came out to Herod, and offered themselves to captivity and chains, to avoid the more insupportable calamity of a raging drought; and that the rest made a sally by consent, and attacked the besiegers, in which encounter seven thousand fell, choosing rather a present certainty of death, than to expose themselves to the lingering torment of it, for want of water. (Antiq. lib. xv. cap. 8.) But how sad would have been the condition of Bethulia, and indeed of all Judea, if Ozias and the chief of the city had listened to the clamour of the people, and through impatience of thirst had surrendered themselves! In what misery would they have been involved, and what an opportunity of victory and triumph would they have lost! Lysimachus, king of Macedonia, was sensible of this too late, who, being choked with thirst in Thrace, surrendered with his whole army to the enemy, and when plentifully refreshed with water so much longed for, cried out, *For what a small satisfaction and pleasure have I, from the state of a king reduced myself to be a slave!*

Ver. 28. *We take to witness against you the heavens and the earth, and our God, and Lord of our fathers, which punishes us according to our sins, and the sins of our fathers, that he do not according as we have said this day.*] Μαρτυρόμεθα ὑμῖν τὴν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν, καὶ τὸν Θεὸν ἡμῶν, καὶ Κύριον τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν, ὃς ἐκδικεῖ ἡμᾶς κατὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, καὶ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν, ἵνα μὴ ποιήσῃ κατὰ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ σήμερον. The latter part of this verse is obscure, and the several versions and expositors understand it differently. Coverdale, following the Vulgate, has, *We take heaven and earth this day to record, and the God of our fathers (which punishes us according to the deserving of our sins), and give you warning that ye give up the city now into the power of Holofernes' host, that our end may be short with the sword, which else shall endure long for want of water, and for thirst.* The Geneva Bible, *We take to witness against you the heaven and the earth, and our God, and Lord of our fathers, which punishes us according to our sins, and the sins of our fathers, that he lay not these things to our charge.* The Syriac, *Contestamurque adversus vos cœlum et terram, Dominumque Deum patrum nostrorum, qui vindictam exigit de nobis secundum ea quæ dicta sunt hodierno die.* Junius renders, *Videte ut non faciat quemadmodum diximus hodierno die.* To which agree Grotius and Badwell, who suppose an ellipsis here, as Gen. iii. 22. xxxviii. 11. xlii. 4. Matt. xxv. 9. and make the sense to be, *See that the calamity which we have mentioned, and warned you against, of seeing our wives and children perish before our eyes, come not upon us.* Or, understanding it of Holofernes, as the margin does, *See that he bring not upon us the evils which we have solemnly forewarned you of this day.* Calmet has, *We conjure you before heaven and earth, and the God of our fathers, that evil befal us not this day, the evil of seeing our wives and children die before our faces.* And the Port-Royal comment, *We call heaven and earth to witness the earnest supplication we made to deliver up the city to Holofernes, and to die instantly by the sword, rather than by thirst to undergo a lingering death.*

Ver. 29. *Then there was great weeping with one consent in the midst of the assembly, and they cried unto the Lord God with a loud voice.*] There seems to be a sort of contradiction here with respect to the context, at least there is in the Vulgate: ver. 24. 26, 27. they murmur against Ozias, and charge him with the evils they suffered, and beg importunately, that the city may be delivered for a spoil to the people of Holofernes, and that they may be his servants; and ver. 28. they call God to witness the sincerity of their desire: here they cried unto him in the words of the Vulgate, *Miserere nostri, et noli tradere confitentes te populo, qui ignorat te, ut non dicant inter gentes, Ubi est Deus eorum?* This irresolution and sudden change of sentiments will best be accounted for, probably, from their fear, which at different times suggested different means and motives of acting to them: at one time the thirst they laboured under induced them to wish and pray importunately, that they might live as captives among the Assyrians; at another time the reflection on Holofernes's cruelty, and a strong presumption that he would use them worse for daring to resist his power, threw them into despair, and, changing their minds on a sudden, they requested that they might fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of men.

Ver. 30. *Then said Ozias to them, Brethren, be of good courage, let us yet endure five days, in the which space the Lord our God may turn his mercy towards us.*] See note on viii. 12. Sulpitius Severus makes the time fixed for the surrender to be fifteen days, "Quinto decimo die deditionis tempus constituit:" (Sacr. Hist. lib. ii. xxiv.) but this probably is a mistake; the true reading of the place seems to be, as Drusius conjectures, "Quinto demum die deditionis tempus constituit." We meet with a like instance, 1 Sam. ii. 3. where, upon the threats of Nanash, king of the children of Ammon, or, as others suppose, the captain of his host, the elders of Jabesh Gilead desire a respite of seven days, to send messengers into all the coasts of Israel, and promise to surrender themselves, if in that time none came effectually to their help and relief. And the event answered accordingly; for, as the text there says, *the Spirit of the Lord stirred up Saul* to come to their assistance within the expected time, and they proved victorious.

Ver. 32.] This verse is entirely omitted by the Vulgate, but is retained in the other versions.

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CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW at that time Judith heard thereof, which was the daughter of Merari the son of Oz, the son of Joseph, the son of Oziel,* &c.] The versions differ greatly in the names of the fifteen descents here mentioned; the Syriac and Greek particularly from the Vulgate. One reason of this difference perhaps may be, that the same person is here called by two different names, one of which is mentioned in the Greek, the other in the Latin versions: or the confusion which is observable in the genealogy, may probably come from hence, that the copyists have put all the proper names, which were in different verses, into one; and by that means have intermixed and confounded the relations of Judith, with those of her husband Manasses. What seems to confirm this strongly is, that the genealogy of Manasses, which Fulgentius gives separately, and in a more concise manner, (Epist. 2. ad Gall.) is ranked under, and connected with, that of Merari, the father of Judith, in the Greek and Syriac copies.

Ver. 2. *And Manasses was her husband, of her tribe and kindred.*] *i. e.* Of the tribe of Simeon, as Judith was. (See ix. 2.) The Vulgate omits this particular, perhaps as a known and customary thing: thus Anna and Tobias were of the same tribe and kindred: (see Tob. iii. 15. 17. vi. 12.) and Joseph and Mary were both of the house and lineage of David, and as such were espoused.

Ver. 3. *As he stood overseeing them that bound sheaves in the field, the heat came on his head, and he died.*] Manasses seems not only to have had the care of his own business and concerns abroad, but to have been an overseer by public appointment, and to have had the inspection and ordering the whole number of reapers, in that wide and large field adjoining to Bethulia. That there was among the Jews such a post or employment for public use, Josephus testifies, who mentions that such a charge of the fields, and of the labourers there employed, was committed to Æbutius. The being exposed to the scorching heat of the sun in an open plain, in the middle of the day, has often proved dangerous, and occasioned faintness, and sometimes mortal diseases: "Meridie ipso faciam ut stipulam colligat; tam excoctum reddam atque atrum ut carbo est," is mentioned as a punishment by Terence, Adelph. act. v. sc. 3. And Victor Uticensis speaks of it as a thing dangerous as well as irksome, "sub ardentis solis incendio cespites messium desecare." The writer of the Geoponics has the same observation, τῶν ἐν τῷ ἡλίῳ ἐργαζομένων ἥλιος βλάπτει τὰ σώματα καὶ τὰς φλεβάς. It appears from the instance mentioned 2 Kings iv. 18. 20. which resembles this, that persons of note in ancient times (for the quality of his wife shews him to be no mean person, which also may be observed of Judith) looked after their corn, and oversaw their labourers; and sometimes for their health, and the increase of their estates, laboured with their own hands. (See Jonah iv. 8. Matt. xx. 12.) This and the five following verses should be put, as Junius places them, in a parenthesis.

And they buried him with his fathers in the field between Dothaim and Balamo.] The Vulgate says expressly, that he died and was buried in Bethulia, his own city, the place of his nativity, *Mortuus est in Bethulia civitate sua, et sepultus est illic cum patribus suis;* with which agrees the old Italic version. Calmet contends that this is the truth, as no reason can be assigned why Manasses should be interred so far from his own tribe, and from the city of Bethulia, as the other opinion supposes: and should we even place Bethulia in the tribe of Zebulun, Dothaim would be at least thirty miles from it.

Ver. 4. *Judith was a widow in her house three years and four months.*] The Syriac reads in like manner; but Archbishop Usher makes the time to be three years and six months, ad A. M. 3348. in which year he places the death of Holofernes. The Vulgate makes this quite clear, which has, *Erat autem Judith relicta ejus vidua jam annis tribus, et mensibus sex;* i. e. Judith had now been a widow so long before this great enterprise happened; for it cannot mean that three years and a half was the whole time of her widowhood, because she lived to be very aged, and never married after the death of her husband Manasses.

Ver. 5. *She made her a tent upon the top of her house.*] The Vulgate seems to understand this of a chamber in the upper part of the house, *in superioribus domus suæ fecit sibi secretum cubiculum, in quo cum puellis suis clausa morabatur.* The Jews that lived at a distance from Jerusalem, generally either went up into an upper chamber to pray, with the windows opened towards the temple, as is expressly mentioned of Daniel, (vi. 10.) and of the apostles when assembled together, (Acts i. 13.) and of Sara, Raguel's daughter; (Tob. iii. 17.) or, when they were out of Judea, or Jerusalem, and so could not go up to the temple at the hours of prayer, went up to the house-top, or roof of the house, as is recorded of St. Peter, (Acts x. 9.) for the sake of privacy, and to be freer from noise and distraction, turning themselves towards that part which looked towards Jerusalem, according to Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, 1 Kings viii. 29, 30. 35. 38.

Ver. 6. *She fasted all the days of her widowhood.*] A great instance this of her pious disposition, and of the tender regard which she had for the memory of her deceased husband. This great strictness and severity of life and manners, customary among the Jewish women, passed afterward into the church. We read of Anna the prophetess, a widow of fourscore and four years old, that she *never departed from the temple, but served God with prayer and fasting, night and day.* (Luke ii. 37, 38.) St. Paul gives the like description of a truly devout widow, *She that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplication and prayers night and day; but she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.* (1 Tim. v. 5, 6.)

Save the eves of the sabbaths, and the sabbaths, and the eves of the new moons, and the new moons, and the feasts, and solemn days of the house of Israel.] It is agreed on all hands, that it was the custom of all the Israelites who feared God, to observe the sabbaths and the new moons, among the feasts of the house of Israel; and they seem carefully to have observed their solemn feasts in their worst as well as in their best state, from the earliest to their latest times: (see 1 Sam. xx. 5. 1 Chron. xxiii. 31. 2 Chron. ii. 4. viii. 13. xxxi. 3. Isa. i. 13. lxvi. 23. Ezek. xlvi. 1. Hos. ii. 11. Amos viii. 5.) and these Ezra took care to revive at the return from the captivity. But when the regard here mentioned to be paid to the eves of the sabbaths and new moons first began, and on what occasion, and whether in use so early as the days of

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Judith, is much controverted. It is certain the custom was very ancient, but according to the Talmudists was not in force in the time of Judith, but afterward in use among the Jews in their dispersions. Various reasons are assigned for the origin of this practice; Grotius thinks that the eves were thus respected, as a sort of fence to the law, which forbade fasting on any part of a festival, and that this was done by way of caution, that there might be no remains of a preceding sorrow on the day of the festival; for the eve before any festival was esteemed part of that festival: from whence the same custom was derived afterward into the Christian church; and as the Jewish festivals were always kept from even to even, so the sabbath began on the Friday evening. (See Lev. xxiii. 32. Isa. xxx. 29.) And the feast of the Passover, it is well known, was always kept in the evening, and concluded with hymns. (See Matt. xxvi. 30.) Cunæus carries the matter farther, That fasting was not only forbid on the sabbath and its eve, but even on the day following the sabbath, that the joy of that solemnity might not be disturbed, nor lessened by any sorrow or humiliation, either preceding or subsequent. (De Rep. Heb. lib. ii. cap. 10.) Others imagine that the reason of this was, the almost impossibility of keeping a fast that day, being the day of the preparation, so called by the sacred writers, because on it they were obliged to make provision of victuals for the sabbath, and could not well avoid tasting of what they were so preparing. (Schickard de Purim.) With respect to the new moon in particular, and the not fasting on its eve, it probably began when the Jews appointed two feasts the beginning of each month, for fear of being wanting in any respect or particular which the law required; as to guard also against any inconvenience, from the uncertainty of the precise time when the new moon appeared. Calmet is inclined to think, that what is mentioned of the eves of the sabbaths, and of the new moons, is an addition, as no notice is taken of them either in the Syriac or Jerome's version, and that the practice referred to is probably later than the days of Judith: that the Greek translator inserted the clause in that version, as being the custom of the Jews at that time when it was made, and in the parts where he lived, though it might not be in the original from whence he translated.

Ver. 7. *She was also of a goodly countenance, and very beautiful to behold.*] This may be concluded from the power which she appears to have had over Holofernes, and his being captivated at first sight; a conquest not to be wondered at, especially if she was not older at that time than twenty-five years, as Prideaux conjectures: but supposing her forty-five, or more, the expression is as justifiable as that Gen. xii. 11. where Sarah, who was then sixty years old, is said by Abraham to be γυνὴ εὐπρόσωπος: this particular, as well as her being rich, is here added, lest any should think that she embraced the strict manner of life here described, rather out of necessity than choice. But in one so accomplished, severity and retirement are not a little to be admired, and in proportion as her beauty was amiable, her humility to decline appearing in public view, was the more exemplary and meritorious; particularly her wearing sackcloth, and using such austerities in dress and appearance, as naturally contributed to disfigure and lessen the agreeableness of her person, which the generality of the sex take such pains to improve by studied ornaments, shews her to have been devoid of affectation and vanity. For continual fasting in the midst of affluence and abundance, save on the eves of certain festivals, and particularly her choosing to continue in a state of widowhood, though she had many offers and temptations to change her condition, (see xvi. 22.) are not less worthy of admiration and notice. In fine, a virtue so perfect received a new and additional lustre, as appearing among a people sensual and carnal, who regarded pleasures, riches, and marriage, as substantial parts of happiness. Fulgentius proposes her as the most perfect pattern of widowhood, and gives the following fine character and eulogium of her, which comprises all the excellences abovementioned, "Ecce vidua præclara natalibus, facultatibus dives, ætate juvenis, specie mirabilis, divitias contempsit, delicias respuit, carnis incentiva calcavit, et induta virtute ex alto, non quæsivit secundo famulari connubio." (De statu viduali, Epist. 2. see also Hieron. Epist. 10. tom. i. p. 96.)

Ver. 8. *And there was none that gave her an ill word, for she feared God greatly.*] The character which the historian gives Judith here is a very high commendation, says St. Jerome, considering how tender and delicate a thing the reputation of a young and beautiful widow is; who elegantly expresses his remark upon it in the following words; "Tenera res in fœminis fama pudicitiæ, et, quasi flos pulcherrimus, cito ad levem marcescit auram, levique flatu corrumpitur; maxime ubi ætas consentit ad vitium, et maritalis deest autoritas, cujus umbra tutamen uxoris est." (Ad Salv.) And from the character here given by the author of this history of his heroine's piety, there is the less reason to credit the objections raised by some against her religion and modesty, from particular passages in it misunderstood, which we shall consider in their order, and reconcile with a just sense of both. The Abbot de la Chambre, in a funeral oration on one of the queens of France, took these words for his text, and observes upon them, "That they are perhaps the finest commendation that ever was given to woman; for though there may be some women, who, notwithstanding the prodigious detraction that has prevailed so long in the world, have yet escaped the attacks of it, yet this good fortune rarely happens to those who have otherwise a shining reputation, and who are, as the text says, *famosissimæ*." So that we may challenge all the Greeks and Romans to shew us a passage in their books that in so few words gives us so great an idea as these do of the heroine Judith, who reached the highest pitch of glory and renown, and which is aptest to alarm and raise the envy of the world; yet her virtue and merits were so engaging and powerful, so guarded with discretion, and so incomparably amiable, as to silence and strike mute that restless and implacable passion. And what is farther to be admired in our author here is, that he has so happily and justly pointed out the true cause of her matchless virtue, and the universal admiration it met with: "She had (says he) a great reputation in all things, and was secure from every evil tongue, because she was sensibly touched with the fear of the Lord." (See Bayle's Dict. in voce Judith, note *d*.)

Ver. 10. *She sent her waiting-woman that had the government of all things that she had, to call Ozias, and Chabris, and Charmis, the ancients of the city; and they came unto her.*] By the *ancients of the city*, we are not to understand the oldest people in it, nor yet the priests, though the Vul-

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gate has here *presbyteros*, but certain officers or magistrates so called. And though Joacim the high-priest is joined, xv. 8. with the ancients of the city, and is said in the Vulgate to come to Bethulia, *cum universis presbyteris suis ut videret Judith*, yet the Greek expresses it by ἡ γερουσία τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ, i. e. *the senate, or ruling elders of the people*. Estius observes, that there is no one place in all the books of the Old Testament where the word *presbyter* is taken in the sense of *sacerdos*, however it may be used in the New. And by the *two ancients of the people*, (Sus. 5.) that are said to attempt Susanna's chastity, we are neither to understand priests nor persons stricken in years, but stated judges, as is plain from the text itself. It may seem perhaps assuming in Judith to send to these ancients or magistrates to come to her, instead of going to them herself in person: but this ought not to be ascribed to any motive or principle of pride, as if from an affected superiority she thought herself better or more considerable than they; such a carriage by no means agrees with one who, on many occasions, distinguished herself for her humility. It rather proceeded from her modesty and unwillingness to expose to public view her beauty, which she had industriously concealed, that she desired them to come to her, that she might impart to them a matter of great consequence.

Ver. 12. *And now who are you that have tempted God this day, and stand instead of God amongst the children of God?*] By limiting God to such a certain time as five days, or promising in his name help within that space; as if he could not help you, if he did not precisely do it at the time fixed by you, and his power then was shortened; contrary to that fine and just sentiment, ver. 15. Judith's reproof on this occasion was very just; for the fixing thus a time to the Almighty, besides the assuming a prerogative that did not belong to them, shewed a great diffidence in them; it was declaring they would no longer depend upon him, if he did not answer their expectation in the time limited. As true religion consists in just and worthy notions of God, in a modest and humble trust in him, submitting entirely in all events and exigencies to his pleasure, leaving the time and manner of deliverance to God's own method and determination; so to act otherwise is tempting God. To *tempt God*, in Scripture language, signifies to distrust his power, truth, or providence, after sufficient demonstrations and reasons given for encouragement to depend upon them. (See Isa. vii. 12. 1 Cor. x. 9. 13.) These people, therefore, who had received so many proofs of the Divine protection upon different occasions, betrayed a great want of faith, in fixing a limited time for his interposition and assistance; as if his wisdom and providence ought not to choose when and in what manner he would favour and relieve them. But such is the impatience and conceitedness of men, as to presume to fix the times and seasons which God has particularly reserved the disposal of to himself, and keeps in his own power.

Ver. 13. *And now try the Lord Almighty, but you shall never know any thing.*] *i. e.* Try if you can find out in this, or in any other matter of consequence, what the mind of the Lord is; the result of the inquiry will be, that you cannot do it to any certainty or perfection. The Geneva version has, *So now you seek the Lord Almighty, but you shall never know any thing; i. e.* You would penetrate into the secret designs and counsels of God, of which nobody could ever fathom the depth. See Wisd. ix. 13—17. where the like sentiment is expressed more at large. Holy Job, describing the unsearchableness of God's wisdom, says, *Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict. Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart,* (xxxvii. 23, 24.) It may not be improper incidentally to observe, that the last clause here is inaccurate in our version; it seems a reflection on the Almighty, as if he neglected or had no regard to such as are well-disposed towards him; for that this is the meaning of the phrase, see Exod. xxviii. 3, &c. Job xi. 4. Prov. x. 8. xi. 29. The rendering of the LXX. is much clearer, φοβηθήσονται δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ οἱ σοφοὶ καρδίᾳ; but the Geneva version is most agreeable to the context, *Let men therefore fear him, for he will not regard any that are wise in their own conceit;* and Coverdale's is much to the same effect, *It is not we that can find out the Almighty; for in power, equity, and righteousness, he is higher than can be expressed; let men therefore fear him, for there shall no man see him, that is wise in his own conceit.*

Ver. 16. *Do not bind the counsels of the Lord our God; for God is not as man, that he may be threatened.*] *i. e.* Think not to tie down God to terms and conditions, to assist you when or in the manner ye please, as one obliges a debtor to pay in a certain fixed time, or to give security to satisfaction; for God is not a weak creature like man, to suffer himself to be insulted or intimidated by menaces. This verse is nearly the same with that Numb. xxiii. 19. especially if it be rightly translated, *God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent;* where our version is by no means accurate; the verb ἀπειλῆσθῆναι, the same that is here used, does not signify to *repent*, but to *threaten*. And in this sense the LXX. translate the Hebrew word, Gen. xxvii. 42. and so ἀπειλέομαι is rendered by the lexicographers, and not as signifying to *repent*. The verb εἰλέομαι, *vertor*, indeed, has such a sense, but not the compound ἀπειλέομαι. St. Cyprian, who quotes this place of Judith, accordingly renders, *Neque quasi filius hominis minas patitur.* (Testimon. cont. Judæos, lib. ii. cap. 20.)

Neither is he as the son of man, that he should be wavering.] Οὐδ' ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου διαιτηθῆναι. The reading of all the copies seems corrupt; the true one probably is, διαρτηθῆναι, which is followed by all the ancient fathers who quote this place; St. Cyprian particularly has, *Non quasi homo Deus suspenditur.* We are justified in this alteration by the parallel passage, Numb. xxiii. 19. where the verb used is διαρτηθῆναι, which the Greek scholiast renders σαλευθῆναι, *i. e.* to be shaken in his resolutions, or to be in doubt or suspense what to do. It no where signifies to *lie*, as our version in that place of Numbers has it. (See Origen and Theodoret in loc.) If we retain διαιτηθῆναι, I think it should be derived from αἰτέω, and the meaning be, *entreated; i. e.* God is not as a man that he may be threatened, neither as the son of man that he should be persuaded, entreated, won by solicitations, or teasing. The versions understand it as coming from δίαιτα. Vulgate, *Ad iracundiam inflammabitur.* (Vers. Lat. vet. ut judicetur.) Syriac, *Ut in ordinem redigatur;* but I cannot reconcile it with that derivation.

Ver. 18. *For there is neither tribe, nor family, nor people, nor city among us, which worship gods made with hands, as hath been aforetime.* Ver. 19. *For the which cause our*

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fathers were given to the sword, and for a spoil, and had a great fall among our enemies. Ver. 20. *But we know none other God, therefore we trust that he will not despise us, nor any of our nation.*] What Judith here urges, was an argument of real consolation to them in their present circumstances; *viz.* that if the many calamities their nation at different times had laboured under, as desolation, captivity, and the sword, &c. were owing to the then corrupt and idolatrous state of the people, they had great reason now to hope, that being free from that crime and abomination which was the occasion of their forefathers' miseries (for it was a common and confessed observation among them, that the sin of the golden calves had a share in all their punishments), they might rely upon his favour and protection, and should not therefore, through despair of assistance, deliver themselves up rashly to their enemies.

Ver. 21. *For if we be taken so, all Judea shall lie waste, and our sanctuary shall be spoiled, and he will require the profanation thereof at our mouth.*] Judith cunningly aggravates the fault which they had committed, in being so dispirited, and ready to deliver up their city, from a consideration of a more public nature; *viz.* that on the safety and preservation of the city of Bethulia depended even that of the holy city Jerusalem, and consequently of their temple and altar, and the right and regular performance of their whole religious service; as it was not allowable to offer sacrifice any where else but at the temple, it would, therefore, she insinuates, be an instance both of great weakness and rashness, to form a resolution to give up the city, if not relieved in five days; as it would be exposing at the same time their whole nation to the common danger, to defend which, and their most holy rites from being discontinued or profaned, they ought rather courageously to shed the very last drop of their blood, than to pursue such an unadvised measure, to the hazard of the common safety. There is a great variety in the Greek copies here; some have, ὅτι ἐν τῷ ληφθῆναι ἡμᾶς, οὕτως καυθήσεται πᾶσα ἡ Ἰουδαία. Others, οὔτε ἐν τῷ ληφθῆναι ἡμᾶς, οὕτως κληθήσεται, κ. τ. λ. To which agrees the Geneva version, which has, *Neither when we shall be taken, will Judea be so famous;* and in one we have καυθήσεται. Our translators seem to have followed a copy different from the rest, which placed the comma after οὕτως; as does Junius likewise, *Neque vero si deprehendamur ita, nominabitur Judea amplius.*

Ver. 23. *For our servitude shall not be directed to favour, but the Lord our God shall turn it to dishonour.*] The Geneva version has, *Our servitude shall not be directed by favour; i. e.* The slavery we shall bring upon ourselves will not procure us the more favour; that we shall not have the better treatment for our tameness in yielding, we may be assured from the example of other nations who have submitted. Junius seems to take it in this sense, when he renders, *Non enim reddetur servitus nostra gratiosa.—Nous ne pourrons leur plaire par toutes nos soumisions, Nous ne trouverons point graces à leurs yeux,* says Calmet, in loc.

Ver. 24. *Now, therefore, O brethren, let us shew an example to our brethren, because their hearts depend upon us.*] Ἐξ ἡμῶν κρέμαται ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτῶν. Though Judith knew the great consternation and fright in which the besieged were, and their disposition to surrender; yet she would not address herself personally to the body of the people, notwithstanding she might with good reason have expected to have raised their drooping spirits, and made them resolute by what she had to offer. But she chooses to apply herself only to the chief men of the city, to let them know and understand, that being the ancients and rulers of the people, and by consequence their life and soul, on whom they depended and placed all their hope; it was their duty, on so important a conjuncture, to animate them by their example, and to betray no signs of fear or despondency themselves, but rather to act like their great forefathers, who were *troubled on every side, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* For it has not only a bad aspect, but is generally attended with evil consequences, when those who are at the head of affairs appear themselves dispirited; and they are so much the more blamable herein, as by their pusillanimity they cast a damp and panic upon others, and probably will be thought to have contributed, through their discouragement, to any future miscarriage that may ensue. In like manner, as, when generals, who have the command of an army, and ought to animate and encourage the soldiers by their martial spirit and example, betray themselves signs of fear, and backwardness to engage; if afterward it happens that they are vanquished by the enemy, they are deservedly in disgrace with their prince, as being the real, the reputed occasion, at least, of the great loss sustained. A learned writer thinks the rendering here would be more proper, *Their hearts agree,* or *conspire with us,* according to the use of the verb in some parts of Scripture, as Luke xix. 48. (See Hammond, in loc.) But the former sense I think more agreeable to the context, especially if we read ἐξ ὑμῶν κρέμαται, as some copies have it, and is confirmed by the Vulgate rendering.

Ver. 25. *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God, which trieth us, even as he did our fathers.*] In this and the two following verses, there is an excellent advice given to all such as at any time labour under afflictions, and it consists of the following particulars: 1. That they are of such a nature, that instead of being uneasy under them, men should rather give God thanks for them. 2. That they are graciously designed, and rather kind admonitions, than any real tokens of God's displeasure. 3. That God's most faithful servants, the patriarchs and prophets, have been visited in the same manner, for the examination of their hearts, and the trial of their patience. To which the Vulgate adds a fourth reason, That murmuring provokes God to inflict heavier judgments, as he did on the Israelites of old in the wilderness on that account. The words of that version are very observable; *Illi autem qui tentationes non susceperunt cum timore Domini, et impatientiam suam, et improprium murmurationis suæ contra Dominum protulerunt, exterminati sunt ab exterminatore, et a serpentibus perierunt;* exactly agreeing with the very words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 9, 10.

Ver. 28. *Then said Ozias to her, All that thou hast spoken, hast thou spoken with a good heart, and there is none that may gainsay thy words.*] The inhabitants of Bethulia do not seem hitherto to have made the least effort to defend themselves, no blood spilt, no remedy attempted. Thirst pressed them sore, and yet they had not the courage to attempt the Assyrian guard, that had seized upon the fountains and reservoirs of water. It was not without rea-

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son, therefore, that Judith reproaches them with want of courage. Upon reviewing and comparing the very different conduct and behaviour of her, and the persons she speaks to, one sees the observation, that God chooses the things that are weak to confound the things that are mighty, remarkably verified. Judith, a defenceless widow, whilst the men around her quake for fear, and even the chiefs themselves give up all for lost, appears quite undaunted, and argues with so much coolness and constancy of mind, as well as strength of reasoning, as really to deserve the character Ozias here gives her. That one single woman should dare to venture on an act of such danger and boldness, and be so successful as to accomplish it, was owing at least to her great zeal for the safety of God's chosen people; or shall we ascribe it to a Divine impulse?

Ver. 33. *I will go forth with my waiting-woman.*] The word in the ancient translation is, *abra*, which signifies a companion or maid of honour (such as ladies of the first condition had) rather than a servant; for the same word in the LXX. is applied to the women who attended both Pharaoh's daughter, Exod. xi. 5. and queen Esther, iv. 4. Thus Calmet understands the word. In other writers it is certain it signifies merely a servant, a chambermaid, or housekeeper; and whether it is not to be taken in this latter acceptation, see ver. 10. compared with xvi. 23.

Within the days that you have promised to deliver the city to our enemies, the Lord will visit Israel by my hand.] Judith, ver. 11—17. blames Ozias and the rest of the governors, for presuming to limit the interposition of the Almighty, within the space of five days, and does she not seem to do the same here herself, engaging for his assistance within that precise time? Was this in compliance with them, and that she might encourage their hopes; or shall we charge her with rashness and enthusiasm for assuring them that she should be the happy instrument to accomplish their deliverance within the fixed time? or, with the Romanists, suppose that she had an assurance of the successful event of her intended enterprise, by some particular revelation? Without having recourse to this, it seems better to resolve Judith's engaging in so adventurous an exploit, into her strong confidence of God's favour and assistance against a usurper of that honour and adoration which belonged to him alone.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *UNCOVERED the sackcloth wherewith she was clothed.*] Ἐγύμνωσεν ὃν ἐνεδιδύσκετο σάκκον· *i. e.* She discovered the sackcloth she had upon her, by taking off some upper garment, which she probably put on occasionally, out of compliment to the elders that came to her. The Syriac makes her to tear her upper garment, *Scidit tunicam etiam, et apparuit saccus quo induta erat.* According to Calmet the sense is, *She resumed her sackcloth, which she had put off to receive the governors of the city.* Thus also Junius takes it, *Imposuit cilicium, positâ, quam induerat, veste;* and Grotius, who restores the Greek text, which he thinks corrupt, to this sense, and makes the true reading to be, καὶ γυμνωσαμένη ἐνεδιδύσκετο σάκκον. The Geneva version, which has, *She put off the sackcloth wherewith she was clothed,* seems faulty here, and not to be reconciled with the context, which mentions prostration, putting ashes on her head, and the like instances of humiliation, to recommend and enforce her suit more effectually to God.

Ver. 2. *O Lord God of my father Simeon, to whom thou gavest a sword to take vengeance of the strangers, who loosened the girdle of a maid to defile her.*] Judith here begs of God to inspire her with a zeal, like that of Simeon, who massacred the Sichemites, to punish the violation of his sister's honour, in order to take vengeance of the blasphemous Assyrians, and to deliver his people from their present sad state, and the imminent danger that threatened them. But does not the book of Genesis acquaint us, that this action of Simeon and Levi very much displeased Jacob their father, and that he condemned it as cruel and unjust? (See Gen. xlix. 5, 6. compared with xxxiv. 30.) How then can we excuse Judith for commending this fact of Simeon, whom Jacob cursed for the very barbarity of it? But in answer it may be said, that these words do not necessarily imply, that she applauded the fact, nor does the phrase of God's giving a sword to take vengeance, mean any thing more than his permitting an action to be done. As he may be said to put the like means of destruction into the hands of tyrants, whom he occasionally makes his scourges. The like may be said of other wicked persons, whom he sometimes permits in his anger to execute his justice upon a people, often not more abandoned and undeserving than themselves. (See Jer. xxv. 9.) And thus he is said to arm his creatures to avenge his honour, or to make the creature his weapon for the revenge of his enemies, Wisd. v. 17. (See also Joel ii. 25.) So that nothing can be concluded for the merit of the person, that is occasionally made the instrument of God's vengeance. Judith rather praises God for his justice, in revenging such an instance of brutal lust, though executed by the sword of cruel Simeon: she only commendeth the zeal or just indignation shewn on the occasion, but by no means justifies the cruel manner of revenging the affront. The resentment of such an injury was just; but the involving such a number of people in its punishment, was a criminal excess of zeal, and an instance of great barbarity.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore thou gavest their rulers to be slain, being deceived.*] The difference between the people of God and idolatrous nations, was visible in the point of lust and carnal uncleanness, from the first separation of them, as appears by the zeal of Simeon and Levi, here mentioned, for their sister dishonoured. The idolatrous nations, who were abandoned to the service of strange gods, as the Sichemites were, looked upon all uncleanness of this nature as a thing indifferent, and made no account of it, but in civil regards, as it dishonoured the house, or tainted the issue; being deceived or mistaken in considering it in this respect only; but the Israelites, being bred in the knowledge of the true God, and of the abomination, in which he hath all such acts of uncleanness, regarded them in a moral or religious view; and if they acted herein, as the idolaters, or seemed to countenance them in others, by overlooking them, thought they could no longer be taken for God's people. Hence Simeon and Levi proceeded probably to revenge the injury offered to their sister, considering it as an act, which God had forbidden, which his true servants abhorred, and was a pollution of the holiness of their blood, which distinguished them from idolaters. (See Thorndike, of the Laws of the Church, p. 62.) Calmet

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observes, that the description in these verses of this foul act, and its consequences, are described poetically, and that it is probable, that this writer had read the poets, as appears from xvi. 7.

Ver. 5. *For thou hast wrought not only those things, but also the things which fell out before, and which ensued after: thou hast thought upon the things which are now, and which are to come.*] The Geneva rendering here comes nearer the Greek *For thou hast wrought the things afore, and these, and the things that shall be after;* i. e. As thou wast the author of all the miracles done in our forefathers' days, so thou art no less of those that now come to pass, or shall hereafter. All events succeed one another by the ordering of thy wise providence, which has so disposed them according to thy eternal counsel. The last clause the Vulgate renders indeterminately, *Illa post illa cogitasti,* which seems to imply such a succession of thoughts in God, as is observable in the human mind; but I conceive the meaning there to be, that God executeth the things that are present at the same time in the Divine mind, at different successive times; or that all things done gradually in time, were at once and all together in his sight and knowledge.

Ver. 6. *Yea, what things thou didst determine were ready at hand, and said, Lo, we are here: for all thy ways are prepared, and thy judgments are in thy foreknowledge.*] The Geneva version is clearer, *For the things which thou dost purpose are present, and say, Behold, we are here: for all thy ways are ready, and thy judgments are foreknown; i. e.* Thy infinite prescience foresaw all things with their events, and what thou didst at any time determine to effect, must necessarily come to pass. For thou executest without any difficulty whatever thou pleasest; no obstacle lies in thy way, thy measures are never wrong, nor thy designs ever ill concerted; nor is it possible that they should be discovered, or disappointed by thine enemies, as the means that thou employest are sure and infallible. The mighty power of God in producing, as it were instantaneously, whatever his wisdom determines to have done, is beautifully described in the following words, *What things thou dost determine are ready at hand, and say, Lo, we are here.* (See Job xxxviii. 35.) The Syriac rendering of them is much to be admired, *Tu cogitasti, et facta sunt; consultasti, et steterunt coram te; vocasti, et dixerunt, Ecce hic sumus.* The observation in the latter part of the verse about the Divine prescience, is parallel to that, Acts xv. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* Seneca has almost literally expressed the same sentiment, "Nota est illis (*sc.* Diis) operis sui series: omnium illis rerum per manus suas iturarum scientia in aperto est; nobis ex abdito subit: et quæ repentina putamus, illis prævisa veniunt, ac familiaria." (De Benefic. iv. 32.)

Ver. 7. *For, behold, the Assyrians are multiplied in their power; they are exalted with horse and man; they glory in the strength of their footmen; they trust in shield and spear.*] Ἤλπισαν ἐν ἀσπίδι καὶ ἐν γαισῷ· *gæsum,* or *gæsus,* was a javelin used among the Gauls. (See Cæsar, de Bell. Gall. lib. iii.) And from them the Greeks and Romans borrowed the word. We meet with it in the LXX. Josh. viii. 18. which the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, reciting the same story, renders by ῥομφαία, or a *sword,* xlvi. 3. (See Hody, de Vers. Græc. auth. lib. ii.) But Symmachus and the Vulgate render it by a *shield.* This verse seems not well connected with the foregoing; the Vulgate expresses it clearer, and illustrates it by the example of the Egyptians, whom God destroyed for their self-sufficiency and presumption, *Respice castra Assyriorum nunc, sicut tunc castra Ægyptiorum videre dignatus es, quando post servos tuos armati currebant, confidentes in quadrigis, et in equitatu suo, et in multitudine bellatorum; sed aspexisti super castra eorum, et tenebræ fatigaverunt eos. Tenuit pedes eorum abyssus, et aquæ operuerunt eos. Sic fiant et isti, qui confidunt in multitudine sua,* &c.

Ver. 10. *Smite by the deceit of my lips the servant with the prince, and the prince with the servant.*] *i. e.* Prosper the stratagem which I have laid, to lead the enemy into a mistake by my words, and inflame their general with such a fond love of me as may prove a snare to deceive and ruin him. But how could Judith entertain any hopes of success from such a request? Can we suppose, consistently, that God would approve of either of these ways? Can the God of truth patronize falsehood, or the most pure Being favour any attempt towards impure lust? To this it is answered, on the other hand, that the reading of some Greek copies is, πάταξον ἐκ χειλέων ἀγάπης μου, and not ἀπάτης, as our version has it; and so the Vulgate expressly renders, *Capiatur laqueo oculorum suorum in me, et percuties eum ex labiis caritatis meæ.* Secondly, That it was the opinion of those times, that, in a lawful war, surprise, stratagem, deceit, and craft, were fair and allowable; that one might disguise, dissemble, counterfeit, and use all possible means to conceal a design, which the enemy has no right to know; and that if, through misrepresentation or equivocation, he be led into any mistake prejudicial to his safety or interest, there is no just ground of complaint, according to that old maxim, "Dolus, an virtus, quis in hoste requirat?" Thus Jael prevailed, by the deceit of her lips, against Sisera, Judg. iv. 18. 21. And Grotius thinks the men of Jabesh-Gilead used the like deceit towards the Ammonites, 1 Sam. xi. 10. And thus Elisha deluded the Syrians, 2 Kings vi. 18, 19. (See Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 1. sect. 17.) But however some casuists may gloss over mental evasions, equivocations, untruths, and officious lies, as they term them, yet the case is widely different, when one forges express lies, with a direct intention to betray men into wrong measures, and evil counsels, to their ruin; especially when religion is made an accomplice in the cheat, when it is pretended that what is spoken is by inspiration of God, and from a zeal for his religion and glory; (see xi. 16, 17. 19.) when studied arts and allurements are made use of to stir up impure love, and kindle an unlawful flame, and thereby to destroy the soul as well as the body; than which complicated mischief, nothing can be more cruel or more contrary to the law of God. It is well known in what an exemplary manner God treated the Midianites, for following the evil counsel of Balaam, to send their daughters into the camp of the children of Israel; what vengeance he took of the false prophet that gave that ensnaring advice, and of the Midianites that followed it, and of the Israelites that were seduced and corrupted thereby. (Numb. xxxi. 16.) "For these, and the like reasons (says Calmet), we cannot approve, in all respects, either the prayer or action of Judith; we com-

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mend her good intentions, and think that the uprightness of her designs and her ignorance abate much of the crime: we neither blame her for concealing her purpose, nor for leading Holofernes into a mistake, nor even for the murder of him; for all this is just and allowable in a lawful war. Yet will not this suffice entirely to excuse her; a lie, told with so much solemnity, and carried on through her whole conversation with Holofernes, is still indefensible. The employing her beauty, and all her little winning arts, to inflame his passion, and thereby exposing her person to a rude attack, is a step likewise not to be justified."

Ver. 11. *For thy power standeth not in the multitude, nor thy might in strong men.*] It was a firm persuasion of this truth, that induced Jonathan, and his armour-bearer only, to attempt the Philistines' garrison; *It may be that the Lord will work for us, for there is no restraint to the Lord, to save by many or by few.* (1 Sam. xiv. 6.) By the same, Gideon, with his three hundred men, prevailed over the Midianites. (Judg. vii. 7.) This also encouraged king Asa, when Zerah the Ethiopian came out against him with a thousand thousand; he comforts himself with this reflection, *Lord, it is nothing with thee to help with many, or with them that have no power: we rest on thee, O Lord, and in thy name we go against this multitude.* (2 Chron. xiv. 11.) Not unlike this is Judas Maccabeus's observation to his soldiers, who, seeing a mighty host of the ungodly coming against them, discouraged at the sight, said to him, *How shall we be able, being so few, to fight against so great a multitude, and so strong?* whom that great and good leader piously comforts, *It is no hard matter for many to be shut up in the hands of a few; and with the God of heaven it is all one, to deliver with a great multitude, or a small company. For the victory of battle standeth not in the multitude of a host, but strength cometh from Heaven.* (1 Macc. iii. 17—19.) Artabanus's speech to Xerxes, who had a much larger army with him in his expedition against Greece, surprises us, as coming from a heathen, "Ingens exercitus ab exiguo profligatur, quoties Deus iis, quos detestatur, aut metum, aut tonitru incutit."

Ver. 13. *And make my speech and deceit to be their wound and stripe.*] *i. e.* Make the deceit of my speech to be their ruin, ἐν διὰ δυοῖν, not unlike that of St. Paul, Col. ii. 8. *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit; i. e.* through the vain deceit of philosophy, or through the deceit of vain philosophy. Our version follows a copy which read, δὸς λόγον μου καὶ ἀπάτην εἰς τραῦμα, κ. τ. λ. and so the Alexandrian MS. has it. Other copies have, δὸς λόγον μου, καὶ ἀπάτην καὶ τραῦμα, καὶ μώλωπα αὐτοῖς, *i. e.* make my speech to be a snare and hurt to them. In this sense Junius takes it, *Præsta ut sermo meus sit fraudi, et vulneri, et cicatrici istis.* The Geneva version affords another, but more obscure sense; *i. e. Grant me words, and craft, and a wound, and a stroke, against them that enterprise cruel things against thy covenant.*

Ver. 14. *And make every nation and tribe to acknowledge that thou art the God of all power and might,* &c.] It seems as if the former part of this verse had suffered much by transcribers, as the reading of the Greek is so different in the several editions. Some copies have, καὶ ποίησον ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ ἔθνός σου, καὶ πάσης φυλῆς ἐπίγνωσιν, τοῦ εἰδῆσαι, κ. τ. λ. Others, ποίησον ἐπὶ παντὸς ἔθνους σου, καὶ πάσης δυνάμεως καὶ κράτους, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος, κ. τ. λ. The Alexandrian MS. seems to retain the true reading, ποίησον ἐπὶ παντὸς ἔθνους σου, καὶ πάσης φυλῆς ἐπίγνωσιν, τοῦ εἰδῆσαι ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Θεὸς, Θεὸς πάσης δυνάμεως καὶ κράτους, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος, κ. τ. λ. To which agrees the Syriac, *Fac toti populo tuo, et omnibus familiis, ut sciant te esse Deum omnis potentiæ et dominii, nec esse alium qui protegat Israel, præter te:* and the Geneva version, *Shew evidently among all thy people, and all the tribes, that thou art the God of all power and strength,* &c. The sense, I conceive, will be somewhat improved, and the wish more extensive and affectionate, if, by a small transposition, we read the passage thus, ποίησον ἐπὶ παντὸς ἔθνους καὶ πάσης φυλῆς σου ἐπίγνωσιν, κ. τ. λ. which Junius greatly confirms, *Affer in omni gente notitiam tui, et totius potentiæ tuæ,* &c.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 3. *WASHED her body all over with water.*] The Jews first washed, and then anointed themselves with precious oil. So Naomi to Ruth, *Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thyself,* (iii. 3.) So David, after the death of his child, rose up and washed, and anointed himself. (2 Sam. xii. 20.) The like is mentioned of Nausicae, and her maids,

Αἱ δὲ, λοεσσάμεναι, καὶ χρισσάμεναι λίπ' ἐλαίῳ,
Δεῖπνον ἔπειθ' εἵλοντο. (Οδ. vi.)

And anointed herself with precious ointment.] This refers to the Jewish custom of anointing the head, more particularly on festivals and other solemnities. Instances of this in profane story are almost innumerable, in the description of their festivities: and that it was usual among the Jews, appears by many passages. Thus Psal. civ. 15. we have mention of oil, *to make a cheerful countenance.* And in this sense learned men understand the *oil of gladness,* Psal. xlv. 8. as referring to the oil used on festivals, which is expressly called gladness or *joy,* 1 Chron. xii. 40. But that passage in Eccles. ix. 8. comes nearest to what is here mentioned, *Let thy garments be white, and thy head want no ointment.* (See also Luke vi. 17.) On the other hand, upon days of humiliation and mourning, and particularly on the great day of expiation, the Jews were interdicted both washing and anointing. (2 Sam. xiv. 2. Dan. x. 3.) Though Judith is described in this and the following verse, with braided hair, and with a rich mitre or bonnet tied round her head with ribbons finely embroidered, and with other decorations and ornaments, yet are these no certain signs or tokens of a loose turn of mind, or of wanton inclinations; though Jezebel indeed is described with some of them, 2 Kings ix. 30. but her character is the very reverse of this heroine: they are such only, as were worn by the women of that age of condition and distinction, and were now only occasionally used to set off her person, for the better accomplishment of the great design in hand. What the Vulgate here adds, that God himself at this time gave her uncommon and irresistible beauty, to make her admired and amiable in the eyes of all beholders, has no foundation in any of the other ancient versions.

And put on her garments of gladness, wherewith she was glad during the life of Manasses her husband.] It may seem surprising, that Judith, who was so cautious of exposing her person to public view, and was so singularly strict in her dress, should, on a sudden, put on fine and

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gay apparel, to allure the eyes of all men that should see her: but this she did to ingratiate herself the more to Holofernes, to disarm his fury and resentment against her, as one of the Hebrews, and thereby to procure her a more favourable audience and admittance. Her putting on the very garments she wore in her husband's lifetime, was probably to remind her, that, being attired in these, it was incumbent on her to behave with as much distance and reserve as in her conjugal state, to prevent her yielding to any criminal solicitation, by the very sight of them; to be careful not to reflect any dishonour, through misconduct, on her husband's memory, but to revere his ashes, by preserving her chastity as a widow. This seems to be St. Ambrose's meaning, when, speaking of this particular, he says, "Et bene conjugales pugnatura resumpsit ornatus, quia monumenta conjugii arma sunt castitatis; neque enim vidua aliis aut placere possit, aut vincere." (De Vidnis.)

Ver. 5. *And filled a bag with parched corn, lumps of figs, and with fine bread.*] These are the principal food of the eastern nations; the constitution of their bodies and the nature of their clime inclining them to a more abstemious diet than is used in colder countries. And she took her own provisions with her, that she might not be obliged to partake of the victuals of the gentiles, which the law made her to regard as polluted and defiled, (xii. 2.) Ἄρτος καθαρὸς here means *unfermented bread, pure, and free from leaven.* Instead of which the Vulgate has, *panem et caseum;* and the Syriac renders in like manner.

Ver. 12. *I am a woman of the Hebrews, and am fled from them, for they shall be given you to be consumed.*] See xi. 15. It is to be observed in general of the speeches of Judith, that many expressions therein are spoken ironically, and many equivocally, or with a double meaning. Here she cunningly conceals the truth, when she says, that they *shall be given you to be consumed;* having some such mental reservation as this, *unless God extraordinarily interposes in their behalf,* which she seems to be well assured of. Others consider these words as spoken prophetically, as presaging some future captivity to the Jews, unless they repented. In this light the generality of expositors consider Judith's conduct, and endeavour to excuse her from any imputation of falsehood.

Ver. 13. *I am coming before Holofernes to declare words of truth.*] Which, indeed, she did with respect to herself, that she was a woman of the Hebrews, and had left or fled from them. (See xi. 12.) But supposing her to speak ambiguously, ironically, or even deceitfully, is she not excusable, if it be considered, that the war, which the children of Israel were engaged in at this time, was a just and necessary one; and that, in the judgment of most casuists, stratagem, dissimulation, and even deceit, in such circumstances, have been thought allowable? (See note on ix. 10.) But how shall we justify her, when she says, in the latter part of this verse, *I will shew him a way whereby he shall go, and win all the hill country, without losing the body or life of any one of his men?* She seems to have made her promise good in effect, when she acquainted Holofernes (xi. 12.) with the state of the besieged, that their victuals failed them, and their water was scant, and, therefore, were under a necessity of surrendering speedily. So that what she says about taking the hill country, without the loss of a man, was true, considered in this light, as there was no need of force, or the hazard of an action, where the famine was so pressing, though this indeed was not the whole of the business she came about, and her main and principal design she concealed in her own breast. Thus Samuel, when sent to anoint a king at Beth-lehem, instead of Saul, to prevent his killing him, gave out, by the order of God, that he came to sacrifice to the Lord: (1 Sam. xvi. 2.) the excuse was not only plausible, but the thing itself true; but still the chief part of his commission he kept to himself, *viz.* anointing David to be king. Herein Samuel and Judith were both alike, that they spoke the truth, but did not think it proper or safe to lay open their whole purpose.

Ver. 14. *Now when the men heard her words, and beheld her countenance, they wondered greatly at her beauty,* &c.] As the courage of Judith must be acknowledged great and uncommon, to venture into the Assyrian camp, accompanied only with her maid, so early as break of day, *circa ortum diei,* as the Vulgate has it, so it is equally to be wondered at, that the soldiers should offer no rudeness of any sort to her; but, on the contrary, for her safer conduct, should appoint her a guard of a hundred men, till she reached the general's tent. We must, I conceive, ascribe this unusual civility to some of the following causes; either to the majesty of her countenance, the splendour and eclat of her dress and appearance, which bespoke her a person of distinction; or to the importance of the dispatches which she said she brought with her; or, lastly, to the Divine protection. St. Ambrose makes the same reflection, "In qua fœmina insidiosæ pulchritudinis novitatem hostilis exercitus vehementer expavit, ut in ejus obsequio vires amitterent, arma projicerent, et colla curvarent. Deducitur ad prætorium subjectis ordinibus fraus Holofernis, et lugentis victoria civitatis." (Serm. 228.)

Ver. 19. *And every one said to his neighbour, Who would despise this people, that have among them such women?*] This remark of Holofernes's soldiers very much resembles, says Madame Dacier, that of the venerable old counsellors in the third book of the Iliad, who, though they had suffered all the calamities of a tedious war, and were consulting upon methods to put a conclusion to it, upon seeing Helen, the true and only cause of it, approaching towards them, are struck with her charms, and cry out,

> Οὐ νέμεσις, Τρῶας καὶ ἐϋκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς
> Τοιῇδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν·
> Αἰνῶς ἀθανάτῃσι θεῇς εἰς ὦπα ἔοικεν.

Which Mr. Pope has thus beautifully rendered,

> ——— *No wonder such celestial charms*
> *For nine long years have set the world in arms.*
> *What winning graces! what majestic mien!*
> *She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen!*

Ver. 21. *Now Holofernes rested upon his bed under a canopy, which was woven with pearls, and gold, and emeralds, and precious stones.*] This piece of state, more agreeable to the softness of an eastern monarch, however customary in times of peace, and suited to the indolence of the tender and delicate, was an indulgence not so much to be affected by a soldier. The business and hurry of a camp scarce admits or requires state, and therefore we conceive but meanly of Holofernes, and should of any other general,

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to see him at such a time extended on a sofa, or lying ingloriously under a magnificent pavilion, as if luxury and pleasure were chiefly regarded. Horace's observation, considered either as a reflection on Antony himself, or on the degeneracy of the old Roman spirit, by the introduction of effeminate softness, is very just and apposite,

" Romanus, eheu ! (posteri, negabitis)
Emancipatus feminæ
—spadonibus Servire rugosis potest:
Interque signa turpe militaria
Sol aspicit conopium." (Epod. Od. 9.)

Ver. 22. *And he came out before his tent, with silver lamps going before him.*] Either, because it was yet scarce daylight, (see xi. 5.) or because it was dark within the tent of Holofernes ; for it consisted of two apartments, an antechamber, and a withdrawing or inner room. From the latter he came out to meet Judith, preceded by servants carrying lamps ; which were continually, as Calmet supposes, burning in it. In this piece of state Holofernes may be thought to imitate the customs of the Persians, among whom it was usual to carry fire before their kings ; as it was afterward done before the Roman emperors, and is at present before the emperor of the Turks. Whether this was a Persian custom or not, herein however we know that all the oriental nations were unanimous, *viz.* in affecting pomp and grandeur.

Ver. 23. *She fell down upon her face, and did reverence unto him: and his servants took her up.*] It was neither a sudden fright at the sight of this great and formidable general that thus affected Judith, for she who seemed to have defied the whole Assyrian army, by passing through them with a single waiting-woman only, would scarcely fall down in a swoon at the sight of one man, however considerable ; nor was it the eclat and splendour of all that pomp and magnificence which surrounded Holofernes, that dazzled her senses so as to occasion her falling down: her prostration was rather an expression of duty and profound reverence, and a submissive token of her meanness and unworthiness to appear in his presence. The paying him a sort of worship and adoration, was an artifice to work upon his vanity, to recommend her to favour, and to draw him into her snare.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *WOMAN, be of good comfort: fear not in thine heart, for I never hurt any that was willing to serve Nabuchodonosor, the king of all the earth.*] Οὐκ ἐκάκωσα ἄνθρωπον, ὅστις ἠρέτικε δουλεύειν, κ. τ. λ. *i. e. I have never hurt any man that was willing to* submit to and *serve* Nabuchodonosor; much less shall I injure a defenceless woman, who is fled to me for safeguard. Judith had but little reason to depend upon this declaration, or to trust to his veracity, as he sets out with a falsehood, in saying that he never hurt any that submitted to his great lord; for iii. 8. mention is made of his casting down the frontiers and cutting down the groves of such as had sued for peace, and had surrendered themselves and their cities, and had been received into protection.

Ver. 3. *Be of good comfort, thou shalt live this night and hereafter.*] How are we to understand *night* here and in ver. 5.? does it mean that Judith came first to Holofernes in the night, and had an audience in his tent, as our version, following the Greek, seems plainly to represent it? But how then shall we reconcile this with x. 10. where it is said, that the men of the city looked after and followed Judith with their eyes till she had passed the valley, and then saw her no more ? which intimates that it was not night, but rather, as the Vulgate has it, about daybreak or sunrising, *circa ortum diei.* Possibly it might seem night to Holofernes, who went no farther than his antechamber, and had then lights burning in his tent; or else it must mean the night ensuing, or that he determined to have her be with him for a continuance. It is probable that Holofernes could not speak the Syriac or Chaldee language which Judith used; for v. 3. he asks the princes of Moab who this people were, as if he was an absolute stranger to them; we may suppose, therefore, that the conversation which passed between them was managed by an interpreter.

Ver. 6. *If thou wilt follow the words of thy servant.*] Jael's behaviour to Sisera was not unlike this, when she said to him, *Turn in, my lord, turn in to me ; fear not:* (Judg. iv. 18.) and with the like design of treachery. Such also was Rahab's receiving, concealing, and conveying away, the spies, which was all a crafty management, assisted and carried on by an untrue suggestion; for she said, *There came men unto me, but whence they were, I wist not ; and when it was dark, the men went out ; but whither they went I wist not: pursue after them quickly, for ye shall overtake them:* and yet she knew they were concealed in the house at the same time. (Josh. ii. 4, 5.) It would be too bold to charge what she said and did upon the occasion with the guilt of a lie, since the writer to the Hebrews, xi. 31. records her name with honour. In like manner, when a city is straitly besieged, and sore distressed for want of either succours or sustenance, the casuists allow a liberty to amuse the enemy with feigned reports, and false accounts of their state, and to make use of any crafty stratagem they can devise, that may be of service or relief to themselves, though altogether inconsistent with the truth. This, and such-like practices, have been thought sufficiently justified from the very state and exigency of things in time of war. For when people are at open hostility with one another, whether matters be managed by mere force or cunning sleight, it makes no difference ; and therefore, if it be lawful to kill an enemy outright, much more is it so to deceive him, though it be to his very great hurt. What some writers have observed to excuse evasive answers, or equivocating behaviour, in those mentioned, and other examples in sacred story, *viz.* that a mixed action may be commended for the good that is in it, or which it occasions, without any express notice or censure of the evil, seems applicable to the case of Judith.

God will bring the thing perfectly to pass by thee.] *i. e.* God will execute what he has decreed and purposed, and will grant a complete victory. The expression is equivocal, and may either mean a victory to or over you. Here it is to be taken in the latter sense, and as spoken with such a reservation, as that x. 12. Holofernes understood her to speak of victory, by the surrender of the Israelites, or their overthrow ; but Judith's meaning was, that the victory should be obtained by the death of Holofernes himself. The next sentence also is equivocal ; viz. *My lord shall not fail of his purposes:* which may either mean that Holofernes,

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to whom she was speaking, and whom she compliments with the title of *her lord*, should gain his point, if he would follow her advice: or, that her Lord God would infallibly execute his design, touching the deliverance of his people. Where Judith's speeches are capable of a double meaning, it is sufficient to free her from the imputation of lying, if one of the two senses be true, *viz.* that which she herself had in view, though Holofernes and his officers might understand her in a quite different sense; who, for their pride and repeated blasphemies, deserved to be blinded in such a manner as to interpret in his favour what was really against them.

Ver. 7. *As Nabuchodonosor king of all the earth liveth, and as his power liveth.*] *i. e.* As true as it is that Nabuchodonosor liveth, and that his power is felt, and acknowledged by the nations around him, so true is it, that thou shalt not fail in thy purposes. It was a common form among the people of the east, to swear by the life of their kings, and other persons of great merit and dignity: thus Hannah, the mother of Samuel, swore by the life of the high-priest Eli; (1 Sam. i. 26.) Elisha by that of Elijah his master; (2 Kings ii. 4.) Abigail by the life of David, when she met him as he went to avenge himself on the family of Nabal; (1 Sam. xxv. 26.) and her compliments, and fair speeches to ingratiate herself, and soothe his anger, somewhat resemble those of Judith. Abner swore by the life of Saul, (1 Sam. xvii. 55.) and Joseph by that of Pharaoh, (Gen. xlii. 15.) But in this sort of oath there was neither superstition nor idolatry: for neither these, swearing by the life of holy men or prophets, nor the other, by that of kings, regarded them in so doing as gods; but being persons held in reverence, and reputed sacred and inviolable, and as representing the power and majesty of God, whose ministers they were, the swearing by their life, was the introducing and applying as it were a thing sacred, to attest the truth of what was spoken: and the setting such a value upon their lives, as of public concernment, was a species of homage, and so high a degree of political respect, as soothed the vanity of princes.

Who hath sent thee for the upholding of every living thing.] This does not suit the character either of Nabuchodonosor or Holofernes, who destroyed all before him, in pursuance of that prince's orders, who had vowed to avenge himself on all the earth; except it be understood as spoken ironically. Our version here seems inaccurate; the Greek εἰς κατόρθωσιν πάσης ψυχῆς will admit of another and better meaning, *viz.* for the new modelling, correcting, and reforming of all amiss, or that have been out of order, or given offence. And thus the Vulgate, *Ad correctionem omnium animarum errantium;* and the Geneva version, *Whose power hath sent thee to reform all persons.* But tyrants, such as Nabuchodonosor, however complimented, seldom concern themselves about reformation in earnest; they are indeed often scourges appointed by God to correct and punish wicked nations, such as the Assyrians were to that of the Jews when they carried them away captive.

For not only men shall serve him by thee, but also the beasts of the field, and the cattle, and the fowls of the air shall live by thy power, under Nabuchodonosor, and all his house.] This is a rhetorical exaggeration; and the mention of animals, and things without reason, submitting to his jurisdiction, as well as men, means only that whole provinces submitted to him, with all the creatures in and belonging to them, though indeed not voluntarily, but through fear or compulsion.

Ver. 8. *For we have heard of thy wisdom, and thy policies, and it is reported in all the earth, that thou only art excellent in all the kingdom, and mighty in knowledge, and wonderful in feats of war.*] To free Judith from the imputation of lying, as flattery often partakes of it, it may be necessary to observe, that in what she says here of Holofernes, she declares rather the praises which others bestowed upon him than praises him herself. For as there were many flatterers that cried up the merits of that general, so even among those who had submitted to him there were some who were forward to flatter him upon those excellent qualities mentioned here; *viz.* the prudence of his conduct, his policy, and contrivance, and depth of stratagem; his power, or, as the margin has it, the *favour* he was in with his prince, his skill in military discipline and the art of war; the great exploits he had performed, and his humanity and goodness to the vanquished. If this is only panegyric, it is not purely of her making; she is not answerable for the justness of the character, as she only mentions what others said of Holofernes.

Ver. 10. *Our nation shall not be punished, neither can the sword prevail against them, except they sin against their God.*] The truth of this observation the Jews experienced in every stage of their state, from their first becoming a nation to their ceasing to be so, by the captivity of the twelve tribes; their obedience or disobedience respectively ruined or saved them. It was therefore Balaam's policy, says Philo, to make the daughters of Moab to sell the use of their bodies to the Hebrews, upon condition that they would sacrifice unto idols, as knowing that the children of Israel were not otherwise to be subdued than by their own sinfulness and breach of God's commandments, εἰδὼς Ἑβραίοις μίαν ὁδὸν ἁλώσεως παρανομίαν. (See Numb. xxv. xxxi. 16.) And the like reflection holds true universally, that no Divine judgment overtakes a nation in any signal and exemplary manner, but what is brought upon it by its own repeated transgressions, and a confirmed obstinacy in sinning.

Ver. 11. *And now, that my lord be not deceived and frustrate of his purpose, even death is now fallen upon them, and their sin hath overtaken them, wherewith they will provoke their God to anger, whensoever they shall do that which is not fit to be done.*] The sense of this and the following verses, as they stand in our translation, is very obscure, occasioned by the great confusion of the tenses; nor do the Greek or oriental versions afford any light or assistance. That of Geneva makes it rather clearer, by putting the three following verses in a parenthesis. Junius's exposition, founded on the context, seems most natural; only allowing, what is far from being unreasonable, that sin may then be said to lay hold of us, when first being conceived it is entertained and encouraged, and as it were completed in our thoughts, before the actual commission of it: on this supposition the drift of Judith's speech is to the following effect: "The elders of Bethulia have judged it already allowable, and in case of necessity lawful, to eat what at other times is forbidden by the law; for form's sake, indeed, they have sent deputies to Jerusalem for a dispensation from the Jewish Sanhedrin, which from their own practice in a similar case, they are assured of: but even now the inhabitants of Be-

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thulia are guilty, and will suffer as such for their wicked intention." Judith's design, without doubt, was to impose upon Holofernes, as is plain from ix. 10. 13. and her story was framed to agree with what Achior had before told him, that if the Hebrews had or should sin against their God, he might easily overcome them: she now shews there was such a sin in their hearts, and soon would be actually committed by them, as would stir up the anger of their God, the moment they should commit it, and the execution waited only the return of the messengers with the licence, instantly expected, and they would then immediately be given up to destruction, and even Jerusalem itself and all Judea, as the sin would hereby become general, be a prey and spoil unto him. But, to give a shorter answer to this difficulty, may not Judith be supposed to speak here as of a fact already done, to shew her assurance of the certainty of it, and to gain the greater credit with Holofernes? or by a Hebraism the preterit be put for the future, instances of which are not unfrequent?

Ver. 16. *God hath sent me to work things with thee, whereat all the earth shall be astonished, and whosoever shall hear it.*] This address is so artful, as that the words of it admit of a double meaning: Judith inwardly meant her own enterprise, but Holofernes, from her speech, fondly concluded, that the God of the Hebrews was angry with the Jews, and had given them up to destruction; and this he imagined, through mistake, to be the cause of Judith's quitting them.

Ver. 19. *I will lead thee through the midst of Judea, until thou come before Jerusalem.*] Holofernes flattered himself, from the intelligence and assurance given him by Judith, that he should go up thither himself in triumph; but her reserved meaning was, that his head should be carried thither, and through all Judea, in triumph.

And thou shalt drive them as sheep.] This, too, is capable of a double meaning; the secret sense in Judith's mind was, that he should be the occasion, by the surprise of his death, of the Assyrians' being driven in this manner, when the Jews should pursue after them, destroy many of them, and spoil their tents. What follows, viz. *A dog shall not open his mouth at thee,* is also equivocal; and may either mean, that none shall oppose or make any resistance to him, in his victorious march through Judea, or that, when he is dead, and there is no longer any fear of him, he shall give no disturbance or uneasiness to any. It is a proverbial expression, and used in this sense, Exod. xi. 7. Josh. x. 21.

For these things were told me according to my foreknowledge, and they were declared unto me, and I am sent to tell thee.] This is scarcely intelligible, as our version has it; for what necessity of telling or declaring the thing to her, if she herself had foreknowledge of it? Grotius thinks the true reading of the Greek is, κατὰ πρόγνωσιν θεοῦ, *according to the foreknowledge of God:* (see ix. 6. xii. 4.) which is confirmed by the Vulgate, *Hæc mihi dicta sunt per providentiam Dei.* Whichever reading we follow, she flatters manifestly Holofernes, in making him believe that God watched particularly over him for his good and preservation, by sending a person to him of such great penetration, and filled with the spirit of prophecy.

Ver. 22. *God hath done well to send thee before the people, that strength might be in our hands, and destruction upon them that lightly regard my lord.*] *i. e.* God hath dealt favourably and kindly with you, in sending thee hither, for thereby thou wilt save thy life. (See x. 15.) Thus Calmet, *Dieu vous a favorisée de vous envoyer ainsi devant ceux de vôtre nation.* The Vulgate has, *Benefecit Deus qui misit te ante populum, ut des illum tu in manibus nostris.* Our version follows the Greek, which is more explicit.

Ver. 23. *And now thou art both beautiful in thy countenance, and witty in thy words; surely if thou do as thou hast spoken, thy God shall be my God.*] Junius thinks that Holofernes swears here by her beauty (instances of which, used by lovers, occur in Plautus and other writers), That if she, or, as the Vulgate has it, *her God, brought that to pass which she had promised and engaged for, he himself would become a Jew, and adopt her God.* It is not easy to think, says Calmet, that Holofernes spoke this seriously, and in good earnest, as his conversion would prejudice his fortune; or he must certainly be ignorant that the God of Israel allowed not any to worship strange gods together with him. He meant only hereby to flatter and please Judith, to insinuate himself into her affections, and to gain her love. And observing Judith to be a woman of strict piety, and strongly attached to her religion, he foresaw this would be the principal difficulty in the way of his passion; he declares, therefore, that a difference in religion ought not to create in her any distance or estrangement to his person, as he was ready to become a Jew, as soon as he saw the accomplishment of what she had assured him of.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND bade that they should prepare for her of his own meats.*] Συνέταξε καταστρωθῆναι αὐτῇ ἀπὸ τῶν ὀψοποιημάτων αὐτοῦ. Calmet, from the authority of the Syriac, which has, *Et jussit sterni ipsi, darique ipsi de convivio suo,* &c. thinks the true reading of the Greek, συνέταξε καταστρῶσαι αὐτὴν, καὶ δοῦναι αὐτῇ ἀπὸ τῶν, κ. τ. λ. he ordered that a bed or couch should be prepared for her, and that she should sit or lie down, and his own meat and provisions should be given her.

Ver. 2. *And Judith said, I will not eat thereof.*] It was the custom of ancient times (see Grotius on Dan. i. 8. Casaub. ad Athen. lib. i. cap. 11.) to consecrate all that they did eat or drink to their gods, by putting part of it on the altar, or casting it into the fire; so that to eat of meats and drinks so consecrated, was in effect to partake of things offered to idols. Whereas, by the laws of Moses, nothing was to be eaten or drank by the children of Israel, but which had been offered to the Lord, either immediately in itself, or virtually in the first-fruits and offerings. (Lev. xvii. 3. xxiii. 14. Deut. xii. 21. 26.) The Jews, therefore, as appears from the examples of Daniel and his associates at the court of Nabuchodonosor, of Tobit at that of Shalmaneser, (i. 11, 12.) and of Nehemiah at that of Artaxerxes, who, being cupbearer to that king, was dispensed with from drinking the wine of the gentiles; the Jews, I say, when they could not avoid conversing with the gentiles, took great care to abstain, not only from things really sacrificed to idols, but from most things that came out of gentile hands, because there was some pre-

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sumption, that a part of most kinds, by way of first-fruits, had been consecrated to idols, the rest being by such first-fruits deemed polluted, as dedicated to them. From the places above cited it appears, that the Jews forbore all meats and drinks that came from the gentiles, in like manner as the Egyptians would not eat with the Hebrews, whom they looked upon as impure and profane, and esteemed it an abomination so to do. (Gen. xliii. 32.) When the enemies of the Jews aimed to vex and displease them, they compelled them to eat swine's flesh and other forbidden meats; and great was the persecution of them by Antiochus, and other heathen rulers, especially in the times of the Maccabees. In like manner, Julian the Apostate, to be revenged upon the Christians at Antioch, made all the food that was brought to market to be first dedicated at a heathen altar. (Theodoret, lib. i. cap. 14.)

Lest there be an offence.] The word σκάνδαλον, in general, signifies a stone or block, or something in the way, at which men are apt to stumble and fall; and accordingly in the Old Testament it is taken for a fall, and sometimes for sin, the lapse of the soul, as it seems to be, Judg. viii. 27. and so the sense here may be, Lest by eating forbidden meats I sin against God, and so be a hinderance to what God had otherwise decreed to have brought to pass by my means for the public good: or, secondly, *offence*, or *scandal*, as it is rendered from the Greek, sometimes signifies a snare; and so another sense of this place may be, That she would not eat with him, lest his table should prove a snare unto her, an occasion of falling, and an inlet to temptation: or, lastly, we may understand it of her giving offence to others thereby, as the word is used when applied to eating, 1 Cor. viii. 13. This determined the venerable and good Eleazar not to eat even of his own lawful meat and provisions, because, being brought to him secretly, he was apprehensive that many young persons might think that Eleazar, being fourscore years old and ten, was now gone to a strange religion, and so his dissembling prove a snare unto them. (2 Macc. vi. 18—24.)

Ver. 4. *As thy soul liveth, my lord, thine handmaid shall not spend those things that I have, before the Lord work by mine hand the things that he hath determined.*] Messieurs of Port-Royal observe, that there is the less reason to believe that Judith is guilty of lying, as she occasionally confirms what she says by an oath; sometimes swearing by God, and asseverating solemnly, that she was sent from and commissioned by him; at other times by the life of Nabuchodonosor, and here by that of Holofernes, which, if made use of in confirmation of any falsehood, is inconsistent with that character of her, viii. 8. *that she feared God greatly.* However this be, it is certain, that throughout almost her whole discourse with this general, she converses dubiously, or in equivocal terms, and particularly here, when she says, that the Lord will work by her hands what he has determined, she speaks of her design to cut off that general's head, and Holofernes understands her of delivering the Jews into his power.

Ver. 5. *Then the servants of Holofernes brought her into the tent, and she slept till midnight, and she arose when it was towards the morning-watch,* Ver. 6. *And sent to Holofernes, saying, Let my lord now command that thine handmaid may go forth unto prayer.*] According to the Vulgate, Judith asks this favour of going forth to prayer at a distance from the camp, at her first entrance into the tent appointed her, which seems more probable than disturbing Holofernes unseasonably by such a message towards the morning-watch. And indeed Judith had prepared Holofernes to grant this favour, by telling him on the preceding day, *thy servant will go out by night into the valley, and pray unto God,* (xi. 17.) Judith could as well have prayed within her tent, and God could as effectually have heard her from the most secret and retired part of it; but persisting out of policy in her first resolution, of going forth at a distance from the camp for that purpose, she thought it an instance of more duty and respect to apply for leave afresh. This conduct of Judith, though very artful, was regular, and of a piece, and left Holofernes no room to suspect her fidelity and integrity. For as it was necessary at first to take this precaution, so was it likewise to manage the liberty indulged her, of going forth for three days, in such a manner as to create no jealousy; that after having cut off Holofernes's head, and accomplished the great design she came upon, she might retire with more ease, safety, and confidence, to Bethulia again, without any stop or molestation. To retire apart for prayer, that it may be performed with more earnestness and attention, and freer from the notice and hearing of the rude and profane, is certainly most laudable; but the true reason of Judith's procedure at this time, seems rather to be founded on artifice, than on any obligation either from the Jewish law or custom. By this pretext s heinduced Holofernes to think, what was contrived for his ruin to be most advantageous to his great designs, and, under a notion of praying for victory and success in his undertaking, she opened a way to triumph more securely over the grand adversary of her country, and to facilitate her own safe return.

Ver. 7. *And went out in the night into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself in a fountain of water by the camp; and when she came out, she besought the Lord God of Israel, to direct her way to the raising up of the children of her people.*] One is astonished to see here a woman of such beauty go out in the night-time, accompanied only with her waiting-woman, and pass through the camp of the Assyrians, without any insult or violence offered to her. But it is most probable, that the dread of Holofernes's resentment, who was captivated with her person, and regarded her as one who would soon crown his warmest wishes, hindered the soldiers from attempting any rudeness or assault. There is no necessity to suppose, with the Romish expositors, that either an angel conducted her at first from Bethulia, or secured her each night from danger when she went out into the valley. The occasion of her going was to wash herself in a fountain, whether that at the foot of the mountain, whose aqueduct, according to the Vulgate, Holofernes cut off from all communication with the city, is not material to determine; it may be more proper to observe, that fountain-water seems particularly enjoined by the law, Lev. xv. 13. where the Chaldee interpreter has, *in aquis fontis.* Spencer adds this farther reason, *Aqua fontana purior, et acrioris ad purgandum virtutis, adeoque lustrationi magis apta crederetur.* (De Purific. p. 774.) Purification, or washing the hands or body before prayers, or sacrifices offered to the Deity, was a very ancient religious ceremony. The Egyptians, Greeks, and

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Romans, all used these washings before their devotions; and from the heathens probably this custom was derived to the Jews. (Spenc. ibid. p. 788. Philo, περὶ φιλανθρωπ. Eurip. Alcest. ver. 157. Hom. Il. Z. Ovid. Fast. lib. v. Virg. Æn. ix.) Thus xvi. 18. of this history, we read that, as soon as the people were purified, they offered their burnt-offerings; and to this custom the Psalmist alludes, Psal. xxvi. 6. as the apostle also is thought to do, 1 Tim. ii. 8. *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, ὁσίους χεῖρας, puras manus.* It is certain that the Jews even to this day wash their hands before they enter the synagogue to pray: (Leo Moden. de Jud. Rit.) and from Mark vii. 2—4. it appears, that when they returned from market, or other public place, they used with great care and exactness this ceremony, to purify themselves from any defilement, which a converse with strangers, or the touch of any thing that was thought impure, according to the law, might occasion. And so Judith being all day in the camp of the Assyrians, probably took the opportunity of the night to wash herself, that she might purge or purify herself from any defilement or uncleanness which she might have contracted from conversing with gentiles, among whom she was.

Ver. 9. *So she came in clean, and remained in the tent until she did eat her meat at evening.*] It seems from this place, as if Judith, to fervent prayer for the happy success of her enterprise, added likewise strict fasting, to render herself more worthy to effect the deliverance of her people: for being an Israelite, indeed, serving the God of heaven in spirit, day and night, (xi. 17.) she rightly judged it necessary to purify her heart before God of all that might displease him, as well as to use the outward ceremony of washing. And as thereby she returned pure, so she resolved to continue so both in body and spirit, passing the whole day in severe fasting until the evening, before she took any refreshment; according to the custom of the more religious, who used to fast not only till evening, but even till the stars began to appear. And nothing but prayer, added to such a severe discipline, say Messieurs of Port-Royal, could have kept one so beautiful, chaste, and virtuous, in the midst of a camp of rude barbarians; or enabled an instrument so feeble to execute a work of such vast danger and importance. St. Ambrose has the same remark, "Non bibebat fœmina Judith, jejunans omnibus diebus viduitatis suæ. His armis munita processit, et omnem Assyriorum circumvenit exercitum. Sobrii vigore consilii abstulit Holofernis caput, servavit pudicitiam, victoriam reportavit. Hæc enim succincta jejunio, in castris prætendebat alienis: ille vino sepultus jacebat, ut ictum vulneris sentire non posset. Itaque unius mulieris jejunium innumeros stravit exercitus Assyriorum." (De Jejunio.)

Ver. 10. *And called none of the officers unto the banquet.*] *i. e.* That he might be more at liberty, and have fewer witnesses of his intemperance and lasciviousness. Most of the copies have, εἰς τὴν χρῆσιν, but the Alexandrian and the Complute, which last our translators generally follow, have, εἰς τὴν κλῆσιν. Thus in the third book of Maccabees κλητοὶ are guests invited to a feast, to which is opposed ἄκλητοι in Homer, and *invocati* in Plautus. In the glossaries we have, κλήτωρ, and δειπνοκλήτωρ, *invitator*. And so Matt. xxii. 3. καλέσαι τοὺς κεκλημένους, is to be understood, and is an expression like that here, ἐκάλεσεν εἰς τὴν κλῆσιν.

Ver. 11. *Bagoas, the eunuch, who had charge over all that he had.*] Bagoas is not a proper, but a common name for a eunuch, at least for the chief of them; for so the principal ones were called among the Persians and Babylonians, according to Pliny, (lib. xiii. 4.) Q. Curtius calls Alexander's eunuch *Bagoas*, (lib. x.) Herod also had one called by the same name. (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. 3. see Sulpit. Sever. Sac. Hist. lib. ii. in Not.) We find eunuchs in vogue among the Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, and all the eastern princes. They were anciently employed in the most momentous affairs, all places of the greatest trust being filled by such. The term *eunuch*, therefore, does not always signify a real one, but often an officer at court, and near the king's person. In the book of Esther, i. 10. vi. 2. they are called *chamberlains*, that served in the presence of the king; such as was Potiphar to the king of Egypt, as many have supposed. To them the Persian kings not only committed the guard of their own persons, (Xen. Cyr. lib. vii.) but likewise the education of their children; it being a custom among them to put the heir-apparent to the crown, as soon as he was born, into the hands of eunuchs, under whose tuition he remained till he attained the seventh year of his age. (Plato in Alcib.) Formerly they were entrusted likewise with the care of some favourite women, and to watch over their conduct. Thus Ovid,

"Quem penes est dominam servandi cura Bagoæ."
(Amor. lib. ii.)

As in later times they have been employed in seraglios. From the words, πεῖσον τὴν γυναῖκα τὴν Ἑβραίαν, ἥ ἐστι παρὰ σοὶ, it seems probable that Bagoas had the care of Judith, and that she lodged with him, or in his tent.

Ver. 12. *For it will be shame for our person, if we shall let such a woman go, not having had her company: for if we draw her not unto us, she will laugh us to scorn.*] These words of Holofernes are capable of a double meaning, and contain either a harmless invitation to the banquet, and innocent freedom of discourse, or in a bad sense they may imply an intention in Holofernes to abuse and debauch her, in which sense ὁμιλέω is often taken by Lucian, Aristotle, and other writers. (See particularly Hist. of Susanna, ver. 54. 58.) The Syriac and Geneva versions understand it in the former sense; the Vulgate and Sulpitius Severus (Sacr. Hist. lib. iii.) in the latter; which the conclusion of the verse, and the context, (see ver. 16.) render most probable, and is better adapted to the dissolute character of the person spoken of, to say nothing of the profession. But what a mean and detestable opinion does it give us of Holofernes's honour, and of his loose and degenerate manner of acting, to hear him declare, that it will be a reflection and disgrace to him not to have ruined a woman's virtue! As if it was a commendable triumph, or added to the laurels of a general, to glory in the spoils of beauty, or signalize himself by debauching innocence. And how degenerate must those or any times be, when rapes are accounted gallantry, and brutal lust an accomplishment! As virtue wears not the attire of a harlot, so neither was Judith like any of his Assyrian prostitutes; he needed not have been afraid, if he did not draw her, *i. e.* as the Geneva version has it, *allure* her to him, that she would

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have ridiculed him for his backwardness, or reproached him for coming away undefiled; for as she would not permit indecent freedoms, so neither would she take them, nor act beneath the unblamable character she had maintained, by any criminal levity of conversation.

Ver 13. *Then Bagoas said, Let not this fair damsel fear to come to my lord, and to be honoured in his presence, and drink wine, and be merry with us, and be made this day as one of the daughters of the Assyrians, which serve in the house of Nabuchodonosor.*] The infamous pander but too well understood his master's inclination; he therefore invites her freely to drink wine, the great incentive to lust. The Persians were much more free and dissolute at their entertainments than the other nations of the east, who allowed not their women to appear at their banquets, nor to dine with them in public: they generally ate by themselves apart, and did not affect to be introduced on such occasions. One sees in the book of Esther how backward queen Vashti was to attend the royal summons, with what a fierceness of spirit she received the message, and absolutely refused to go into the apartment, where Ahasuerus was dining with his nobles, (i. 12.) In the history of the Hebrews, and that of the Egyptians, we read of no women at their public entertainments, nor among the ancient Greeks; but the Persians took much greater liberties, had women promiscuously among their guests, and were very indiscreet, according to many writers, in their behaviour and conduct towards them. (Herod. lib. v. cap. 18. Justin. lib. vii.) Even lewd and infamous women sometimes attended to sing and dance before them, and were afterward employed in scenes of wickedness. It is true, that the manners of the Persians and Assyrians were not altogether alike; but they greatly resembled one another, says Calmet, and the liberties taken with women by the one were to be found and paralleled in the other. One need only read the life of Sardanapulus to be convinced of the dissoluteness of their kings, nor have a stronger proof to what abandoned and vile purposes the daughters of Assyria, who served in the house of Nabuchodonosor, were employed, than the proposal made to Judith by this intriguing eunuch.

Ver. 14. *Then said Judith unto him, Who am I, that I should gainsay my lord? Surely whatsoever pleaseth him, I will do speedily.*] It hath been objected against this history, that the author of it makes his heroine act and talk in a manner not so well comporting with that sense of virtue and religion which she professes to have; (xi. 17.) for she seems, from this verse, as a woman devoid of modesty, who endeavoured to ensnare Holofernes in a sinful amour, and answered to the declaration of a criminal passion, with too little modesty and reserve. To this it is answered, by its advocates, in favour of her conduct, that her answer to the eunuch's suggestions she might design for no more than a common compliment, which the situation of her affairs at that time obliged her to make. She might perceive, very likely, the bad design which the Assyrian general had upon her; but she did not think herself concerned to discover that she perceived it. She pretended, in some measure, to be ignorant of it: and to pretend an ignorance in what is proposed, when the thing is faulty, and will not bear an examination, is a point of modesty as well as prudence; as, where it will admit of a double construction, there to take it in the better sense, is ever reputed an act of candour and good breeding. *Let not this fair damsel fear* (says the old pander) *to come to my lord, to be honoured in his sight, and to be as one of the daughters of Assyria, who serve in the court of Nabuchodonosor.* How the daughters of Assyria, who served in this capacity, were used, Judith very probably had been informed; but since the eunuch put it upon the foot of a great favour and dignation done to her, she could do no less than return him a compliment. But then we all know that the offers of service, which upon every occasion we are so apt to make to one another, and those expressions of submission and respect, which so commonly pass among us, are not to be taken in a literal sense, because they always imply a tacit condition. And, therefore, the answer which the historian puts in Judith's mouth, *Surely whatsoever pleaseth him, I will do speedily,* will fairly admit of this construction:—"Whatever Holofernes shall desire of me, so far as is consistent with my duty, honour, and religion, I will not fail to do." (See Calmet, in loc. and Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. i.) There is also a farther solution to be given of this seeming forwardness of Judith, that by *her Lord* she might mean the Lord God, whom she had all along endeavoured to please by her prayers, fastings, and special acts of faith; and might with good reason say to the eunuch, who was sent to her from Holofernes, "Whatever pleaseth him I will do, and it shall be my joy unto the day of my death;" and her meaning might only be, "I am willing to do what that good and acceptable and perfect will of God requires of me, and it shall be the pleasure of my life to fulfil it; as the accomplishment of it I know will be my happiness in this life, and be the means of blessedness in the other." The eunuch, indeed, who spoke to Judith in this manner, regarded his master as the person whom she called *her Lord,* and being blinded with this persuasion, and interpreting Judith's answer by the passion of Holofernes, he contributed to make that general fall into the snare, which was his overthrow, without thinking of any evil consequence.

Ver. 15. *And her maid laid soft skins on the ground for her, over against Holofernes, that she might sit and eat upon them.*] Εἰς τὸ ἐσθίειν κατακλινομένην ἐπ' αὐτῶν. It appears, from hence, that Judith did not eat at the same table with Holofernes, but apart by herself, and on her own meats; not sitting, as our version has it, but recumbent, κατακλινομένη, on soft skins spread on the ground, a custom among the ancients, which Homer mentions, Il. i. and Strabo, lib. iii. The translator of the LXX. in our Polyglot, has, *Ut manducaret accumbens super eas, et ingressa recubuit Judith.* Junius renders in like manner. The Jews' ancient posture at table was sitting. Saul, when he was king, sat upon his seat by the wall. (1 Sam. xx. 24.) And they continued the posture of sitting, for the most part, in the reign of Solomon. (Prov. xxiii. 1.) At the feast of Ahasuerus, the princes lay on magnificent beds, (Esther i.) as they did also at the banquet Esther made for the king and Haman, (chap. vii.) which, though it relates only to the Persians, yet shews the antiquity of this custom of lying at meals in the east: and after the Jews had acquaintance and dealings with the Babylonians, Persians, and Syrians, little or no mention is made of sitting at meals. The posture of lying at them sprang first from luxury and effeminacy, and as such it is mentioned by the prophets; (Amos vi.

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4. 7. Ezek. xxiii. 41.) but after the captivity it became more general. In the gospel-times, beds to lie on at their meals were common; our Saviour was on one of them, when Mary Magdalen anointed his feet, and also when he ate the last supper with his disciples.

Ver. 18. *I will drink, now, my lord, because my life is magnified in me this day, more than all the days since I was born.*] The glory of which Judith speaks, was that springing from the hopes of victory, which she entertained over Holofernes, the person who aimed to triumph over her chastity; a conquest, not of her eyes, but the effect of her courage; a satisfaction not arising from love, but hatred. For a woman so religious, so attached to the love of her country, and of the sanctuary in particular, was, we may be assured, averse to the addresses of this alien and barbarian, and very far from regarding it as an honour to serve and please him, whose design was, as she mentions in her prayer, to defile the sanctuary, and to pollute the tabernacle, where the great and glorious Name rested, and to cast down the horn of the altar, (ix. 8.) She could never have any thoughts or inclination to respect and honour one so wicked, whom with such earnestness she implored God to give her grace to despise, and strength to subdue. As she had anticipated victory in her mind, and reflected on it as a glorious instance of the power of God, that the wicked and proud Assyrian should fall merely by the hand of a woman, she had reason to regard that day, when she should cut off the head of the grand adversary of her country, as the most glorious in her whole life.

Ver. 20. *And Holofernes took great delight in her, and drank much more wine than he had drank at any time in one day since he was born.*] I cannot better illustrate this than by St. Ambrose's reflection upon it:—"Temperantia virtus est fœminarum. Inebriatis vino viris, et somno sepultis, abstulit vidua gladium, exseruit manum, bellatoris abscidit caput, per medias hostium acies intemerata processit. Advertitis igitur quantum mulieribus nocere possit ebrietas, quando viros vina sic solvunt, ut vincantur a fœminis? Esto igitur vidua temperans; casta primum a vino, ut casta possit esse ab adultero. Nequaquam te ille tentabit, si vina non tentent. Nam si Judith bibisset, dormisset cum adultero. Sed quia non bibit, haud difficile ebrios exercitus unius sobrietas et vincere potuit, et eludere." (De Viduis.)

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW when the evening was come, his servants made haste to depart, and Bagoas shut his tent without.* Ver. 2. *And Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes lying along upon his bed; for he was filled with wine.*] Coverdale's rendering here seems preferable, as it sets this interview in a much stronger light; *Now when it was late in the night, his servants made haste every man to his lodging, and Bagoas shut the chamber-door, and went his way, for they were all overladen with wine: so was Judith alone in the chamber. As for Holofernes he lay upon the bed all drunken, and of very drunkenness fell asleep.* Here are many particulars very observable:—1. That the tents of the great generals in the east were very spacious, having several apartments, and for their grandeur and magnificence not unlike palaces. 2. It is probable that lamps were burning all night in Holofernes's chamber, without which Judith could not have seen to have managed and conducted her enterprise. 3. When it is here said that Bagoas shut the doors of his tent without, it must be understood with this reserve, that Judith had liberty to go out; for, to prevent suspicion, she had the cunning and precaution to acquaint Bagoas beforehand with her intention of going forth that very night as on the preceding ones. 4. Judith's servant is ordered to wait without, not at the door of Holofernes's tent, as some expositors would have it, that she might be ready at call, and to give any notice or assistance that was necessary, but at that of her own bedchamber, which carried less suspicion with it. Nor does it appear that she had acquainted her waiting-woman with the great design in hand; it seems more probable, from her not communicating it to the elders of Bethulia, when she set out on this enterprise, that she kept it as an impenetrable secret, wholly in her own breast, for fear of any discovery or miscarriage. The foregoing circumstances suggest this useful reflection, That the wisdom of God often makes even the vices and irregularities of men to serve, in a surprising manner, to the execution of his own great purposes. Judith would never have been able to have cut off Holofernes's head, if she had not been alone with him in his tent, and, even when alone, could not have accomplished so desperate a design, if an excess of wine had not quite stupified and laid asleep Holofernes and his officers, so as not to be capable of mistrusting any thing, much less to hinder what she was about to effect. One sees also by the event, how brutal lust and pure love were differently rewarded: Judith, inflamed with the love of her country and its afflicted people, is transported beyond herself at the thoughts she had conceived of their deliverance, and with great presence of mind, and undauntedness of spirit, happily accomplishes it. Holofernes, on the other hand, whose intentions were base and dishonourable, intoxicated with wine, falls a sacrifice to his lusts, a victim to that heroine whom he meant to abuse.

Ver. 4. *Then Judith, standing by his bed, said in her heart, O Lord God of all power, look at this present upon the works of mine hands, for the exaltation of Jerusalem.*] Judith shews, by this prayer, directed to the God of all power, that it was not upon herself, or her own management or force that she depended for success, but on the all-powerful hand of God, from whom she expected that assistance which she stood so much in need of at this time. Her prayer seems conceived in this or the like manner:—"I know and experience, O Lord, that in myself I am nothing but weakness, and incapable to execute what I have undertaken; I therefore now, in thy presence, disclaim all pretence to the merit or glory of an action, which is far above me to achieve; but I believe, at the same time, and have a firm faith and assurance, that what I cannot do by myself, thou wilt do in and by me, and make thy power the more known and conspicuous, as the instrument thou art pleased to employ is proportionably weak and insufficient." Judith prayed thus, it is said, *in her heart*, not that she had any fear or apprehension of being overheard by a vocal prayer, as Holofernes was so insensible and stupified by his excessive debauch; but the expression denotes, that God, being a spirit, hears not the articulate

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sound of the voice, though it be said figuratively to *enter into his ears*, but has a particular regard to the language and motion of the heart.

Ver. 6. *Then she came to the pillar of the bed which was at Holofernes's head, and took down his falchion from thence.*] Προσελθοῦσα τῷ κανόνι τῆς κλίνης . . . καθεῖλε τὸν ἀκινάκην αὐτοῦ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. It is very probable that τὸ κιόνι, is the true reading here, as κιὼν properly signifies a pillar. The *acinaces* was a short Persian dagger, according to Curtius, Herodotus, lib. vii. Horace, Carm. lib. i. manageable by a woman's hand. Hence likewise some have concluded Holofernes to have been a Persian. It may be asked, whether Judith had any instruments of death with her, as poison or dagger, &c.; for it may seem probable, as she went with a settled resolution to kill Holofernes, she was prepared accordingly. To this it may be sufficient to answer, that she depended upon finding something for her purpose in the Assyrian general's tent, a magazine usually of warlike weapons: or she assured herself, that his own sword at least would be ready at hand to complete her vengeance; in like manner as David, when, unarmed in comparison, he went forth to engage the champion of the Philistines, made use of the uncircumcised giant's own sword to cut off his head: or, like Jael, she might hope to dispatch him, perhaps, with a nail of the tent; and that, as Sisera's, she might smite off his head, *when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.* (Judg. v. 26.)

Ver. 7. *And approached to his bed, and took hold of the hair of his head, and said, Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, this day.* Ver. 8. *And she smote twice upon his neck with all her might, and she took away his head from him.*] Excess of wine had made Holofernes not only sleepy and drowsy, but even insensible; by his not waking or stirring during the whole action, he seems to have lost all sense, even that of feeling, which gave Judith time, who was not able to take off his head at one blow, to strike a second, and to complete what she had begun. One shall hardly hear or read of an instance, where such a rough and violent assault passed seemingly unfelt and unperceived. When Sisera was smote by Jael, the text says, *At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down;* which seems to import, that at the first stroke he started and lifted up his body (his sleep being only occasioned by fatigue and weariness), and shewed some sign of life and motion, but being very much stunned, he fell down again, and by a second stroke on so sensible part (for the very manner of the expression denotes a repetition of the blow) he fell down dead. Holofernes's death was not quite so immediate, nor from the nature of the part wounded could the dire business be so quickly dispatched; but during the whole bloody process of his decollation, no struggle appears, no groan is uttered; he lay, as it were, in a continued coma, or rather slept, as it really proved, the sleep of death. Herein they both agree, that they fell ingloriously by the hand of a woman, and by a like instance of treachery. When Polyphemus lay in the like circumstances, inebriated and in a deep sleep with the copious draughts of Ulysses's generous wine, the wise chief, to whom some god, says Homer, imparted courage for the design, took the advantage of his drowsiness and stupidity, and contrived cunningly the putting out his eye, which alone occasioned such anguish in him, that, as the same poet says,—

Σμερδαλέον δὲ μέγ' ὤμωξεν· περὶ δ' ἴαχε πέτρη. (Odys. ix.)

It is observable, that Virgil, mentioning the same story of the Cyclops, adds, that the persons who were engaged in the design first prayed to the gods to assist them in the attempt—

"Nam simul, expletus dapibus, vinoque sepultus,
Cervicem inflexam posuit,—nos, magna precati
Numina, sortitique vices, una undique circum
Fundimur, et telo lumen terebramus acuto." (Æn. iii.)

The history of Judith is so far similar, that she had her revenge likewise upon a monster of cruelty, and prayed to God to strengthen her hand for the execution of her design. With respect to the act itself, the advocates of this history justify it from the command of God, Deut. xiii. 6. and following verses. In pursuance of this law, Judith, or any other inhabitant of Bethulia, inspired with the like courage and magnanimity, might lawfully, they maintain, endeavour to counterplot the designs of any, even with the death of the person, who, in a hostile manner, should come not only to invade their civil rights and liberties, but to extirpate their religion, and compel them by force of arms to receive an idolatrous form of worship, which neither they nor their fathers knew.

Ver. 9. *And tumbled his body down from the bed.*] One cannot well guess at the reason which induced Judith to tumble the dead body from the bed upon the ground, unless it was that so frightful a spectacle might strike the greater terror and consternation in those that should behold it, and that the fright and dejection of spirit, communicated from one to another upon the occasion, might at length affect the Assyrian army in general for the loss of their chief, as in reality it did some time after, and occasion their sudden flight, and a successful pursuit after them.

And pulled down the canopy from the pillars.] The ancients, especially in warm countries, made the curtains of their beds of a very fine net-work, which coming round the whole bed, shut them in in such a manner as to have the benefit of the air without the trouble of flies, which could not get through them. Such seems to have been round the bed of Holofernes, called here κωνωπεῖον, and by the Vulgate, *conopeum;* which was a sort of veil made in the form of a fine net, which left a passage for the light, and at the same time kept out the flies. The Egyptians used this kind of net-work all round their beds, to guard against the inconvenience of certain flies or gnats, which are called κώνωπες. The ponds and marshes, with which Egypt abounded, bred a great number of these insects. They who translated the history of Judith into Greek, probably Alexandrian Jews, seem to speak after their country manner, when they say here, that Judith pulled down the *conopeum* of Holofernes's bed after she had cut off his head.

Ver. 11. *Then said Judith afar off to the watchmen at the gate, Open, open now the gate: God, even our God is with us, to shew his power yet in Jerusalem, and his forces against the enemy.*] Καὶ κράτος κατὰ τῶν ἐχθρῶν, which would be better rendered, *And his force against the enemy*, or *his enemies*, as the Geneva version has it. Judith, exulting with joy for the happy success of her enterprise, is impatient till the watchmen open the gates for her admittance, that she may communicate the important news to the elders of the

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city, and the distressed inhabitants. It is observable, that she calls to them afar off, that she redoubles her call, and dwells upon the name of her great and mighty Deliverer. If we should suppose Judith, soon after her entrance, to hasten into the sanctuary of the Lord, there to return her devout thanks in form, it would be no improbable supposition, nor disagreeable to her character, viii. 8. *that she feared God greatly.* She might then say, in a higher and more exalted sense, *Open me the gates of righteousness, that I may go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord. I will thank thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* (Psal. cxviii. 19. 21. 23.)

Ver. 14. *Then she said to them with a loud voice, Praise, praise God, praise God, for he hath not taken away his mercy from the house of Israel.*] The Jews, upon the receipt of any signal deliverance, used to repeat the one hundred and forty-seventh Psalm. Judith probably begins this, the words of which are very applicable to the occasion, particularly ver. 1—3. 5—7. 10—14.

Ver. 15. *The Lord hath smitten him by the hand of a woman.*] As Judith perceived within herself a sort of inspired courage upon the occasion, less than which would not have conducted her through such a desperate and hazardous undertaking, she represents the victory gained over Holofernes as the act of God, and accordingly calls upon the elders of the city, in the most earnest and importunate manner, to praise God for his mercy, (ver. 14.) One cannot but observe here, the great humility of Judith; she doth not say, *I have smitten him,* to take the honour of such an enterprise to herself solely, but attributes all the success of the action to God, who had wrought so great salvation for Israel by her hand. Not unlike that devout and humble acknowledgment of St. Paul, *Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.* (1 Cor. xv. 10.) St. Ambrose, among other instances of the merit of this heroine, mentions particularly her strong confidence in God, and that it was the highest commendation of her virtue to be favoured with the assistance of God, and to experience his loving-kindness and protection, "Quanta honestatis auctoritas, ut Deum adjutorem præsumeret, quanta gratia ut inveniret?" (De Offic. lib. iii.)

Ver. 16. *As the Lord liveth that hath kept me in my way that I went, my countenance hath deceived him to his destruction, and yet hath he not committed sin with me, to defile and shame me.*] *i. e.* Though he was captivated with my person, and intended the ruin of my virtue, yet hath he not effected his vile purpose; I am free from the sin of impurity and uncleanness. But as it might seem very difficult, and almost impossible, that a single defenceless woman should keep her chastity, unattacked and inviolate, in the midst of an army of lawless barbarians, and even alone, under the covert of night, in the tent of so powerful a ravisher, she calls upon God to attest her spotless innocence; that God who had accompanied her in the way, and brought her back in triumph and safety. "Primus triumphus (says St. Ambrose), ejus fuit quod integrum pudorem de tabernaculo hostis revexit; secundus, quod fœmina de vino reportavit victoriam. Non expavit mortis periculum, sed nec pudoris, quod est gravius bonis fœminis. Non unius ictum carnificis, sed nec totius exercitus tela trepidavit. Stetit inter cuneos bellatorum fœmina, inter victricia arma secura mortis. Quantum ad molem spectat periculi, moritura processit, quantum ad fidem, dimicatura." (De Offic. lib. iii. cap. 13.) *i. e.* Her first triumph was, that she preserved her chastity unspotted, even in the tent of the enemy; the second, that she prevailed over the temptation and power of wine. She feared not the loss of life, nor even that of her modesty, which is of more value in the esteem of grave and discreet women. So far was she from being afraid of mischief from one ruffian, that she regarded not the power of his whole army: one single woman stood regardless of fear amidst the crowded ranks of soldiers flushed with victory. If we consider the greatness of the danger, she went in peril of her life; if her faith and confidence in God, she was resolute and determined at the expense of it to contend for victory.

Ver. 19. *For this thy confidence shall not depart from the heart of men, which remember the power of God for ever.*] *i. e.* As long as mention shall be made of God's omnipotence, so long and often shall they instance in that single act, the deliverance of his people by one single woman, effected through the mighty prevalence of her faith. Or thus—Judith's religious confidence shall in future times be honourably mentioned, as an instance, how God, for the bringing about his secret purpose, avails himself of the weakest instrument, which is strong in faith.

Ver. 20. *And God turn these things to thee for a perpetual praise, to visit thee in good things, because thou hast not spared thy life for the affliction of our nation, but hast revenged our ruin, walking a straight way before our God.*] The Vulgate has, *Sed subvenisti ruinæ ante conspectum Dei nostri.* What Ozias here says to Judith, gives one a high idea of her who wrought this deliverance at this time. It seems, say Messieurs of Port-Royal, commenting on this rendering, as if God was angry with his people, and was upon the point of delivering them up to the fury of the Assyrians, when Judith, urged by a secret impulse, and herein not unlike Moses, presents herself before his throne, and interposes between him and the people of Israel, to disarm his fury, and hinder the ruin of her nation. She interposes with him in their behalf, not by urging any merit of theirs, but by her watchings, fastings, and other religious austerities; by her continual prayer, holy confidence, and faith, and above all her profound humility, which rendered her a worthy advocate to apply to, and prevail with God to take pity on his people. St. Ambrose sets the reasons in a strong light, which induced Judith to engage in an enterprise so hazardous; "Honestatis fuit, prohibere ne populus Dei profanis se dederet, ne ritus patrios et sacramenta proderet, ne sacras virgines, viduas graves, pudicas matronas barbaricæ subjiceret impuritati; ne obsidionem deditione solveret. Honestatis fuit, se malle pro omnibus periclitari, ut omnes eximeret periculo." (Lib. iii. Offic.)

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *HEAR me now, my brethren, and take this head, and hang it upon the highest place of your walls.*] This was done to discourage and cast a dread upon the Assyrians from so ghastly a sight. Judas Maccabeus did the like by Nicanor's head; he hung it upon the tower, *an evident and manifest sign* (says the text) *unto all, of the help of the Lord,* 2 Macc. xv. 35. Livy mentions, that when

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Asdrubal was slain, his head was flung into his brother Hannibal's tent, that the sight of it might cast a damp upon that general and his soldiers. In like manner, when the Philistines saw the head of their champion Goliath in David's hand, they fled, and were overtaken with a great slaughter. (1 Sam. xvii. 51.)

Ver. 2. *And so soon as the morning shall appear, and the sun shall come forth upon the earth, take you every one his weapons, and go forth every valiant man out of the city, as though you would go down towards the watch of the Assyrians, but go not down.* Ver. 3. *Then shall they take their armour, and shall go into their camp, and raise up the captains of the army of Assur, and they shall run to the tent of Holofernes, but shall not find him: then fear shall fall upon them, and they shall flee before your face.*] This was a well-concerted scheme, and a politic contrivance: she advises not, that the Hebrews should go down, and fall on the sudden on the Assyrians, who would be sure to repulse and overcome them, being much stronger and far superior in number: but her counsel is, not to come in reality to blows, but only to make a feint of so doing, and by a false attack to alarm and put their army in motion, and oblige them to run to Holofernes's tent to receive his orders, who, upon seeing their general lie dead, and his mangled carcass upon the ground, would be flung into a panic and confusion, and before they should have time, or be able to recover themselves from the consternation, the Israelites with all their force should attack them, and they would flee with great precipitation and disorder. St. Ambrose admires Judith for this stratagem, and extols her reach of thought above her magnanimity, "Nec dexteræ tantum hoc opus, sed majora tropæa sapientiæ. Nam manu solum Holofernem vicit, consilio autem omnem hostium vicit exercitum. Suspenso enim Holofernis capite, quod virorum non potuit excogitari consilio, suorum erexit animos, hostium fregit, suos pudore excitans, hostes quoque terrore percellens, eoque cæsi sunt et fugati:" (lib. vi. de Viduis.) *i. e.* The victory which Judith gained was not so much an instance of her courage as of her wisdom. By her hand she triumphed over Holofernes only, but by her counsel over the whole army of the Assyrians, by hanging up Holofernes's head; by an expedient, which not even the elders of the city thought of, she as much exalted the spirits of the besieged, as she depressed those of the enemy. By the sight of this trophy she shamed her own people into courage, as she cast a dread and horror upon the besiegers by so shocking a spectacle: and her stratagem had the desired effect; for, through the power of it, they fled, and were cut to pieces.

Ver. 5. *But before you do these things, call me Achior the Ammonite, that he may see and know him that despised the house of Israel, and that sent him to us, as it were to his death.*] The Vulgate places this almost at the end of the last chapter. One is surprised to find, since it is said, xiii. 13. that all, both small and great, ran together to meet Judith at her return, that Achior still continued in Ozias's house a stranger to it, and came not among the rest to congratulate her arrival, till he was sent for; as he seems equally interested and concerned to know this important news, it does not appear what should detain him at a time when all others hastened where Judith was. It is probable that Achior had not yet his entire liberty, and that he was in some sort watched, till they saw the success of Judith's expedition; or perhaps, as her return was in the night, Achior might be asleep, and not instantly informed of it. Whatever was the cause, it was highly reasonable to acquaint him with it, to free him from inquietude and fear, whom the proud Holofernes threatened to kill, when he took Bethulia, because he had so much extolled the almighty power of the God of Israel. And therefore Judith was kind in remembering him, and insisting, that before they went forth out of the city, they should fetch Achior to her, that she might give him the pleasure to hear that the tyrant who threatened his life was through her means now no more. Particular favour also might be shewed to Achior, because he differed so much in temper and behaviour from the rest of his countrymen; for it was true of the Ammonites, as well as of the Moabites and Edomites, that though they were related in blood to the Jews, yet they bore a constant hatred towards them, which they took all opportunities to shew, when the Jews were under any distress: and therefore Achior's interesting himself in their behalf, in the time of their distress, at the peril of his own life, was the more remarkable, and on that account he claimed the more notice and favour.

Ver. 6. *Then they called Achior out of the house of Ozias, and when he was come, and saw the head of Holofernes in a man's hand in the assembly of the people, he fell down on his face, and his spirit failed.*] The sight of the severed and bleeding head of him who had threatened his life, the surprise of an event so great and unexpected, and the joy to see himself thus delivered in an instant from the cruel death which awaited him, if Bethulia had been taken, these meeting together, occasioned within him such a disorder and confusion of spirits, as quite to overset him. "So pious souls are affected (say Messieurs of Port-Royal, who often allegorize part of this history), from considering, that Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman, has bruised the serpent's head, has delivered them from the wrath to come, and wrought for them so wonderful a salvation. The thoughts of their deliverance fill them with holy raptures; like St. Paul, they are, as it were, in an ecstacy, caught up into the third heaven, and can scarce tell whether they are in or out of the body." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 10. *And when Achior had seen all that the God of Israel had done, he believed in God greatly, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was joined unto the house of Israel unto this day.*] *i. e.* He became a Jew, and his descendants continued so; for being circumcised, and becoming a Jew, were synonymous terms. Thus what our translators render, Esth. viii. 17. *Many of the people of the land became Jews,* according to the LXX. is, πολλοὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν περιετέμοντο, καὶ Ἰουδάϊζον, were circumcised, and conformed to the Jewish rites and customs. It should seem from the text, as if Achior circumcised himself, and at that instant; but it is more probable, that this was done by the proper minister of circumcision, and not till after the victory was gained over the Assyrians. It also seems to intimate, at least according to the rendering of the Vulgate, and I think it is likewise countenanced by the Greek, that Achior was induced to *believe in God greatly,* from seeing and admiring this instance of his power; but does not the zealous manner in which he delivered himself be-

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fore Holofernes and his chief officers, (chap. v.) and his noble declaration of the greatness and majesty of God, his strict justice and impartial goodness in all his dealings with his people, give us reason to think, that he believed in God long before? The truth is, Achior hitherto regarded the God of the Jews as a local Deity only; as the God or protector of one particular people; he doubted not of his power, and the miracles which he had done for his people Israel, but he still continued, according to the custom and mode of his nation, a worshipper of Moloch, or Milcom, and an observer of his abominable and superstitious rites. The elders of Bethulia, when they received him into the city, probably instructed him better, and gave him the choice of being either a proselyte of the gate, or a proselyte of justice. Upon seeing this farther evidence of God's power in behalf of his chosen, exerted by Judith's hand, and the proud leader of the Assyrians, for his blasphemy and contemptuous defiance, so exemplarily punished by him, he received circumcision, the initiatory rite into the true religion, and proved the sincerity of his inward belief, by outwardly submitting to this ceremony. But still as an Ammonite, he was not entitled to any of the privileges usually allowed to a proselyte of justice, which makes his faith the more conspicuous and remarkable, as he was now joined to a people despised, and embraced a religion, where he could not expect or hope for, either for himself or his descendants, any temporal advantages, belonging to the Jewish people. And hence we may satisfy an objection which naturally offers itself from this place, *viz.* how Achior, being an Ammonite, could be joined unto the house of Israel, since the law expressly says, Deut. xxiii. 3. that *no Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the congregation of the Lord for ever, even to the tenth generation.* But this prohibition is not to be understood strictly and literally, since it is agreed on all hands, that neither a Moabite, or Ammonite, or even a Canaanite, were hereby incapable of becoming converts or proselytes to Judaism, and entering thereby into the congregation of the Lord: the intention of this negative precept was only to hinder such from ever partaking of the Jewish privileges, prerogatives, dignities, places, preferments, or other temporal emoluments; and it does not appear from the story, that Achior was so fully received among the Jews, as to be admitted to partake of any, or all of the privileges and advantages of that people: though Aquinas and some others have maintained, that the rigour of this law was dispensed with in favour of Achior, on account of his signal profession and acknowledgment of God's power and providence before Holofernes. The like difficulty has been started with respect to Ruth, who being a Moabitish woman, and married to Boaz, became a Jewess. But here the case is still clearer, as that law in Deuteronomy affected not women, who might from any nation be admitted proselytes, and by reason of their sex were incapacitated from aspiring to or enjoying any dignities, prerogatives, or emoluments.

Ver. 13. *Waken now our Lord, for the slaves have been bold to come down against us to battle, that they may be utterly destroyed.*] The appellation of *slaves* is disgraceful; but the Vulgate speaks of them as contemptibly when it renders, *Egressi mures de cavernis suis, ausi sunt provocare nos ad prælium.* And probably it spake of them as such, from the fastnesses in which they secured themselves, and as appearing very diminutive on the top of so high a mountain to those in the plain.

Ver. 14. *For he thought that he had slept with Judith.*] This is expressed with great decency, though an impure sense is intended: Ὕπνος is often used for *concubitus* by the Hellenist Jews and other writers. (See Wisd. iv. 6. vii. 2. with the notes on those passages.) Terentius Christianus renders it not improperly, *Nunc imperator noster in amore est totus.*

Ver. 15. *But because none answered, he opened it, and went into the bedchamber.*] By the description of Holofernes's tent it seems rather to have been a pavilion, which was generally built with long palisadoes made of fir, the top of it covered with reeds, and the inside divided into several apartments, as this is described to be. Thus Achilles, in Homer, had his αὐλὴ μεγάλη, or great hall, and behind it were lodging-rooms. So again, Il. ix. Phœnix has a bed prepared for him in one apartment, Patroclus has another for himself and his captive Iphis, and Achilles had a third for himself and his mistress Diomeda. Such fixed tents were not used in common marches, but only during the time of sieges, when their long stay in one place made it necessary to build such tents. At other times they lay in the open air, their spears standing upright to be ready upon any alarm, and generally with the hides of beasts spread on the ground instead of a bed.

Ver. 18. *These slaves have dealt very treacherously.*] Ἠθετήκασιν οἱ δοῦλοι. This expression seems to be a kind of stated form, the form of a cry intimating sedition. Like that 1 Sam. xiii. 3. which the LXX. it is observable, render by the expression here used, ἠθετήκασιν οἱ δοῦλοι, though our version in that place renders it, *Let the Hebrews hear*—a form likewise in use among the Jews to bespeak attention.

One woman of the Hebrews hath brought shame upon the house of king Nabuchodonosor: for, behold, Holofernes lieth upon the ground without a head.] To overcome the captain or general of the hostile host personally, and by one's own hand, was the highest point of military glory, and such as no more than three of their heroes had ever gained, from the foundation of the Jewish commonwealth. In this action of Judith's, personal prowess and great bodily strength, which are made essential ingredients to complete the character of a great hero, were supplied and compensated by fineness of stratagem, artifice well conducted, and a resolution not to be shaken. And the renown arising from this action was the greater, as being done by the hands of a woman, and therefore reflected the more disgrace upon the house of king Nabuchodonosor. And well may she be said to have saved her country, and destroyed its enemies; because to vanquish the general himself, whose presence and bravery were the support of his troops, was in effect to dismay and to defeat his forces, as experience proved.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 2. *AND fear and trembling fell upon them, so that there was no man that durst abide in the sight of his neighbour; but rushing out all together, they fled into every way of the plain, and of the hill-country.*] One can hardly look upon the fright which seized the Assyrians as merely natural; for allowing it possible, that an army may on the

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report of the sudden death of its general, be affected with great surprise and consternation, and that it may be increased by the reflection on the manner of it, and especially by the discouraging sight of his head hung out to public view, yet, as there are always experienced commanders ready to supply the place of the deceased chief, and as they knew the condition of the besieged to be so desperate, for want of water, as to be obliged to surrender within a very few days, one would think, that such an accident happening to one man, though a principal person indeed, could not have affected the whole host in such a manner, as not only to break up the siege ingloriously, but to flee with the utmost precipitation. And it is yet more unaccountable to see so formidable an army pursued and cut to pieces, by a people famished and weakened for want of necessaries, whom just before they looked upon with the utmost contempt. It is therefore not improbable, supposing the truth of this history, that God cast upon them a supernatural panic, as he once confounded with a sudden fear the host of the Syrians; (2 Kings vii. 6.) and that, to humble their pride and presumption, he took from them the spirit both of counsel and of courage, for they seem not to have deliberated what to do, or what course to take, but, like sheep scattered and dispersed, they fled before the Hebrews.

Ver. 5. *Now when the children of Israel heard it, they all fell upon them with one consent, and slew them unto Chobai,* &c.] This overthrow of the Assyrian host may seem the more probable, as they fled without order, in different and unknown ways, and through an enemy's country, who having notice of what had happened, lay in wait for their coming, and slew such as fell into their hands. The event reminds one of Gideon's success in slaying a hundred thousand of the Midianites, by so small a company as three hundred only: and the description in the book of Judges, vii. 21—25. of their flight, the pursuit, the dispatching messengers throughout all Mount Ephraim to intercept them, and their final overthrow in consequence of it, very much resembles the account here. Messieurs of Port-Royal have a fine and pertinent reflection upon this defeat of the Assyrians: "Let none presumptuously assure himself of success, on account of the number of his forces, when he considers that the proud Holofernes, who had the vanity to tell Achior that he knew no other God but Nabuchodonosor, and that he would destroy all the Jews as one man, fell himself by the hands of a woman; and his great and very numerous army itself, fled like one man before the face of those very Jews whom he so cruelly threatened. Nor let the meanest at any time be discouraged, or fall into despair, at the sight of insulting enemies, how formidable soever they may appear, when he reflects upon the unexpected and miraculous deliverance which the weak hand of Judith, strengthened by the all-powerful one of God, procured for the children of her people." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 8. *Then Joacim the high-priest, and the ancients of the children of Israel, that dwelt in Jerusalem, came to behold the good things that God had shewed to Israel.*] Our version here, with the Vulgate, follows the Roman edition, which has, τοῦ θεάσασθαι τὰ ἀγαθά. The Complut. Ald. and some others have, τοῦ θεμελιῶσαι τὰ ἀγαθά. Grotius prefers the latter; and his exposition of the place is, that the ancients of Jerusalem came to be certified of the truth of the good news: but were they not before assured of this by messengers dispatched thither on purpose, or by the men that told them what things were done in the camp of their enemies, ver. 5.? Nor is the sense of the Geneva version, which follows the same reading, sufficiently clear; *viz.* that the ancients of the children of Israel that dwelt in Jerusalem came to confirm the benefits that God had shewed to Israel. The meaning seems rather to be, and the passage would thereby be more intelligible, that the ancients of the people, or judges at Jerusalem (for the Sanhedrin, of which some expound it, possibly might not be in being at this time, as its institution is generally thought to be after the return from the captivity), sent a solemn deputation of the principal persons in authority, to compliment Judith upon the success of an enterprise so wonderful, to testify in her presence the grateful sense which they had of the extraordinary service done to all Israel, and to Jerusalem in particular, by destroying the common enemy, and putting the Assyrian army to flight; and their public acknowledgment of God's loving-kindness and mercy to their whole nation, and to improve withal the advantage gained by Judith, and settle upon a sure and lasting foundation the quiet and safety she had procured for them. And from the account in the last verse of this history, *that there was none that made Israel any more afraid in the days of Judith, nor a long time after,* it appears, that they fixed the public repose upon a firm basis.

Ver. 10. *Blessed art thou of the Almighty Lord for evermore.*] In like manner Deborah the prophetess called Jael *blessed among women,* for the like fact committed on Sisera, Judg. v. 24.

Ver. 11. *And the people spoiled the camp the space of thirty days.*] The Syriac has only three days instead of thirty, as the Greek and Vulgate have it. It may be alleged in defence of this reading, that the camp of the Assyrians was doubtless very large, of great circuit and extent, detachments of it being differently distributed on the mountains, or distant parts of the plain, for the greater convenience of subsisting so great an army, and therefore must require no little time to go through and plunder it. The camp itself indeed might be plundered in less time than a month, but it may be supposed that the people continued for the whole thirty days to ransack, and constantly to find some things which escaped former searchers: it is probable the first that went out in quest of the spoil did it in a hurry and with precipitation. On such occasions, where variety offers, people are wont to take only what strikes them most, and to leave many things, which afterward are gathered with more exactness and care when the plenty is not so great and the hurry not so pressing. Or the meaning perhaps may be, that a whole month passed before a division and distribution was made of the whole spoil; it might take up the greater part of that time before all the plunder could be brought into Bethulia, to be faithfully and equally distributed among the people, according to the rules of war, and prescription of the law, mentioned Numb. xxxi. 27. 1 Sam. xxx. 24, 25.

And they gave unto Judith Holofernes's tent, and all his plate, and beds, and vessels, and all his stuff.] The Syriac has, *Tabernaculum et lectum ejus, jumenta, et universum instrumentum ejus.* In dividing the spoils taken from an enemy, the person who chiefly conducted the enterprise had

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always a more particular and larger share. Some rich present was also set apart to the Lord, and consecrated in his temple. (See xvi. 19.) What remained was usually divided among the soldiers, as well those that guarded the camp as those that were actually in the battle. Judas Maccabeus gave a portion to the maimed, the widows and orphans, of the spoils taken from Nicanor, and the residue was divided. (2 Macc. viii. 28.)

Ver. 12. *And she took branches in her hand, and gave also to the women that were with her.*] Θύρσους. The *thyrsus* was a sort of spear twisted about with ivy, used in the mysteries and triumphs of Bacchus. It is probable the Jews borrowed this, as they did many other customs, from the heathens, and applied it to their feasts of tabernacles and other solemn occasions. Boughs were made use of by both of them, to adorn and set off the pomp of their solemn processions, and as public ensigns of triumph. When Judas Maccabeus had cleansed the temple from the pollutions which Antiochus Epiphanes brought into it, all the people, to do him honour and to express their own joy, carried branches or boughs in processions, (2 Macc. x. 7.) and *sang psalms unto him that had given them good success in cleansing the holy place.*

Ver. 13. *And they put a garland of olive upon her, and her maid that was with her.*] Crowns, and particularly those made of olive twigs, were very rare, especially for women. This is the only instance one meets with, says Calmet, among the Hebrews; but nothing was more proper to grace Judith's triumph than such a crown. The olive was a tree in much esteem among the ancients, and its boughs used on certain festival occasions; it was also made by them an emblem of peace, and as such now very pertinently applied to distinguish and adorn her who was the happy procurer of it. Pliny mentions the honour paid to it by the Romans, "Oleæ honorem Romana majestas magnum tribuit, turmas equitum Idibus Juliis ex eis coronando, item minoribus triumphis ovantes." (Lib. xv. cap. 4.) And among the Greeks, the reward of the conquerors at certain games was a crown made of olive. (Alex. ab Alex. Gen. Dier. lib. v. cap. 8.)

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *ALL the people sang after her.*] The way of singing alternately, or for the people to join in the chorus, and sing the ἀκροτελεύτια, or ends of the verses which the *Psaltæ* began, was a very common and ancient practice; see Exod. xv. 21. where, after the children of Israel had passed the Red Sea, Moses and the men sang a song unto the Lord, and Miriam the prophetess, with all the women, joined in the chorus. (Exod. xv. 20, 21.) So, after David's victory over Goliath, the general chorus of the women was this, *Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.* (1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7.) And in the ceremonies used on the passage of the ark from one place to another, the chorus is generally thought to have been, *For his mercy endureth for ever.* (Psal. cxxxvi.) Calmet thinks this song of thanksgiving was composed *extempore* by Judith, animated and inspired by the Spirit of God; and that the people replied in the measure she began, and joined together in the chorus. Others are of opinion, that this was sung publicly in the temple at Jerusalem, when Judith went thither to offer the trophies of her victory to the Lord, carrying with her the head of Holofernes in triumph.

Ver. 3. *For God breaketh the battles.*] Judith, in her prayer to God, chap. ix. *to throw down the strength of the Assyrians by his power, and bring down by his wrath the forces of them that were exalted with horse and man, who gloried in the strength of their footmen, and trusted in shield and spear, and bow, and sling,* uses this very expression, *Thou art the Lord that breakest the battles, the Lord is thy name.* And very properly does she here, when her prayer was answered, and she had obtained her request, repeat it, and expatiate, with great pleasure and thankfulness, upon his almighty power and mercy, shewed to her *amongst the camps, and in the midst of the people, who threatened to destroy their borders.* The Jews, to exalt the almighty power and majesty of their God, sometimes describe him as going forth like a mighty man of war, armed with a sword to take vengeance of his enemies; sometimes as the God of the armies of Israel in particular, and sometimes as the Lord of hosts in general. The Vulgate furnishes us with a new and not improper sense of the remainder of the verse, *Qui posuit castra sua in medio populi sui, ut eriperet nos de manu omnium inimicorum; i.e.* his ministering spirits watched over the Israelites, and procured their deliverance, by striking a panic into the hearts of the Assyrians, and occasioning their flight.

Ver. 4. *Assur came out of the mountains from the north.*] Though Assyria and the other provinces beyond Euphrates were not directly north of Judea, the prophets notwithstanding usually describe them by *the north.* (See Isa. xiv. 13. 31. xli. 25. Jer. i. 13—15. iii. 12—18. Ezek. i. 4. viii. 3, &c.) It seems to be, because the people beyond Euphrates came into Judea by the defiles of the mountains of Libanus and Hermon, which are north of Judea: the way through Arabia Deserta, which was the direct and shortest way, was impassable for an army, as having neither water, nor wood, nor forage of any sort, nor any villages.

He came with ten thousands of his army, the multitude whereof stopped the torrents.] The Jews often confound the *torrents* with the *valleys* through which they pass, the same word נחל, with them signifying both; and so the sense here may be, that the Assyrian army covered all the valleys. The Greek seems to imply, that they maliciously stopped up and spoiled all the springs, wherever they came, that the inhabitants and their cattle might perish with thirst. Or the meaning may rather be, that through the great number of their forces, they had drained and exhausted all the torrents, as Sennacherib boasted, that he had *dried up all the rivers of besieged places.* (2 Kings xix. 24.) The like is mentioned of Xerxes's army, Juven. Sat. x. Herod. lib. vii. cap. 108, 109.

Ver. 6. *The Almighty Lord hath disappointed him by the hand of a woman.*] He who had defied the God of Israel, and had threatened to destroy his people, as one man, ignominiously falls by the hand of a woman. In the like disgraceful manner, Sisera, who was determined to destroy the children of Israel utterly, was given up into the hands of a woman, who slew him with a nail, and the workman's hammer. (Judg. iv. 21.) Dying by the hand of a woman, was reckoned so ignominious, that Abimelech, being wounded by the hand of a woman, desired his armour-bearer to save his

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honour, and thrust him through with his sword, *lest it might be said, that a woman had slain him.* (Judg. ix. 54.)

Ver. 7. *Neither did the sons of the Titans smite him . . .*] Some have formed an objection from this term as taken from the heathen poets; but have not some of the inspired writers borrowed words and even sentences from the poets, especially St. Paul and St. James? And why is this word more to be condemned than the name giant, which is as poetical as that of Titan? for giants are supposed to be so called, *quasi* γηγενεῖς, or earth-born, according to poetical fiction: it seems to be used here only to vary the expression. The LXX. and Vulgate have taken the same liberty, and particularly in the book of Job, by inserting the names of the Pleiades, Hyades, Orion, Arcturus, Amalthea, &c. (See note on Wisd. xix. 21.) All, I think, that can with reason be inferred from the use of this term is, that the author of this history, or however the translator of it, had read the Greek poets. By Titans are here meant the Rephaim, giants, often mentioned in Scripture.

Ver. 9. *Her sandals ravished his eyes.*] By the shape and size of these, the beauty of the feet was discovered: these shoes or sandals were anciently wont to be set off, or adorned with jewels, as we learn from many authors, (see Isa. iii. 18.) and were richer and neater than men's. The rabbins say, that the Israelites of condition appeared in the temple on solemn days with crimson shoes; Virgil describes Venus in the dress of a Phœnician damsel, with buskins of purple. The bride's sandals, Cant. vii. 1. were probably of this colour, *How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!* Their shoes did not hide their feet as ours do, but were like the Phœnician buskins, which discovered the foot and part of the leg, the whiteness whereof was set off by the lustre of the purple. Judith, in all probability, had a pair of these buskins on when she appeared before Holofernes.

Her beauty took his mind prisoner . . .] Nothing can be more poetical than this, or express the power of beauty stronger; see Ecclus. ix. 8. 1 Esd. iv. 26, 27. where the words, πολλοὶ ἀπενοήθησαν ταῖς ἰδίαις διανοίαις διὰ τὰς γυναῖκας, καὶ δοῦλοι ἐγένοντο δι' αὐτὰς, sufficiently confirm this passage.

Ver. 10. *The Persians quaked at her boldness, and the Medes were daunted at her hardiness.*] Possibly the Medes and the Persians were at this time subjects to the king of Assyria, and made up part of his army, as they did when Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem, that army consisting of several sorts of nations. (Isa. xxix. 7.) Except we should think that Nebuchadnezzar was foisted in here, and that this expedition was undertaken by Darius, or some other Persian prince. (See note on ii. 7.) Calmet thinks these two nations submitted to Nabuchodonosor after his victory over king Arphaxad, or Phraortes, (i. 13.)

Ver. 11. *Then my afflicted shouted for joy, and my weak ones cried aloud; but they were astonished: these lifted up their voices, but they were overthrown.*] *i. e.* The people of Bethulia, her weak and afflicted ones, through want of water and other necessaries occasioned by the siege, shouted for their deliverance: or, in a more general sense, the Israelites, threatened with ruin and destruction by this proud conqueror, triumphed upon his overthrow. But the Assyrians, as the margin rightly understands it, were astonished at a calamity so sudden, and a defeat so unexpected. The former lifted up their voices in songs and acclamations; and the latter were overthrown by those whom they had insulted for their impotency and weakness. There is a sort of contrast here which heightens the sense, and makes it preferable either to that of the Syriac or Vulgate, which understand the whole of the Assyrians.

Ver. 12. *The sons of the damsels have pierced them through, and wounded them as fugitives' children: they perished by the battle of the Lord.*] *i. e.* Because the Lord fought for Israel. The meaning here is, that raw youths, or children in comparison, overcame these mighty men of valour, so little resistance did they make; so little, that, according to the Geneva version, they fled away from those that wounded them like so many children; or, as the Syriac has it, suffered themselves to be put to death, like timorous women, without returning a blow.

Ver. 15. *For the mountains shall be moved from their foundations.*] *i. e.* Such proud princes, who, like the Assyrians, trust in the multitude of their forces, shall be disappointed and overthrown. Or it may be applied to the overthrow on which this song, or ἐπινίκιον, was composed.

Ver. 16. *For all sacrifice is too little for a sweet savour unto thee, and all the fat is not sufficient for thy burnt-offering; but he that feareth the Lord is great at all times.*] *i. e.* Is always in great favour with him. *Qui timet Dominum, magni est apud eum semper.* This sentence is very remarkable, and a strong proof of the inefficacy and unprofitableness of the ancient sacrifices as such: that God does not regard the sacrifice itself, however nice and costly, so much as the mind and holy disposition of the offerer; nothing but the fear and love of God can render men agreeable to him, or their oblations effectual in his sight.

Ver. 17. *The Lord will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment, in putting fire and worms in their flesh. . .*] *i. e.* The Lord shall slay all the enemies of the Jewish nation, and they shall be like to so many putrefying carcasses lying slain in the field of battle, and overrun with worms and stench. They shall be a lasting monument of God's justice, like Sodom, set forth for an example of the Divine vengeance, and of that eternal fire which is prepared for the ungodly. (See Mark ix. 44. Ecclus. vii. 17.) An expression of the like import we meet with in Isa. lxvi. where it is said of the enemies of God, that *the worm shall not die, neither shall the fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.* It seems more curious than useful to inquire, whether the fire and worms mentioned here and in Scripture, as the punishment of the wicked, are really material. If by these is to be understood a wicked and polluted conscience only, with the racking reflections that always accompany it, as was the opinion of Origen, there seems but little reason for the wicked to triumph, as the stings of conscience must be a greater torment than any bodily punishment, and will be coeternal with the soul.

They shall weep under a sense of their pains for ever.] The ancient Jews held, that the punishment of the wicked in hell should be perpetual, or without end. Josephus informs us, de Bell. Jud. lib. ii. Antiq. lib. xviii. that the pharisees maintained, the souls of the wicked were to be punished, ἀϊδίῳ τιμωρίᾳ, with perpetual punishment, and that there was appointed for them, εἱργμὸς ἀΐδιος, a perpetual prison. Philo says, the punishment of the wicked is, ζῆν ἀποθανόντα ἀεὶ, to live for ever dying, and to be for ever in

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pain, and grief, and calamities, that never shall have an end. (De Præm. et Pœn.) Instead of κλαύσοντας, the common reading of the place, a learned writer would have, καύσονται ἐν αἰσθήσει. (See Thirlby notes in Just. Apol.)

Ver. 18. *As soon as the people were purified, they offered their burnt-offerings.*] See note on xii. 7. Philo's testimony, with respect to the antiquity of this rite of purification, is too particular to be omitted: "Let the person (says he) who is about to offer sacrifice, after he has washed and purified his hands, lay them upon the head of the victim." (De Vict.) The Psalmist seems to allude to this custom, Psal. xxvi. 6. *I will wash mine hands in innocence, and so will I go to thine altar.* The priests were more particularly and strictly obliged to this purification, when they were to attend the public service, and minister about holy things, Exod. xxx. 20. see Gen. xxxv. 2. where we read that Jacob's servants, before they performed their devotions in Beth-el, washed themselves and changed their garments. The meaning of this passage is, that the people offered sacrifice as soon as they were purified from the uncleanness which they had contracted from the slaughter of the Assyrians, and the touching their dead bodies, and carrying away their spoils.

Ver. 19. *Dedicated all the stuff unto the Lord.*] The reason of this was, to acknowledge God is the giver of all victory. Almost all nations have concurred in this duty of thankfulness and gratitude after some signal success, and called, as Virgil expresses it, *in prædam partemque Jovem.* So the Philistines hung up the arms of Saul in the temple of Ashtaroth, and carried the ark into the temple of Dagon. The sword of Goliath, slain by David, mentioned 1 Sam. xxi. 9. to be wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod, is thought by learned men to be dedicated unto God. Thus Josephus understands it, τὴν ῥομφαίαν ἀνέθηκε τῷ θεῷ· And Sulpitius Severus, *Gladium postea in templum posuit.* Thus Abraham gave to Melchisedec, the priest of the most high God, as a return of gratitude to him, δεκάτην τῆς λείας, the tenth of all the spoils. (Heb. vii. 4.) And the Jews sometimes offered all the spoils taken in war, 2 Sam. viii. 12. or the first-fruits, 1 Sam. xv. 21. according to the rendering of the LXX. or the tenths, Heb. vii. 4. or hung up in the forefront of the temple, some more remarkable part of the spoils, as shields, &c. in token of victory, and as an instance of gratitude for it, 1 Macc. iv. 51. (See Spencer, de Leg. Heb. de Solut. Decim.)

Ver. 20. *So the people continued feasting in Jerusalem before the sanctuary for the space of three months.*] Such a fact as the killing of Holofernes, and thereby defeating the whole army of the Assyrians, and rescuing the Jews, not only from the danger of the present siege, but from such farther attacks as might have affected the very being of their state,—was it indeed true, say objectors, one might well expect that some public notice, some standing memorial, besides the temporary rejoicings here mentioned, though longer indeed than usual (being three months, according to all the versions but the Syriac, which mentions only one), should have been instituted of so auspicious an event. Public blessings of an inferior nature to this were wont to be commemorated by anniversary feasts, and that no such should be appointed in memory of this may seem scarce credible. From the foundation of the Jewish state, and the first giving of the law, scarce any deliverance happened to that people which was of greater consequence than this, if it had been truly such as is here represented, and yet we find no such annual triumph and festivities, though the occasion may seem to demand it. Some Latin editions, indeed, as particularly the Vulgate, conclude this book with the following verse, *Dies autem victoriæ hujus festivitatis, ab Hebræis in numero sanctorum Dierum accipitur, et colitur a Judæis, ex illo tempore usque ad præsentem diem.* But as there is no mention of this in the Greek and other versions, nor any festival taken notice of by the Jewish writers, as instituted on this occasion, it has been judged a corrupt addition to the text. Huetius thinks this is not a sufficient reason, because in time such a feast might be abrogated and laid aside. (Dem. Evang. prop. 4.) And this, Calmet says, is not improbable, as being only a human institution, and therefore it might drop by disuse or other accidents. In like manner, as the anniversary festival of Judas Maccabeus's victory over Nicanor, which in Josephus's time was celebrated with great rejoicings, (Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 17. 1 Macc. vii. 2 Macc. xv.) afterward ceased, and it is now many ages since any notice was taken of it. The Babylonish captivity gave so violent a shock to the Jewish state, and occasioned such confusion and disorder, that it is no wonder, during so long an exile, if they forgot and dropped many of their ancient feasts and solemnities, such especially as were not of Divine institution. Scaliger, indeed, mentions, lib. vii. de Emend. Temp. that the church of Ethiopia still observes the feast in memory of this victory, and that it is kept on the fourth of August in particular; which agrees very well with the history which places the siege in the time of harvest, and when the season was dry and hot. Which shews that the feast here said to be observed, could not be that of the dedication of the temple, instituted by Judas Maccabeus, as Grotius would have it, since that was confessedly kept in the winter, John x. 22. On which place that learned writer observes, that it was instituted in memory of the purification of the temple from the pollutions of Antiochus. But if this book was composed before that time, (see Præfat. in Jud.) how can the festival here mentioned possibly relate to it?

Ver. 22. *And many desired her, but none knew her all the days of her life, after that Manasses her husband was dead.*] Judith is not more magnified for her severe fastings than she is for her widowhood of so many years, and living with one husband only for the space of so long a life. She continued in the state of widowhood, not from any imbecility of body, or for want of solicitation, but from the magnanimity of her virtue. St. Ambrose admires and celebrates her prudent conduct on this occasion:—"Nec his tamen elata successibus, cui utique gaudere et exsultare licebat, viduitatis reliquit officium; sed contemptis omnibus, qui ejus nuptias ambiebant, vestem jucunditatis deposuit, viduitatis resumpsit. Nec triumphorum suorum amavit ornatus, illos existimans esse meliores, quibus vitia corporis, quam quibus hostium arma, vincuntur." (De Viduis.) Like that holy pattern of widows, Anna the prophetess, a widow about eighty-four years of age, (Luke ii. 38.) whereof she lived seven only with one husband from her virginity, and continued the rest of the time separated and retired, serving God with fastings and prayers night and day. Great things are said in the ecclesiastical writings in praise of perpetual widowhood: it is put upon a footing with, and by some

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preferred to, continual virginity. For as the lapsed, who remained true to the faith after their reconciliation to the church, were the more valued and esteemed, so the widows *indeed*, who, after casting off their first faith, continued single and chaste, were counted worthy of double honour. Second marriages, anciently, were looked upon as infamous, especially in women, and, even among the heathens, esteemed faulty, and somewhat criminal; and the reason was, because it brought them under a suspicion of incontinence. Nay, some writers have carried it much farther, and made it a sort of adultery. After the same manner second marriages were condemned by the Jewish rabbins, *Filii mulieris viduæ, filii scortationum sunt; i. e.* the children of a woman once a widow are the children of whoredom; and even some of the fathers seem to have been of the same opinion.

Ver. 23. *And waxed old in her husband's house, being a hundred and five years old.*] *Transit autem in domo viri sui annos centum quinque,* Vulgate. Not that she lived so long with her husband, or even in his house, but that her life was prolonged to that term, or that she died at that age.

Ver. 24. *And the house of Israel lamented her seven days.*] See Ecclus. xxii. 12. where the son of Sirach says, *Seven days do men mourn for him that is dead:* and that this was the stated time of mourning among the Jews appears from many instances; see Gen. v. 10. where Joseph's mourning for his father is said to have been seven days. The like was observed with respect to Saul and his sons, 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Archelaus performed the accustomed solemnity of seven days' mourning for his father Herod.

And before she died, she did distribute her goods to all them that were near of kin to Manasses her husband, and to them that were nearest of her kindred.] From hence it seems probable, that she had no children by her husband, as she adopted those that were nearest of kin on both sides to inherit her substance. As barrenness lay under a sort of disgrace among the Jews, her continuing without issue seems to have arose from an abhorrence of a second marriage.

Ver. 25. *And there was none that made the children of Israel any more afraid in the days of Judith, nor a long time after her death.*] There is not a greater difficulty in all this history, than to account for so long and continued peace as is here mentioned. For according to the account of this writer, says Dr. Prideaux, (Connex. vol. i.) "Peace must have lasted at least eighty years. For allowing Judith to have been forty-five years old at the time of her killing Holofernes (and in an older age she cannot well be supposed to have beauty enough to charm such a man), there must be sixty years after to the time of her death. But the expression, *a long time after,* in the text, cannot imply less than twenty years, and so carries the computation still farther." Calmet endeavours to explain and settle the difficulty thus: "From the death of Holofernes, A. M. 3348. to that of Manasses, A. M. 3361. we read of no war or considerable disturbance either in Israel or Judah: Amon, who succeeded him, reigned but two years, he was slain in his own house, but no account of any war in his time. Josias lived in like manner in peace and quiet, during the one-and-thirty years of his reign, to A. M. 3394." According to this reckoning there are forty-six years of continued peace. He supposes farther, as the text says nothing certain of the age of Judith at the time of this assassination, that she might be sixty-three or sixty years old, being then what we call a fine woman, and having an engaging air and person. In this case, and if this be allowed, he maintains, that from the raising of the siege of Bethulia to the death of Judith, and even some time longer, there was no war, or considerable disturbance in Israel, for the space of six-and-forty years. The following table will make his scheme clearer:—

A. M.	
3285	Birth of Judith.
3306	Manasses began to reign.
3328	He is brought prisoner to Babylon, and after some months sent back to Judea.
3347	War between Nabuchodonosor and Arphaxad.
3347	Victory of Nabuchodonosor over Arphaxad.
3348	Expedition of Holofernes.
3348	Siege of Bethulia.
3361	Death of Manasses, king of Judah.
3390	Death of Judith, aged a hundred and five years.
3394	Death of king Josiah.
3414	The last siege of Jerusalem by Nabuchodonosor.
3416	The city taken, the temple destroyed, and the people brought captive to Babylon.

APPENDIX

TO THE

COMMENTARY ON JUDITH.

THE time in which the history of Judith is to be placed, is a point the most contested and most difficult of all others to be settled, and is indeed that on which depends the solution of most of the other difficulties usually urged against this book. If one could once fix a certain epoch of the great event recorded in this history, the adversaries of it would have little to object against its truth and reality. The opinion most followed, and which is countenanced by the best chronologers is, that the date of this history ought to be placed before the last Babylonian captivity. But they are not generally agreed whether it should be placed in the reign of Zedekiah, Manasses, Amon, Josiah, or Jehoiakim. Our learned Usher fixes it particularly in the time of Manasses, or A. M. 3348. (Per. Jul. 4058. ante Christ. 656.) And the same opinion is espoused and followed by the author of the Index and Tables to the Quarto Bibles, supposed, with good reason, to be the work of the truly great and eminent Bishop Lloyd. But even those that place it under Manasses, are divided among themselves; some think this event happened while that prince was prisoner at Babylon, and that the history itself countenances this notion by its silence with regard to the prince that then reigned. Others will have it to be a little after his return from thence, and ascribe his absenting from public business, partly to

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prudential and political views, which hindered him from declaring himself openly against the king of Assyria, and partly to a spirit of humiliation and contrition, which engaged his thoughts and pleased itself in retirement. The last reason Calmet thinks most probable; his system with regard to the date of this history, Judith's age at the time of Holofernes's death, and the long peace that ensued upon it, as it has been more generally approved and followed, I have explicitly set down, and for more clearness added a short chronological table at the conclusion of the Commentary, of his hypothesis. But against his scheme the following objections have been thought to lie, and to carry with them some considerable weight: 1. From his account the heroine of the story, who by her singular beauty makes such a conquest as is hardly to be paralleled in all history, was at that time at least sixty years old; rather an old woman, than one capable or likely, by the sprightliness of her charms, to captivate such a general. 2. His solution has been objected to, as inconsistent with sacred history. Judith's death happens, according to him, twenty-nine years after that of Manasses: at the end of this book it is expressly said, that *none made the children of Israel any more afraid for a long time after her death;* and yet, in the thirty-third, or at most the thirty-fourth year after the death of Manasses, that is within four or five years after her death, Josiah, king of Judah, found himself under the unfortunate necessity of opposing Pharaoh-Nechoh, who would force a way through his country against the king of Babylon, to whom Josiah had sworn allegiance and fidelity. In this fatal struggle Josiah fell, and with him, as Prideaux expresses it, "perished all the glory, honour, and prosperity, of the Jewish nation." But these objections I shall have an opportunity to consider, and in some measure reply to, under the following hypothesis; *viz.* that of Montfaucon, who agrees with Calmet, and the learned chronologers above, in placing the siege of Bethulia in the reign of Manasses, but fixes it to the latter part of it: he supposes Judith at this time to be about forty-five, or at most fifty years old, and peace to continue to the end of the reign of Jehoiakim; and by this account there will be sixty years of tranquillity; *viz.* the sixteen last years of Manasses, two of Amon, thirty-one of Josiah, and eleven of Jehoiakim. In this hypothesis the objection with respect to Judith's age is somewhat weakened, but if it be thought very rare, that a woman should preserve her beauty in such perfection to fifty, and especially to sixty years, let it be considered, that it is no less surprising, that one of that sex should live to a hundred and five; and that such, whose constitution is so strong and vigorous, as to live to so very long a term of life, generally were better, and preserve their complexion and beauty longer, than other people, especially if they have had no children, nor any of the accidents or infirmities incident to teeming women, as was particularly the case of Judith. I might here add also, what the Vulgate expressly says, though I do not pay an equal regard to it with the catholics, "that God, for the more effectual deliverance of his people by her hand, added to the grace and lustre of her beauty at the time when she presented herself before Holofernes." But possibly this representation of her, with these additional advantages, may not be thought consistent with the eunuch Bagoas calling her, *fair damsel,* and the Greek παιδίσκη; (xii. 13.) but there is the less stress to be laid on this, as the LXX. call Ruth νεᾶνις, when she had at that time lived many, at least ten, years with her first husband, and Sarah εὐπρόσωπος, when she was older than Judith in either of the reckonings is supposed to be here: as Abraham and David in like manner, each of them is, by the same writers, called παῖς, even when somewhat advanced in years. As to the next particular, *viz.* the long continuance of the peace in and after her time, it is observed by the same learned apologist for the truth of this history,* "that the Jews, from their coming out of Egypt, never enjoyed so long a respite and tranquillity as at this time, the whole term being little less than sixty years; the happy effect probably of the sincere penitence and contrition of Manasses, and of the great piety of Josiah. We find in Herodotus, a farther reason of their long quiet, and placid state of affairs; *viz.* that the most powerful empires of the east were then so engaged and employed on different occasions in warlike enterprises, that they were not at liberty to molest their neighbours, which they would not have failed to have done if they had been at peace. Hence the Babylonians and Assyrians were hindered from carrying their arms into Judea; and hence too it happened, that we read of no war in the books of Kings and Chronicles, after the return of Manasses from his captivity, to the death of Josias:" unless that struggle indeed is to be called a war, wherein Josiah only defended his own borders, and the war was properly and truly, according to the best historians, between the king of Egypt and the king of Assyria. Some indeed perhaps will not be brought to consent, that the peace should be allowed to continue after the death of Josiah, in a reign when the Jews were tributary to the Babylonians; but, as the paying tribute, though an instance of the people's weakness, does not always infer war, so the mulct imposed upon the Jews, hinders not, but that all this time may pass for a time of peace and repose, especially with regard to a people so accustomed to slavery as the Jews were; and consequently the eleven years of Jehoiakim are to be included in the long term of peace here mentioned, and their national calamity to be dated from their final transmigration, when there was an end more properly of the Jewish glory and prosperity. Farther, it has been thought a strong presumption of a fiction, as we have the history of the reigns of Manasses and Josiah twice recorded in Scripture, that we find not the least syllable there, relating to such mighty events, as are mentioned in the book of Judith: and if Josephus had believed them real, it is surprising, that, were he professedly writing the history of those times, he should not take occasion to supply that omission. Josephus's absolute silence as to this whole transaction, is urged as increasing the difficulty: had he believed the history to be fact, the taking notice of it was so much for the dignity and glory of his country, so proper to raise the figure of his people, which was the grand point he had in view throughout his history, that one would almost as easily believe an able historian could attempt to write the history of our king Edward III. and yet quite overlook the battle of Cressy, the most glorious and distinguished character in it. As for the books of Kings and Chronicles not mentioning this great event, it may be sufficient to reply, that the reason of this perhaps may be, that the sacred history being very concise, a particular account

* Montfaucon. la Verité de l'Histoire de Judith.

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of all facts relating to the Jewish nation, is not to be expected. It sometimes mentions remarkable occurrences transiently, and in a few words, and sometimes altogether omits things considerable and important. This observation is particularly applicable to the books of Kings and Chronicles, which speak in general terms, and refer for actions unmentioned to books then extant, but long since lost. (See 1 Kings xiv. 19. 29. 2 Kings xvi. 19. 1 Chron. xxix. 29. 2 Chron. ix. 29. xxxiii. 19.) As to that part of the objection drawn from Josephus's silence, I shall not, in solution of it, urge that the writer says nothing of some other important transactions within the compass of history, as the infanticide, and the actions of Jesus Christ, and John the Baptist, these being rather repugnant to the general design of his writings, but shall set down some, I think not improbable, reasons of this silence. 1. As it was not his design to take in all occurrences that any ways related to the Jewish people, so he professes to confine himself to such things and facts as were recorded in their ancient books, *i. e.* the Hebrew Scriptures comprised in their canon, and therefore might pass over the circumstances of this history, however known to or believed by him, as not being wrote in that language, nor admitted into the sacred code: and should it be allowed, that he has occasionally inserted in his history some circumstances and facts apocryphal and unrecorded, yet this, I conceive, proves more against the veracity of Josephus himself, and his little regard to the profession he makes of a strict attachment to the Hebrew Scriptures only, than it impeaches the credit of the history of Judith. 2. Those who have read Josephus with care must have observed, that in his history of the times which precede the captivity of Babylon, he scarcely mentions any thing more of the kings of Judah, than what he finds in the books of Kings and Chronicles. And hence probably it happened, that many remarkable facts omitted in those sacred books are likewise omitted by Josephus. It is observable, that he follows these step by step, and possibly he either would not interrupt their series and order, if he knew of Judith's history, or might not certainly know in what time to place it. Which is more probable, as he seems not to have had any great knowledge of the history of the Medes, wherein several very considerable omissions are to be discovered. It is certain that the Scythians invaded Asia in the time of Manasses; that they made great devastation there; that they entered even Palestine, robbed and plundered the temple of Venus at Ascalon, and at length settled at Bethsan, a city of Judea, and from their own name called it Scythopolis. Might not one expect, in such a history as that of Josephus, some account, or mention at least, of so great and interesting events? And yet that historian wholly omits them, probably as not being taken notice of in the books of Kings and Chronicles, which are the memoirs he proceeds upon, and are his only guides and authority in the Jewish history. The same answer will in a great measure satisfy another objection, sometimes urged from Josephus, *viz.* his omitting Joacim in his list of the high-priests, from the times of David to the captivity; for as he omits several of that order, even those mentioned in Scripture, it is no wonder that he should omit a single name which occurs in this history. It appears then from what has been observed, that the objection founded on the silence of Josephus is but of little weight, and that the history of Judith may notwithstanding be true, though Josephus does not mention it. It may be proper here also to examine more fully another difficulty, in some measure indeed replied to in its place, founded on the words of Achior, v. 18, &c. who, speaking of the Jews, says, *The temple of their God was cast to the ground.* From hence some have inferred, that the history of Judith ought to be placed after the captivity, and that the meaning is, that the temple was entirely ruined from the foundation, and that the words *they are returned from the places of their captivity*, point out their return from the captivity of Babylon. But before I proceed to the objection itself, it may be pertinent to premise, that Achior, who speaks in this place, being a stranger, an Ammonite, too much stress ought not to be laid on his account of Jewish affairs; for possibly he might not be well informed of what passed in Judea, or related to it, and might have heard that the number of Jews returned from their captivity was much greater than it really was, as a report often exaggerates matters, and deceives persons at a distance. But there is no occasion to rest in this general answer, or to have recourse, with Bellarmine, to any supposed corruption of the text; for the Greek, ὁ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ αὐτῶν ἐγενήθη εἰς ἔδαφος, may fairly admit of another meaning, *viz.* that the temple had been abused and profaned by gentiles and idolaters, who entered into it, and dealt with it as a common place; *Templum Dei ipsorum habitum est ut profanum solum*, says Junius, very closely and explicitly; and some more ancient Latin copies, *Templum Dei ipsorum factum est in pavimentum.* For though εἰς ἔδαφος καταβάλλειν in Plutarch, and εἰς ἔδαφος καθελεῖν in Thucydides and Josephus, may mean *solo æquare*, I know not of any authority to make εἰς ἔδαφος γίνεσθαι signify *solo æquari.* And even though one should find εἰς ἔδαφος γίνεσθαι in the sense of *solo æquari*, yet this passage will not admit of it here. It is manifest it speaks not here of any particular calamity that happened to the Israelites, such as the destruction of their temple, but of God's general conduct with respect to them, that so long as they were obedient, so long God filled them with blessings; but when they forsook his worship, he delivered them to their enemies to be slain, and carried captive; and even permitted his own temple to be profaned and desecrated, and in that sense trampled under foot; as happened in the time of Rehoboam, when it was spoiled and abused by Shishak king of Egypt; in that of Amaziah, by the king of Israel, who was himself an idolater; in that of Ahaz, by Tiglath-Pileser, and by the scandalous idolatry of Manasses himself; and probably by the Assyrians, when they made him prisoner. It is not then of the actual destruction of the temple, but of its profanation on different occasions, that this passage is to be understood. This will more plainly appear to be the sense, by considering iv. 3. where it is said, *that the people were newly returned from captivity, and the temple, altar, and holy vessels, purified after their profanation.* Can this possibly relate to the return from the last captivity of Babylon, when there was neither altar nor temple remaining to be purified? Or can it be expounded better than of the profanation of them by Manasses, of the captivity of him and his people, of his and their repentance, and their return in consequence of it; and of the purifying of the holy place and utensils through his care, to compensate for his former great wickedness? (See 2 Chron. xxxiii. 15, 16.)

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Strange have been the whims which even learned men have fallen into with respect to this history. Luther will have it to be no more than an artful tragedy; and even Grotius labours, in a forced manner, to make it wholly enigmatical, by fancied derivations, or allusions to the Hebrew: by joining to the names Bethulia and Holofernes what letters he thinks proper, or dividing and splitting them as he pleases, he makes words to signify just what he would have them. Bethulia, or, as the Greek has it, Βετυλούα, must be *Beth-el-ia;* though *El,* which is the name of God, is rarely, if ever found wrote with *ul,* much less is it usual to join two names of God in one word. Nor could he certainly know, how these proper names were wrote in Chaldee, the original language of this book. And to make of Holofernes, which is confessedly a Persian name, *Halpar-nahas,* i. e. *binding the serpent;* is not this straining words beyond all reason, or explaining away their true meaning? Or, finally, could there be any manner of reason to invent a fable, as he supposes, such as he would have this to be, to raise the spirits of the Jews at this time, when there were so many well-attested histories of God's gracious interposition in behalf of his chosen, and by the hands of those famous worthies, whom the writer to the Hebrews so justly celebrates? The allegorizing this history in the manner he has done, and violently extorting a recondite meaning, supposed to be concealed under every place and person, seems rather the sport of fancy than the result of judgment. To conclude, I conceive this to be a real history, and one which is so circumstantial cannot be suspected or objected to, without subjecting other histories to the like caprice or fancy. There is certainly this useful moral contained in it, *viz.* that God is never wanting to his faithful servants; and as he has an infinite variety of means, to bring about his secret purposes, so he is able, and often chooses to do it, by the most feeble and unpromising.

THE

BOOK OF BARUCH.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *AND these are the words of the book.*] It begins abruptly, as if it was a part or continuation of some former work; but the connective particle και, or *et,* is often to be observed in the beginning of books, particularly the historical ones of the Hebrews. (See Exod. i. 1. Lev. i. 1. Numb. i. 1. Josh. i. 1. and 1 Macc. i. 1. Judith i. 1. in the Vulgate.) By *book* we are to understand the letter (see ver. 14.) which Baruch wrote from those that were carried into Babylon to such as remained in Judea, and begins at ver. 10. (the first part is a sort of preface) and contains that confession which the Jews were to use in their public worship, upon solemn days, during their captivity. It begins, i. 15. and is continued to iii. 8.

Which Baruch the son of Nerias, &c.] It is certain that the true Baruch, whom this writer seems to personate, was of an illustrious family; his father and grandfather were of great note in their times, and distinguished in their country. His brother, Seraiah, was sent on an important commission to Nebuchadnezzar, to request him to send back the holy vessels which he had carried to Babylon, when Jerusalem was taken in the time of Jechonias. Josephus confirms the account of his being of a very eminent family, and that he was well skilled in the language of his country; (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11.) which two characters, says a learned writer, seem to imply, that Josephus had read the genealogy of Baruch prefixed to this book, and that it was written in the language of his country, either in Hebrew or Chaldee. (Authen. Rec. vol. i.) Grotius, on the other hand, maintains, that it was not wrote in Hebrew (which St. Jerome urges as the reason of its not being received into the Jewish canon), but the work of some Hellenistic Jew, well skilled in Greek, who exercised his fancy in composing the letter contained herein, framing it as if it was wrote from those who were carried to Babylon, and addressed to those of their brethren who still continued at Jerusalem.

Wrote in Babylon.] Probably, says Calmet, in the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah, when he accompanied his brother to Babylon; and whilst the latter was soliciting the return of the holy vessels, belonging to the temple, Baruch repeated to the captive Jews residing there, the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning the fall of Babylon, (li. 60. 64.) and the encouraging promises of their future deliverance.

Ver. 2. *In the fifth year, and in the seventh day of the month, what time as the Chaldeans took Jerusalem, and burnt it with fire.*] This writer neither mentions what the month was, *i. e.* by what name it was called, nor from whence one should compute the fifth year. It seems probable, that it means the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity. (See ver. 9.) But to make as it should seem the account more clear and explicit, is added, *what time as the Chaldeans took Jerusalem, and burnt it with fire,* which is attended with two difficulties. 1. That the temple is represented here as burnt by the Chaldeans in the fifth year of Jechonias's captivity, which was not till the eleventh of Zedekiah; and, secondly, that after the burning of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, there remained notwithstanding there a high-priest, priests, and numbers of people with them at Jerusalem; (ver. 7.) that the altar was still standing, and sacrifices offered on it; that the solemn days continued to be kept, and particularly that Zedekiah then reigned, and had

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made vessels of silver for the use of the temple, &c.—circumstances so promising and favourable, as but ill comport with the melancholy times which followed the destruction of the city and temple, and the unparalleled misery described in some of the following chapters.

Ver. 3. *Baruch did read the words of this book in the hearing of Jechonias the son of Joachim, king of Judah, and in the ears of all the people.*] This fact is said to be false; Jechonias being in captivity, and Baruch himself not then at Babylon, but in Egypt, as appears from Jer. xliii. 6. and chap. xliv. from which chapters it seems plain, that both Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch died among their brethren of the two tribes, who had carried them along with them into Egypt, in the twenty-third of Nebuchadnezzar; and that neither they nor the body of the remainder of the two tribes who were then in Egypt ever returned thence, or saw Babylon, as is asserted in this passage. This, says a learned writer, is a strong objection according to the present copies of the prophecy of Jeremiah, chap. xliv. But from the authority of Josephus, (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11.) who had ancienter and better copies, he contends, "that not only Jeremiah and Baruch might, but that the body of those Jews that were in Egypt probably did, return from thence, and were directly carried into Babylonia by Nebuchadnezzar himself, according to that prophecy, as it stood in the Hebrew copies of the first century. And to confirm Josephus's account, he refers to 2 Esd. xv. 10. as a prophecy (probably of Jeremiah) of this very fact of the Jews' return from Egypt." (Whiston's Authent. Record. vol. i. p. 7.)

Ver. 4. *All them that dwelt at Babylon by the river Sud.*] *Ad flumen Sodi*, Vulgate. Babylon is mentioned here as situate on the river Sud; but one does not read of any river in Babylonia of this name. *Sodi*, indeed, in Hebrew, signifies *pride*, and so, mystically, may be expressive of the swelling of the mighty river Euphrates, whose course was impetuous and overbearing. The commentators either take no notice at all, or give no sufficient account, of this river. Bochart conjectures, that *Sudi*, or *Sori*, is a fault of the copyist, and that it should be *Sori*, or *Suri*, because there is on the banks of the Euphrates, a city called Sura, or Sora. His words are, "Me autore legendum est Σοῦρ, Sur. Nam ex Hebræorum monumentis desumptum est, in quibus erat סור Sur, sed fefellit interpretem similitudo literarum ר et ד resh et daleth. Sur idem quod Sura vel Sora, urbs Babyloniæ notissima, ad hunc ipsum Euphratis alveum." Of the reality of such a city he gives ample testimony, and observes, it was called by another name, Mahasia; but that the river Euphrates was called *Sur* or *Sor*, he shews not distinctly. However, it is not improbable that it was so, and that the city either took its name from that part of the river, or the river from the city. Ptolemy mentions a branch of the river Euphrates, called *Maarsares*, which Bochart supposes, and not without some probability, to be a corruption from סרת *Naar-Sura, Fluvius Suræ.* (See Bochart, Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 9.)

Ver. 8. *Namely, silver vessels, which Sedecias the son of Josias king of Judah had made.*] Instead of the golden ones, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon carried away, which Solomon had put in the house of the Lord. These being only of silver, and not of such value as the former, possibly might fall into such hands as to be purchased again, and sent back to Jerusalem. The other, of immense worth, were kept by Nebuchadnezzar, as appears from Dan. v. 2. Grotius thinks this sentence an interpolation. (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 10. *Prepare ye manna.*] Ποιήσατε μάννα. It is generally agreed, that this is a corrupt reading, as the margin also intimates; it should be *mincha*, or a meat-offering. Grotius contends, that the true one is μαναὰ, and not μάννα. Ποιήσατε is also improperly rendered *prepare*, it is a sacrifical expression, and signifies *to offer*. In the translation of the Old Testament, which is followed by the writers of the New, ποιεῖν is equivalent to ἱεροποιεῖν, or ἱερουργεῖν. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 21. 1 Esd. i. 6.) And the words at the institution of the eucharist, τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, would be as well rendered, *Offer this in remembrance of me.* It is likewise so used by the Jewish Hellenistic writers, and by the Greek ones of the church, as *facere* is also among the Latins.

And offer upon the altar of the Lord our God.] The exiles at Babylon are here supposed to send money to the priests to buy the necessary offerings for the altar of the Lord. But how is this consistent with what is mentioned, ver. 2. that Jerusalem was taken and burnt? If the temple was indeed at this time burnt, we must either understand this that they were to bring their oblations to the place where the altar formerly stood, which they esteemed as consecrated ground, or that an altar was actually erected on the same spot, or of a place of worship in general, or of that at Mizpeh in particular; which place continued to be a proseucha, or place of worship. (See 1 Macc. iii. 46.) There is the like expression, and upon a parallel occasion, Jer. xli. 5. Grotius thinks this last clause to be an interpolation.

Ver. 11. *And pray for the life of Nabuchodonosor.*] We meet with the like, Ezra vi. 10. where Darius orders all things necessary for the sacrifices to be given to the elders of the Jews, that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savour unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons. Diodorus Siculus has a passage to the same purpose, "Adductis ad eum victimis, mos erat pontificem, sacerdoti adstantem, magna voce in conferta Ægyptiorum corona preces enuntiare, ut Dii sanitatem cum cæteris bonis omnibus regi largiantur." (Lib. i.) And from Tertullian we learn, that it was a solemn part of the service of the church, in his time, to pray for the happiness and prosperity of the princes under whom they lived. (In Apolog.) When the Jews came under the government of the kings of Egypt, Eleazar, their high-priest, writes to Ptolemy thus: "We continually offer sacrifice for thee, thy children, and friends; and the people pray for the happy success in all things, and for the peaceable state of thy kingdom." (Jos. Antiq. lib. xii.) And so they did, when they were under the Seleucidæ. And, lastly, when they came under the Roman government, this was their constant practice, till they began that rebellion which ruined their nation. (Jos. de Bello Jud. lib. ii.) This being, says the same author, the cause of the war, that the seditious did reject the sacrifice offered for Cæsar, though the priests and nobles earnestly entreated them not to desert the custom, which had always obtained among them. And that the Christians, following their example, thus prayed continually, from the beginning, for their kings, though heathens and persecutors, we learn

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from the writings of Polycarp, Justin, Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, and other ancient writers.

And for the life of Balthasar his son.] As the Scripture mentions Evil-Merodach as son of Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxv. 27. some have thought that by Belshazzar, Evil-Merodach is here to be understood, and that one and the same person is meant by both names. Others say, that Evil-Merodach was the eldest son of that monarch, and Belshazzar the youngest; and that the eldest being at that time in disgrace with his father, the younger was looked upon as presumptive heir of the crown, and therefore taken notice of here. Others understand by *son*, his grandson Belshazzar, as grandfathers are frequently called *fathers* in Scripture; see 2 Sam. ix. 7. 2 Kings viii. 26. compared with ver. 18. especially with respect to such as inherit after them. But Nebuchadnezzar was in truth his grandfather, though called his father, Dan. v. 2. for Belshazzar was son of Evil-Merodach, by Nitocris his queen, and therefore grandson to Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 12. *And we shall serve them many days.*] As the Jews had the greatest reason to consider Nebuchadnezzar and his family, and the Babylonians in general, as their most cruel enemies, since they had overturned their state, burnt their holy city and temple, and either killed or taken prisoners their kings, nobles, priests, and the far greater part of the people, can it be consistently supposed, that they should wish or pray, as the words seem to imply, that they might serve them many days? The meaning therefore must be, that if, according to their melancholy prospect they should continue to serve them many years, they might find favour in their sight, and their servitude in the land of their captivity be easy, or at least tolerable to them.

Ver. 14, 15. *And ye shall read this book which we have sent unto you, to make confession in the house of the Lord, upon the feasts and solemn days. And ye shall say,* &c.] By *book* we are here to understand the letter (for so any writing of considerable length is styled among the Hebrews) which Baruch wrote in the name of those that were in Babylon, to such of their brethren as still remained in Judea. It begins properly at the fifteenth verse (for the five foregoing ones are a sort of preface), and it contains that prayer or confession which the Jews used in their public worship, on solemn days, during their captivity. It may be divided into three parts; in the first, which ends at iii. 8. they acknowledge their great unworthiness, and the justice of God's dealings with them; they entreat his forgiveness of their sins past, and repeat the warning and threats of the prophets, whose words and reproofs they had notwithstanding rejected. The second part, which begins at ver. 9. of the third chapter to the beginning of the fourth, recounts the great privileges and advantages which the Jews enjoyed above other nations, in that they had the knowledge of the law of the Most High, and, through the direction of the only true wisdom, were made acquainted with the means of real happiness, life, and peace. From thence to the end of the fifth chapter, is an exhortation to a sincere repentance, and to leave their evil ways, by a speedy conversion, with a promise, on that condition, of a deliverance from the captivity under which they groaned, that the power of their enemies should be subdued, and their haughtiness turned into mourning. This pleasing prospect takes up the remainder of the letter, in which the author has many beautiful turns and lively strokes, and is transported even to a degree of rapture, and the thoughts of the agreeable change. In particular, the happy times of the gospel are spoken of with such assurance and clearness, as to give occasion to some to suspect interpolations in several places, which are indeed too glaring and explicit for the darkness [of those times; especially, iii. 37. It is easy to observe, with respect to the supplicatory part of this prayer, that much of it is borrowed from that of Daniel, and that in the description of the glorious state of the church, there is frequent allusion to many passages in Isaiah.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 3. *THAT a man should eat the flesh of his own son, and the flesh of his own daughter.*] This is to be understood of the first siege of Jerusalem, by the Babylonians, the misery of which Jeremiah thus pathetically describes, *They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: the hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children; they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people,* Lam. iv. 9, 10. see also ii. 20. The like unnatural cruelty happened at the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, when the distress by famine was so great, "That wives tore away the meat out of the mouths of their husbands, children from their parents, and mothers forced the food from the mouths of their infants, and took away even the drops of milk, the last support of their just-expiring babes: but what was most surprising and unnatural, the very instinct of parents towards their children was extinguished by the famine; for they ate their own sons and daughters without horror." (Jos. de Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 10. lib. vi. cap. 3.) The like happened at the siege of Samaria. (2 Kings vi. 28, 29.) In all which lamentable instances was fulfilled that passage, Deut. xxviii. 56. *The tender and delicate woman which would not venture to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness, her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter.*

Ver. 11. *And hast gotten thyself a name as appeareth this day.*] It may be pertinently asked, with what propriety it can be here said, that the destruction of Jerusalem, and the captivity of the people of Israel, exalted the name of God, and manifested the greatness of his majesty? would not infidel nations from hence take occasion to blaspheme the true God, and to reflect upon his power, as if the gods of the nations had been too powerful for him, by subduing a people, of whom he had proclaimed himself the saviour and protector? To this it may be replied, that what these idolaters looked upon as an instance of God's weakness, was a signal act of his power, justice, and veracity, as it was the remarkable fulfilling of what he had so many hundred years before threatened by his servant Moses, Deut. xxviii. 47—49. If the Chaldeans led his own people into captivity, it was because God was become their enemy; if a kingdom once so flourishing, was destroyed in a manner so deplorable, it was to punish the ingratitude of a people quite insensible of his mercies. So that the greatness of God appeared as visibly in the instances of his severity, as in those of his loving-kindness; and he was as truly the God of Israel, when he delivered

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them into the power of a nation of a *fierce countenance*, ver. 50. to suffer all the miseries there threatened, as when he brought them out of Egypt, with a mighty hand and stretched-out arm.

Ver. 13. *We are but a few left among the heathen, where thou hast scattered us.*] Besides the Jews' decrease by dispersions, who were tossed like vagabonds from one country to another, without any certain settlement; the horrid butcheries which the Jews underwent were innumerable. The Jewish writers, in describing them, cannot find expressions tragical enough to represent them: twice as many, they tell us, perished by the Romans' cruelty only, as came actually out of Egypt, and thereby completed that malediction, Deut. xxviii. 62. If one considers the miseries with which the Jews were afflicted from the reign of Josias only, they are scarce to be paralleled in any other kingdom, in so short a time. Pharaoh-necho gained a victory over Josias, conquered Judea, and deposed king Jehoahaz, and set up another, and brought away great part of the people, with their king Jehoahaz, into Egypt; four years after the kingdom of Judah was wasted by Nebuchadnezzar, and not long after Jehoiachin was put to death, and many captives brought to Babylon. Jechonias reigned but three months and ten days, and was also brought to Babylon, with a great number of his subjects. In eight or nine years, how many misfortunes, changes, captivities! how many princes murdered, or deposed!

Ver. 24. *The bones of our kings, and the bones of our fathers . . . taken out of their sepulchres.*] It was a custom, both among Jews and gentiles, to bury with the deceased some of their most valuable effects and ornaments, and sometimes to put into the sepulchre great quantity of money and treasure. On this account, says a learned writer, "Chaldæi ossa regum Judæ, ac principum, nec non sacerdotum ac prophetarum, e sepulcris effoderunt, ad effodiendos nimirum thesauros, quos in antiquorum sepulcris munifica recondi manu consuetos, ipso experimento edocti probè norant." (Alting. Roma Subter. p. 93.)

Ver. 35. *I will make an everlasting covenant with them . . . and will no more drive my people out of the land.*] The Jews at Babylon, where this author wrote, did not imagine that the prophecies were at an end in the first return of the Jews under the Persian kings; they, by virtue of the everlasting covenant which God made to drive them no more out of the land, hoped for another more perfect and glorious restoration, as foretold by the prophets, which should be the deliverance of God himself, even salvation by their Messiah. (See Bishop Chandler's Defence, &c. p. 53.)

CHAP. III.

Ver. 4. *HEAR the prayers of the dead Israelites.*] This passage has been applied by the Romanists, to countenance their notion, that the saints departed intercede and pray for the living, and has been quoted by Bellarmine, particularly, for that purpose. But the place seems capable of a fair and orthodox interpretation, if we consider the following reasons: 1. By the *dead Israelites*, we are not to understand such of them who are departed this life, and whose souls are separated from their bodies, but those who, being yet alive, are dead in trespasses and sins, as St. Paul speaks, Eph. ii. 1. 2. This sense is farther confirmed from ver. 11. where it is said of Israel, *How happeneth it that thou art defiled with the dead? that thou art counted with them that go down to the grave?* i. e. as one of them that are near the pit, upon account of their great misery and affliction. And the reason for this their suffering follows the question immediately; viz. *Thou hast forsaken the fountain of wisdom, for if thou hadst walked in the way of God thou shouldest have dwelt in peace for ever;* i. e. shouldest not have been in captivity. 3. It is no uncommon expression to compare persons under a great calamity to dead men, and to account of them as such. See Ezek. xxxvii. where the Israelites in their captivity are represented as dead bones, ver. 11. and their return from their dispersion, as the opening of their graves; and their restoration is described as a resurrection by Isa. xxvi. 15. 4. After the words, *Hear the prayers of the dead Israelites*, it follows, *and of their children, which have sinned before thee;* where the Vulgate and our version seem faulty: the Greek renders it by a participle of the present tense, ἁμαρτανόντων, which shews that this is to be understood of the Israelites then alive, and not of those which had sinned and were dead, for then it should have been ἡμαρτηκότων, in the preter tense. Junius renders here, *Exaudi orationem mortuorum Israelitarum*, i. e. *filiorum qui peccant coram te.* Lastly, It is an absurdity for the Israelites to intercede for their intercessors, which according to the Romanists' sense they do, by beseeching God to hear the prayers of the departed Israelites in favour of those that are alive. (2 Macc. xv. 13, 14.) Mr. Whiston says the sense is here,—the prayers of those Israelites who were then alive, and interceded with thee, but are since dead. (See ii. 17.)

Ver. 8. *And to be subject to payments, according to all the iniquities of our fathers.*] Εἰς ὄφλησιν. ὄφλημα and ὄφλησις properly signify *a debt.* Here we may understand *unjust exaction*, as Junius expressly renders, which the Jews in the land of their captivity were exposed to, and probably suffered, being at the will and arbitrary pleasure of those that had them in subjection. According to Calmet, it signifies their being bought or sold into slavery, to satisfy the debts contracted by their fathers. Anciently creditors had a power to sell the children of their debtors for the satisfaction of their debt; (Matt. xviii. 25.) and fathers themselves were sometimes necessitated to sell their children for this purpose. (Exod. xxi. 7. Baruch iv. 6.) Or being *subject to payments*, may here mean usury. God threatens his people, Deut. xxviii. 44. that they should borrow of their enemies upon interest or usury, and thereby become their bondmen or debtors. The first part of the letter of these captives ends with this verse.

Ver. 11. *Thou art defiled with the dead, thou art counted with them that go down into the grave.*] The sense is, that, living among the Chaldeans, they were in a state of continual defilement, dwelling as it were among the tombs. He compares the captive Jews, in a strange country, to a person shut up in a grave, or confined in a house with a dead corpse. There is the like expression, Psal. xxviii. 1.

Ver. 14. *Learn where is wisdom, where is strength, where is understanding, that thou mayest know also where is length of days and life, where is the light of the eyes, and peace.*] By *strength*, ἰσχὺς, I would not here understand, with most interpreters, fortitude or bodily strength, to subdue ene-

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mies, which is but ill connected with the perfections of the soul in this place: it means rather, I conceive, strength of mind; see Dan. ii. 20. where *might* is rendered by the LXX. σύνεσις. The Vulgate properly distinguishes between μακροβίωσις and ζωὴ, which follow, rendering the former *longiturnitas vitæ*, and the other *victus. The light of the eyes.* Castalio renders *vita* likewise, which would increase the tautology; nor is it better, I think, translated by Grotius, *res adversæ*. It means rather, as Solomon speaks, that *the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light;* (Prov. vi. 23.) or, as the Psalmist has it, that *the commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth light unto the eyes.* (Psal. xix. 8. see Baruch iv. 2. Ecclus. xxv. 11. and the note.)

Ver. 16. *Where are the princes of the heathen become, and such as ruled the beasts upon the earth?*] Grotius understands this of kings who delighted in hunting, and the diversions of the chase; who pleased and sported themselves with animals the most fierce and savage; looking upon themselves as lords in a more especial manner of nature and the creation, and exercising a power beyond the common dominion given to man at the beginning. The Scriptures often put animals in the number of the things over which monarchs have dominion. Accordingly, God, to denote the absolute sovereignty which he had given to the king of Babylon, says, that *he had given the beasts of the field also to serve him.* (Jer. xxvii. 6. xxviii. 14.) Judith flatters the pride of Holofernes, by telling him, that *not only men should obey him, but also the beasts of the field and the cattle should do homage to him,* (xi. 7.)

Ver. 17. *They that had their pastime with the fowls of the air.*] If we understand this figuratively, it means such as delighted in high and lofty contemplations, whose towering imaginations played aloft, like the soaring eagle. Grotius expounds it literally of such as delighted in hawking, which was a royal pastime in ancient times. A dominion over the fowls of the air is mentioned also in Scripture, as an instance of the sovereignty of princes. Thus Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar, that *wheresoever the children of men dwell, God had given both the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven into his hand, and made him ruler over them,* (Dan. ii. 38.) Ezekiel represents the king of Assyria as a great cedar, *in which all the fowls of heaven made their nests, and under whose branches all the beasts of the field brought forth their young.* (Ezek. xxxi. 6. Judith xi. 7.)

Ver. 18. *For they that wrought in silver, and were so careful, and whose works are unsearchable.*] Ὅτι οἱ τὸ ἀργύριον τεκταίνοντες, καὶ μεριμνῶντες, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξεύρεσις τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν. The Vulgate and Syriac omit ὅτι, which indeed perplexes the sense, eludes and disappoints the reader, and, after promising him a reason, he finds nothing that it relates to, or can be assigned as a reason of. It seems not improbable that the true reading may be, ἔτι οἱ τὸ ἀργύριον, κ. τ. λ. which gives a natural and clear connexion to what follows. Ἐξεύρεσις, which Maldonat and some other expositors understand here in the sense of *lucrum*, is not so proper to this place: it seems rather to mean the number and delicacy of the works here spoken of. The sentence, Οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξεύρεσις τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν, plainly corresponds to the close of the former verse, οὐκ ἔστι τέλος τῆς κτήσεως αὐτῶν, as will appear by laying the two corresponding passages together, "Both they that heaped up riches so extravagantly, that there was no end of their getting, and they that wrought so accurately in sculpture and engravings, that there is no finding out;" *i. e.* no counting their number, no equalling the excellence of their curious works, are all of them vanished, and gone down to the grave. The author designs the close of the two verses to give strength and force to what went before in each, that he may at last more effectually shew the excellence of wisdom or piety, which is so much better and more enduring than these worldly advantages and attainments; that neither the wealth of these men, which was without end, nor their art, which is now inimitable, could ensure to them life and happiness; whereas they that walked in the way of God (ver. 13.) should dwell in peace for ever.

Ver. 19. *They are vanished.*] This, according to Grotius and Badwell, denotes the transitory and mortal state of kings, as well as other men, who die and are as quickly succeeded by others. Νεώτεροι, in the following verse, does not mean merely young men, but fresh successors, or new kings. Or it may refer to the curious artists beforementioned, who took such pains to bring their work to perfection, and to make it valuable and lasting, that they are vanished, and dead, like others of less figure and taste. Ἀφανισμὸς is taken absolutely for death, 2 Macc. v. 12. But in those words of the Psalmist, *before I go hence, and be no more seen,* it is rather a periphrasis of death.

Ver. 23. *The Agarenes that seek wisdom.*] Called also Ishmaelites. Strabo and Ptolemy call them Agræi. Not only Arabia and the adjacent countries, but the eastern part of the world in general, was famous for the study of wisdom, or philosophy, as it was afterward called. The Edomites put in their claim to this character, *Is wisdom no more in Teman?* (Jer. xlix. 7.) In the book of Job, Eliphaz, one of the disputants, is called the Temanite, as being descended from Teman, Esau's grandson. Under the burden of Arabia, Isa. xxi. 14. the inhabitants of the land of Tema are mentioned, which Tema is reckoned by Moses among the sons of Ishmael. As this writer joins Meran to Teman, there is reason to think that the first is in Arabia as well as the second.

The authors of fables.] *i. e.* Ingenious apologues. The margin has *expounders,* probably of enigmas or riddles. Or it may mean persons skilled in the interpretation of dreams or oneirocritics; a piece of science, but falsely so called, in great request among the Egyptians, Arabians, Persians, Indians, and other eastern nations. (See Medes's Comment. Apocalypt. lib. iii. p. 451. 1 Kings x. 1.)

Ver. 24. *How great is the house of God!*] How large and extended is his empire! and how great the number of his creatures! the whole earth is his kingdom, all men are his subjects, and all times under his cognizance! but there are but few that enter into his secrets and partake of his wisdom. It is observable, that this writer calls the universe, *the house of God;* because, great as it is, yet the infinite Being is present every where in it, and governs it with as much ease as a father or master does his family.

Ver. 26. *There were the giants famous from the beginning.*] These great giants, like all others, were under the empire of the sovereign Monarch of the universe; but they were not preferred, or chosen of God to receive the gift of wisdom. God chose before them Noah and his family be-

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fore the flood, and after that time he preferred the Israelites to the Rephaim. And, indeed, throughout both Testaments, the constant tenor of his procedure has been, to prefer the meek and lowly to the mighty or more powerful.

Ver. 28. *These were destroyed, because they had no wisdom.*] Or wanted the fear of the Lord. The fear of God is the principal wisdom, whence, through the whole book of Proverbs, the wicked man, who neglects the fear of the Lord, is called a fool. That passage, Prov. xxi. 16. comes very near this place, *the man that wandereth out of the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead,* or *in the assembly of the giants,* as it may be rendered from the Hebrew; *i. e.* shall go and keep them company in that accursed place and condition which they are in.

Ver. 29, 30. *Who hath gone up into heaven.*] These words allude to and greatly resemble those of Moses, Deut. xxx. 12, 13. *It is not in heaven that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it to us?* To the same effect with this of Baruch is that of Philo, What need is there of ἢ μακρὰς ὁδοιπορίας, ἢ τοῦ θαλαττεύειν, either to take long journeys, or to go to sea in search of virtue, seeing we have the root of it within ourselves; or, as Moses expresses it, *in our mouth, and in our heart?*

Ver. 32. *He that prepared the earth for evermore, hath filled it with four-footed beasts.*] The Vulgate reads with a conjunction, *Qui præparavit terram in æterno tempore, et replevit eam pecudibus, et quadrupedibus.* The sense is, according to Calmet, He that made the earth that it might continue always, or that it might never move at any time. The earth was looked upon as the foundation and centre of all the movements and of all the changes that happened here below, without moving or changing itself. Monarchs rise and fall, men die, and others succeed in their place, the seasons change, and are in continual vicissitude; but the earth continues always the same. According to that observation of Solomon, *One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever.* (Eccles. i. 4.)

Ver. 33. *He that sendeth forth light and it goeth; calleth it again, and it obeyeth him with fear.*] He commands the sun to stop, and it stands still, as it happened under Joshua, x. 12. He commands it to be retrograde, and the shadow returns backward ten degrees, as was the sign to Hezekiah; (2 Kings xx. 9.) he forbids it to shine at all, and darkness is over all the land, as at our Saviour's crucifixion. (Matt. xxvii. 45.) What follows in the next verse about the stars is equally sublime, and very much resembles Ecclus. xliii. 10. Psal. cxlvii. 4. ἔλαμψαν τῷ ποιήσαντι αὐτούς, is inaccurately rendered in the next verse following, *They shewed light unto him that made them;* it should rather be, *They shined,* not for his use, but *by his order and appointment, that made them.*

Ver. 36, 37. *He hath found out the way of knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob his servant, and to Israel his beloved. Afterward did he shew himself upon earth, and conversed with men.*] The author shews, that the Jews were in bondage for deserting that way of wisdom, which, being unknown to idolatrous nations, he that founded the earth by wisdom had made known to his people by his prophets; (see Ecclus. xxiv. 8.) and intending to exhort them to stick fast to God, and not to fall away to the idols of the nations in their captivity, as the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah had warned them before, he puts them in mind, that it was none but God that could discover that way of wisdom which the law taught Israel; which wisdom, says he, was *afterward seen upon earth, and conversed among men,* viz. in and by the prophets, who spoke by the word and wisdom of God. The expression in the thirty-seventh verse, it must be owned, is very like that of St. John, i. 14. *that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us;* and is thought to be so close a resemblance of it, that some learned men have fancied, on that account, it was foisted in here by some Christian copyist. A learned writer, who contends for the canonicalness of this book, thinks that this clause, too much favouring the divinity and incarnation of the Messiah, induced the Jews to lay this book aside, soon after Christianity prevailed in the world, which before that time they ever looked upon as sacred and canonical. (Auth. Rec. vol. i. p. 7.) Bishop Chandler thinks by *afterward* is meant the latter days, or the days of the Messiah; (see Dan. ii. 29. 45.) the time that all Israel shall be saved by the Deliverer's coming to Sion, and his manifesting the Jews to be the children of his kingdom. (Def. Christ. p. 55.) Others, who think that the applying this passage to the incarnation and appearance of the Messiah, would hold out too much light for the times of this writer, refer it either to that occurrence, when, after the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, Moses and Aaron, and the seventy elders, were permitted to see the God of Israel, (Exod. xxiv. 9.) and Moses himself to come up into the mount to him; or to the angel of the covenant appearing amongst, and conducting his people in the wilderness forty years. (Estius, in loc.)

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *THIS is the book of the commandments of God, and the law that endureth for ever.*] As the gospel comprises the law and the prophets in two commandments; *viz.* the love of God and of our neighbour; or, more briefly, in charity: so this writer says, that wisdom, described in the former chapter, contains the substance of the commandments, and of the law, here said to *endure for ever;* not with respect to its ceremonial ordinances, but the moral and spiritual part, which is fixed and unchangeable. Wisdom therefore here described seems to be no other in effect than charity, so highly extolled, 1 Cor. xiii. 8. whose character it is, *never to fail, when even tongues shall cease, and knowledge itself shall vanish away.*

Ver. 3. *Give not thine honour to another, nor the things that are profitable unto thee, to a strange nation.*] It was the glory of the Israelites to know the only true God, to love and serve him, who had chosen them above all other nations to be a holy people, consecrated to his service: this character distinguished his peculium from heathen and infidel nations: by forsaking therefore the God of their fathers, and abandoning themselves to the idolatry of the strange nations, they gave the honour due to the living God only to insensible things, and stained their former glory: and instead of children of God, a title and privilege which they enjoyed before, became slaves, and were rejected by him. And this God threatened to do by Moses, Deut. xxxii. 21. *when they should move him to jealousy with that which is not God, and provoke him to anger with their vanities.*

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Ver. 5. *My people, the memorial of Israel.*] *i. e.* Ye poor remains of the Jews, the surviving hopes of sinking Israel, who are preserved to continue the name and memory of once so famous a people, the only remaining monument of distressed Sion.

Ver. 7. *Ye provoked him that made you, by sacrificing to devils.*] The Psalmist, according to the version of the LXX. says, ὅτι πάντες οἱ θεοὶ ἐθνῶν δαιμόνια, *that all the gods of the heathen are devils.* (Psal. xcvi. 5.) And of the Jews who sacrificed to them it is said, they sacrificed to devils, and not to God; לשדים to evil, wasting, and destroying spirits. And so they are styled, 2 Chron. xi. 15. Rev. ix. 20. The pulling down idolatrous worship, is, in our Saviour's language, the *casting out the prince of this world.* (John xii. 31. xvi. 11.) The converting of the gentiles from idolatry to the worship of the true God, is called, *turning them from the power of Satan unto God;* (Acts xxvi. 18.) the *delivering them from the power of darkness,* (Col. i. 13.) *who before walked according to the prince of the power of darkness,* (Ephes. ii. 2.) *and were led captive by Satan at his will.* (2 Tim. ii. 26.)

Ver. 12. *Let no man rejoice over me, a widow, who for the sins of my children am left desolate.*] This prosopopœia of Sion, bewailing her children gone into captivity, is moving and beautiful. She assumes the character of a disconsolate widow, an idea often borrowed to represent deep distress, bemoaning the loss of the favourite of her bosom, with these two sad but common aggravations of her sorrow, her children taking evil courses, and as such exemplarily punished, stricken of God, and afflicted; and herself, instead of that compassion which her calamities called for from those around her, neglected, insulted, reproached, and injured. The venting her grief in broken accents, (ver. 17.) *But what can I help you?* is inimitably, says Grotius, affecting; "I who am devoid, not only of my former substance, my ornaments, and pleasant things, my comforts and conveniences, but reduced to the lowest state, and wanting myself the necessaries of life, what am I able, what can I be expected, to do for you?" At length all appearance of human help vanishing, she raises motives of consolation from that never-failing treasury of delight and comfort to afflicted minds, the word of God, whose statutes had been her song in the house of her pilgrimage; and assures them, from the prophets, of a deliverance from their captivity, and remarkable vengeance overtaking their persecutors. In this pleasing prospect she exults and triumphs, (chap. v.) as a fond mother overjoyed for the recovery of her children.

Ver. 15.] Probably this refers to Deut. xxviii. 49, 50. and may be considered as a fulfilling that prophecy, *The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth, a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand. A nation of fierce countenance, which will not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.* This, if applied to the Chaldeans, the description of the place will not suit, for the Chaldeans did not come from a country which was very far from Judea. If to the Romans, the time will not suit with the supposed age of this writer. Josephus, indeed, informs us, that upon the Romans making themselves masters of the temple, they slaughtered all, both old and young indifferently, without any respect to age, having neither mercy nor modesty.

Ver. 16. *And left her that was alone, desolate without daughters.*] The Geneva version I think clearer, *Leaving me alone, and destitute of my daughters; i. e.* both sons and daughters were carried into captivity. (See ver. 14.)

Ver. 20. *I have put off the clothing of peace, and put upon me the sackcloth of my prayer: I will cry unto the Everlasting in my days.*] *i. e.* I have put off the garment of *prosperity,* as the margin has it, or of gladness, and put upon me the sackcloth of penance and supplication, *Indui cilicium deprecationis meæ,* Arabic. And Junius renders in the same manner: or, as the Syriac has it, *Clothed me with sackcloth in the solemn time of my prayer and supplication.* The last clause, κεκράξομαι πρὸς τὸν αἰώνιον ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις μου, is inaccurately rendered here. It may either be translated with the margin, *in the time of mine affliction,* and in this sense we are to understand ἡμέρα Ἱερουσαλήμ, Psal. xxxvii. 13. cxxxvii. 7. or the sense may be, *I will cry unto the Everlasting all my days;* thus Calmet, *Je crieray au treshaut tous les jours de ma vie:* and the Geneva version accordingly, *As long as I live I will call upon the Everlasting.* This sense is strongly confirmed by Psal. cxvi. 2. where the expression in the LXX. very much resembles this, ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις μου ἐπικαλέσομαι, and our translators rightly render, *I will call upon him as long as I live.*

Ver. 22. *Because of the mercy which shall soon come unto you from the Everlasting, our Saviour.*] The like is repeated ver. 24, 25. but how can this mercy be properly said to come *soon,* as the captivity was to last seventy years? This, say Mess. of Port-Royal, may be admitted, if considered either with respect to God, who inflicted this punishment, in whose sight a thousand years are but as a day; or with respect to the suffering Jews themselves, those especially among them who were touched with a sense of their sins, and their deserving a much longer and sorer punishment; "for a soul which is truly convinced of and sensibly affected with the eternity of punishment due to its transgressions, counts for nothing, or considers but as a moment, the time of penance and suffering which God is mercifully pleased to inflict in this life." (Ver. 22. 24.) This writer, says Bishop Chandler, personates Baruch, and his book is little else than an epitome of what we have at large in the prophets, concerning a more universal return than that was of the Jews under Cyrus, and in virtue of God's everlasting covenant, to drive them no more out of the land. The Jews at Babylon, where this Baruch wrote, did not conceive that the prophecies were exhausted in the first return of the Jews under the Assyrian kings, they hoped for another more perfect and more glorious restoration, as foretold by the prophets, which should be the deliverance of God himself, as the Jews were wont still to call the salvation of the Messiah. In confidence of this so eminent a deliverance, he breaks forth into admiration of this *Emanuel,* or *God with us.* (Def. of Christ. p. 53.)

Ver. 25. *Shortly thou shalt see his destruction, and shalt tread upon his neck.*] This, says Calmet, was literally accomplished in the time of queen Esther and Mordecai, at Susa; and under Daniel, at Babylon; for when they were exalted to the highest dignity, and the most important posts of the government, the Chaldeans themselves were obliged to submit to their authority, and to bow before them, as Isaiah had long before expressly foretold, (lx. 14.)

Ver. 28. *For as it was their mind to go astray from God, so being returned, seek him ten times more.*] It is not enough, says a pious writer, morally to revoke what is past, by wish-

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ing it had not been done, but you must oppose a state to a state, a habit to a habit; *i. e.* as sin before gave you law, so now must the Spirit of God. Habitual sin must be destroyed by a contrary habit, or state of holiness: this is well summed up by the apostle, *As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.* (Rom. vi. 19.) What the Greek makes matter of exhortation and advice here, is spoken prophetically according to the Vulgate, which accordingly came to pass; for after the captivity, the Jews were more observant of the law of God than they were before, especially with respect to idolatry. But it will be best, if this reading is followed, to understand this of those devout Jews in particular who were converted by the preaching of the apostles, and were the first-fruits of the Christian church.

Ver. 35. *And she shall be inhabited by devils.*] This expression is grounded on a vulgar notion, that desolate and forlorn places are inhabited by evil spirits, who have their haunts there. The canonical Scriptures seem to countenance this opinion; thus the demoniac (Luke viii. 29.) is said to abide in no house, but to be driven of the devil into the wilderness, and thither was our Saviour led, as being the devil's residence, to be tempted by him. (Matt. iv. 1.) And accordingly our Saviour, in the parable of the unclean spirit, says, *that he walks through dry or uninhabited places.* (Matt. xii. 43. see also Tobit viii. 3.)

Ver. 36. *Look about thee towards the East.*] This, no doubt, primarily relates to the restoration of the Jews under Cyrus, and the return from their long captivity by his appointment, or rather God's influencing his heart for that purpose; and though Babylon, properly speaking, was rather to the north with respect to Jerusalem, yet Persia, where Cyrus reigned, and from whence the happy orders were to come, was to the east. That Ἀνατολὴ here is the title of the Messiah likewise, there is no question, whether it be literally rendered *the East*, as the title formerly was bestowed upon him, (Zech. vi. 12.) or the rising of the sun, that Sun of righteousness, mentioned Mal. iv. 2. However that be, it is certain that where Ἀνατολὴ, *the East*, is used in most places of Scripture, the commentators and scholiasts have still applied it to Christ, meaning, by the *East*, that orient or rising sun, and not the point from whence it rises: (see Jer. xxiii. 5.) and this seems the more probable, because, ver. 22. he is called *the Everlasting, our Saviour.*

CHAP. V.

Ver. 3. Τὴ ὑπ' οὐρανὸν πάσῃ. *subaud.* χώρᾳ. The like ellipsis occurs Job xviii. 4. Luke xvii. 24. in LXX. Prov. viii. 28. 2 Macc. ii. 18. in Addit. Esth. xiii. 10.

Ver. 6. *For they departed from thee on foot, and were led away of their enemies; but God bringeth them unto thee exalted with glory, as children of the kingdom.*] *i. e.* As a royal race, or children of kings, riding in triumph, and in a most magnificent procession. Ezra gives us the number and quality of the persons that returned, their horses, mules, camels, &c. employed on the occasion, (ii. 66.) And it appears, from 1 Esd. v. 2. that Darius himself sent a thousand horsemen to conduct them back safely to Jerusalem, with musical instruments. Isaiah describes their return from Babylon in the most pompous manner, and in terms scarcely inferior to a real triumph, (xlix. 22, 23. lxvi. 20.) "Their transport of mirth and jollity on this occasion (says Josephus) was as great, as if the day of their redemption and return had been the first day of a new life." (Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 4.)

Ver. 7. *For God hath appointed that every high hill.*] By ὄρος and βουνὸς, we are here to understand those who are lofty, proud, and supercilious, who exalt themselves from a conceit of worldly wisdom: the meek, on the contrary, are represented as prostrate and humble, casting aside every high thought, and adoring, with holy reverence, mysteries that are above them. This refers to a known custom of great kings, who, when they travelled, had their ὁδοποιοὶ, or *harbingers*, sent before them to make the way plain and commodious, by filling up deep places, and levelling those that were high, and smoothing those that were rough. And so Josephus says, that when Titus came to the wars, there went before him all the royal aids, and all the military men, and those who planed the way (de Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 6. 12.) for the coming of the Roman army. The words here seem to refer to Isa. xl. 4. where the prophet, describing the return of the people from their captivity to their own country, expresses it by "the former deliverance and passage out of Egypt, through uneven craggy ways in the desert, which yet, by God's conduct, was made passable to them, and they brought at last to a happy Canaan." Thus the Targum on Canticles saith, the cloud went before the Israelites in the wilderness three days' journey, to take down their hills, and fill up their valleys before them. Mystically, or by way of metaphor, this expression, of casting down every high hill, means also, the removing of all obstacles to one's happiness or designs, as in those verses of Sibylla Erythræa, set down by St. Austin, De Civit. Dei, lib. viii. where, foretelling the coming of the King from heaven in the flesh, it follows:

> "Dejiciet colles, valles extollet ab imo;
> Non erit in rebus hominum sublime, vel altum;
> Æquantur campis montes."

Which is almost the same with the passage cited from Isaiah. Compare also Luke iii. 5. The same metaphor is used by Homer, Il. o. ver. 260. where Apollo, promising to assist Hector, saith,

> Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ προπάροιθε κιὼν, ἵπποισι κέλευθον
> Πᾶσαν λειανέω,

I will go before and make smooth all passages.

Ver. 8. *Every sweet-smelling tree shall overshadow Israel.*] *i. e.* God will furnish his people with all sorts of accommodations for their return home; in particular, that they should not be incommoded with heat, a calamity very incident to travellers in hot countries; God would plant woods, as it were on purpose to shelter his chosen in their return, from the scorching heat of the sun. This undoubtedly refers to Isa. xli. 19. where God says, *I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, the myrtle, and the olive-tree,* &c. conducting the people home almost in the same marvellous manner, as he did his chosen in the wilderness, by the shadow of a cloud to defend them from the heat. Or, without having recourse to a miracle, this may be understood of his appointing their return at such a season, when the trees afforded most shade; or that they

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marched through such places where there was a natural cover over them. Others think, and not without reason, that this is rather a poetical description, to display, but in an exaggerating manner, the easiness and pleasure with which the Jews would return from Babylon. Our translators follow the copies which read ἐσκίασαν, but others have ἐσκίρτησαν, *subsultarunt;* and thus Junius renders, *exsilieruntque etiam silvæ*, that all the trees of the wood rejoiced on the occasion, like that of the Psalmist, xcvi. 12.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 3. *SEVEN generations.*] The word γενεὰ, or generation, has many senses. Sometimes it signifies twenty, twenty-five, or thirty years, but most generally the last term; and in this sense it is used by approved authors, and particularly in the genealogy recorded by St. Matthew. By it here is meant ten years, or rather seven decads of years; but this acceptation is not very common: but as it was very well known to have been predicted by the prophets, that the captivity should last seventy, that is, seven ten years, it cannot be doubted but that this author had that term in view here, and meant the precise period of ten years. The seventy years of the captivity of Babylon are usually reckoned from the first year of Nebuchadnezzar the Great, and the fourth of Jehoiakim, *i. e.* A. M. 3398, and ended 3468; or before Christ 606, and ended 536, before his appearance; at which time Cyrus gave leave to all the Jews in his dominions to return to their own country. This epistle, said to be Jeremiah's, is supposed to be wrote to the Jews when they were going into captivity with their king, to admonish them to beware of the idolatry which they would see in Babylon: and seems to be the letter referred to, 2 Macc. ii. 2, 3. where the same caution is given as here, to guard against the idolatry they would observe in that place, and is an epitome of sundry things in Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets, against idolatry, and the fullest dissuasive against it, in one continued tract or view, of any through the whole volume of the Bible, and handled in the most proper manner: as banter and ridicule are often found more effectual to expose and confute an error, than grave and serious reasoning.

Ver. 4. *Gods of silver, and gold, and wood, borne upon shoulders.*] Isaiah takes notice of and condemns this custom, *He maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove*, (xlvi. 6, 7.) Jeremiah likewise mentions this idolatry, and their carrying images in great procession and pomp, *They must needs be borne* (says he) *because they cannot go*, (x. 5.) And to this sense, Spencer and other learned interpreters explain those words of Amos, *Ye have borne the tabernacle of Moloch and Chiun your images*, (v. 26.) which the LXX. rightly render ἀνελάβετε, *sursum tulistis.* Numerous instances of this superstition used among the heathen, are to be met with in sacred and profane writers. (See ver. 26.)

Ver. 6. *Say ye in your hearts, O Lord, we must worship thee.*] These words seem wrongly pointed in our translation, and the common editions of the Greek. The sense would be better and more agreeable to the context, if the rendering was, "We ought to worship thee, O Lord, with the spirit, or understanding, in contradistinction to senseless images, which take no notice of their votaries." And so St. Cyprian renders this passage, *In sensu tibi debet adorari Deus.* (De Orat. Domin.) One copy of the Greek reads without any comma at all, probably intending this sense; but for clearness I would place it thus, εἴπατε δὴ, τῇ διανοίᾳ σε δεῖ προσκυνεῖν, δέσποτα. The Psalmist, in like manner, after having exposed the folly of image-worship, and from the honour given by the heathens to their idols, presses the like conclusion upon the Israelites, and excites them to praise the living God, the Lord of the world, with the greater devotion. (Psal. cxxxv. 17—20.)

Ver. 7. *For mine angel is with you, and I myself caring for your souls.*] *i. e.* Mine angel shall protect you, which these idols cannot. Our version and the Vulgate seem faulty in the rendering of the latter clause; in the Greek it is, αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκζητῶν τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν, which I would translate, *And he (the angel) will watch over you, and revenge any injury done to you.* The Geneva version understands αὐτὸς, in like manner, of the angel, *For mine angel shall be with you, and shall care for your souls.* Junius is more explicit to the same purpose, *Angelus meus vobiscum est*, qui idem *reposciturus est animas vestras;* and so the oriental versions also have it.

Ver. 8. *As for their tongue, it is polished by the workman, and they themselves are gilded and laid over with silver; yet are they but false, and cannot speak.*] The mimic representations of life are all deceit; they are mere insensible images of things, having mouths, and a tongue beautifully polished, but are unable to give a word of advice or comfort to their supplicants. Their images are overlaid with coverings of gold and silver plates; (see ver. 57, 58. Isa. xxx. 22.) either to attract the eyes of the beholders, or to cover some defect; but their gold and silver serve only to expose their weakness. They are of no more value than that of the rich materials of which they are made, and so far from being able to say or do any thing, that they themselves are the handy-work of those that worship them: every excellence that they have is derived from the ingenuity of the artificer, and shews rather his art than their divinity.

Ver. 9. *And taking gold, as it were for a virgin that loves to go gay; they make crowns for the heads of their gods.*] The Geneva version is clearer, which has, *And as they take gold for a maid that loveth to be decked, so make they crowns for the heads of their gods.* But the sense, I conceive, would be more perfect, if the pointing was thus, *And taking gold, as for some virgin that loves dress and finery, they make crowns for the heads of their gods.* And so Calmet understands it, *Comme on fait des ornements à une fille, qui aime à se parer, ainsi on fait ces idoles avec de l'or.*

Ver. 12. *Yet cannot these gods save themselves from rust and moths, though they be covered with purple raiment.*] See ver. 72. *i. e.* Their ornaments and royal attire are perishable things, like those that wear them; pass but a few years, and their *riches are corrupted, and their garments moth-eaten, their gold and silver cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against them, and shall eat them up, as it were fire*, as St. James speaks upon another occasion, (v. 2, 3.) That the heathens, in their idolatrous worship, adorned the images of their gods with costly robes, is confirmed from Jer. x. 9. where, speaking of the

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decorations and rich apparel of the false gods, he says, that *blue and purple are their clothing.*

Ver. 13. *They wipe their faces because of the dust of the temple, when there is much upon them.*] Or, as the Geneva version has it, *They wipe their faces because of the dust of the temple, whereof there is much upon them.* And so the Vulgate, *Extergunt faciem ipsorum propter pulverem domûs, qui est plurimus inter eos; i. e.* through the concourse of the people, or votaries, who come there in great numbers. The multiplicity of persons which tread the hallowed courts, which is an honour to the true God, is to them an inconvenience and disgrace; for when the idol-temples, like that of Baal, are filled with worshippers from one end to the other, being unable to help themselves in any respect, they must be beholden afterward to the care of others, to remove any accidental stain or filth that may fasten on them, and to keep them neat and clean. (See ver. 24.)

Ver. 15. *He hath also in his right hand a dagger, and an axe.*] Arnobius observes, concerning the gentiles, "That they designed to create fear by the manner in which they framed and represented the statues and images of their gods: hence scythes, clubs, and thunderbolts, were appendages to their idols." (Adv. Gent. lib. vi.) Like the god of war, or some martial hero, they were exhibited, armed with swords, lances, helmets, bucklers, or whatever fancy could invent to excite terror. In the foregoing verse, indeed, they are set forth in a milder attitude, to create veneration, seemingly dispensing justice, like some prince or governor of a province, of which the sceptre which they held forth was to be the symbol.

Ver. 19. *They light them candles . . . whereof they cannot see one.*] Either in their temples, or in their processions. See Cic. Offic. iii. 26. and Apuleius, who says of the pagan processions, that, on such an occasion, "Antistites sacrorum Deum proferebant insignes exuvias, quorum primus lucernam præmicantem claro porrigebat lumine —Magnus præterea sexus utriusque numerus, lucernis, tædis, cereis," &c. The sense of the writer of this epistle would be more complete, if the first sentence of the following verse was added to it thus, *They light them candles . . . whereof they cannot see one, for they are as one of the beams of the temple.* And thus the Vulgate, from some Greek copies, connects the sense, *Lucernas accendunt illis, et quidem multas, ex quibus nullam videre possunt; sunt quidem sicut trabes in domo.* And so the Geneva version, *They light up candles before them, whereof they cannot see one; for they are but as one of the posts of the temple.* And Junius renders in like manner. The intention of the heathens in having lamps or candles burning before their images and altars, seems to have been what Lactantius intimates, the furnishing light for their gods; the folly of which he thus exposes, "Num mentis suæ compos putandus est, qui auctori et datori luminis candelarum ac cerarum lumen affert pro munere?" (Lib. vi. 2.)

Ver. 20. *Yet they say, Their hearts are gnawed upon by things creeping out of the earth, and when they eat them and their clothes, they feel it not.*] Thus Arnobius, who was himself once a pagan, speaks of idols, setting them upon all occasions in the meanest and most ridiculous light, "Non videtis sub istorum simulacrorum cavis mures habitare? in ore ab araneis ordiri retia?" (Lib. vi. adv. Gent.) It should seem, say Messieurs of Port-Royal, from the context, as if the priests themselves, who got their livelihood by this false worship, or some of the worshippers at least, made this acknowledgment of the meanness and imperfection of their images. But is such an open declaration from them, much to their great discredit, at all natural or credible? would it not, in the esteem of every sensible and well-meaning votary, be the means to expose and discard them, and at length take from the priests themselves all the gain of their craft? Nor is φασὶν, as others contend, to be understood as spoken by way of hearsay, that it is so reported of them, as Coverdale understands it; little need was there to refer to uncertain tradition or report; every one might be convinced from his own observation of their decay, how contemptible such objects of worship were. Might not this more properly be understood of the idols themselves, betraying their own defects and shame by their frail appearance? *i. e.* Their idols confess, testify, or make it plain, by the signs of decay and rottenness visible about them, and by their being eaten as a piece of ordinary wood by worms, and not perceiving what is done to them, that they are perishable and senseless. And thus Junius expounds it, "Ipsa idola testantur se facillime a tenuissimis vermibus erodi in partes intimas usque." Or the sense, lastly, may be that of Isaiah, xliv. 9. that *the makers themselves are their own witnesses;* i. e. they best know the materials of which they are made, and are sufficiently convinced from their wanting often to be repaired and beautified, that they are mouldering vanities.

Ver. 22. *Upon their bodies and heads sit bats, swallows, and birds, and the cats also.*] Besides the meanness of their original, and the imperfection of their state, if one considers farther the rudeness and insults offered to their divinityships, by vile, despicable, and abject creatures, this also is sufficient to expose men's folly in worshipping them. Minucius Felix is very pleasant upon the occasion: "Quanto verius de Diis vestris animalia muta naturaliter judicant, mures, hirundines, milvi? Non sentire eos sciunt, rodunt, insultant, insident, ac, nisi abigatis, in ipso dei vestri ore nidificant;" (p. 175. edit. Oxon.) *i. e.* The mice, swallows, and crows, know better than you (pagans) what your gods are; for, by gnawing and sitting upon them, and being ready to make nests in their mouths, if you do not drive them away, they know that they have neither sense nor understanding. Spiders also spin upon their faces, and use their sacred heads for blocks only to hang their webs on.

Ver. 27. *If they fall to the ground at any time, they cannot rise up again themselves.*] This was the case of Dagon, who fell upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord; and though he was once set right again after his fall by his priests, yet fell in the like manner a second time, with the additional misfortune of losing his head and both his hands. (1 Sam. v. 3, 4.) So if Bel at any time is bowed down, and Nebo stoopeth, they cannot restore or make themselves straight again, but must continue in that posture and direction, in which design or accident has placed them. The author of the book of Wisdom has been no less happy than this writer, in exposing the weakness and impotence of idols:—"When the workmen (says he, speaking of this particular defect) had formed it by the skill of

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his understanding, and fashioned it as he designed, he then looked out for a convenient room for it, set it in a wall, and made it fast with iron; for he provided for it that it might not fall, knowing that it was unable to help itself, as being an image that hath need of help." (Chap. xiii. 15, 16.)

Set gifts before them as unto dead men.] In Scripture, likewise, they are compared to dead things, to nothing, and vanity. The sense here is, that they are served with victuals, which are set before them in form, without their being able to avail themselves of them, to touch or use them, or to receive and feast on the viands and offerings which are made to them. And how, indeed, should they, being inanimate and senseless things? And their votaries themselves must be equally so, to think that they had such a power, or ever could make use of it: and yet we find, by the story of Bel and the Dragon, that the simplicity of the Chaldeans was such, that they thought that idol ate in reality the great store of provisions set before it. By *gifts placed before dead men,* the writer alludes to the parental or sepulchral entertainments, which were anciently much in vogue in the eastern or other countries, and particularly among some idolaters, whose notion was, that the souls of the departed wandered about their sepulchres, and wanted a proper sustenance; and that it was a pious office to place bread and wine over their graves, for their support and refreshment. (See note on Ecclus. xxx. 18.)

Ver. 28. *The things that are sacrificed unto them, their priests sell and abuse.*] Instead of exercising acts of hospitality and charity to poor and helpless persons, widows, and orphans, and bestowing upon them the remains of the sacrifices, they make a trade of holy viands, or pervert them to bad and evil uses. It is certain the ancient idolaters were wont to save some part of their sacrifices for magical and superstitious purposes. Herodotus testifies the same concerning the ancient Persians. (Lib. i. cap. 132.) And, therefore, God orders in the paschal sacrifice, that nothing of it should remain until the morning, lest it should be profaned, or any ways corrupted and abused.

Ver. 29. *Women in childbed,* &c. *eat their sacrifices: by these things ye may know that they are no gods.*] It appears from their many false rites, and the shameful abuse of their sacrifices, that they are no true gods; for if they were, neither would their priests dare to take such liberties in holy things, nor unclean and impure persons be permitted to approach them, or partake of them, which they might not do of a true sacrifice, nor in the service of the true God; for, according to the Levitical law, such persons were not to enter into the sanctuary, nor touch any hallowed things, but to continue in a state of separation for a certain time, as being defiled by their infirmity. (Lev. xii. 4.)

Ver. 30. *For how can they be called gods? because women set meat before the gods of silver.*] The sense is more determinate and clear in the Geneva version, *From whence cometh it then that they are called gods? because the women bring gifts to them; i. e.* their silly and superstitious votaries, through their ignorance, pay the like honours and regard to their idols, as if they were really gods.

Ver. 31. *The priests sit in their temples, having their clothes rent, and their heads and their beards shaven, and nothing upon their heads.*] Several of the heathen priests, particularly those of Isis and Serapis, had their heads shaven and uncovered, in the manner here described. It was a standing ordinance at Memphis:—"Ut Isidis sacerdotes semper deraso sint capite, utque tertia quaque die corpus eradant." (See Alex. ab Alex. lib. vi. Juven. Sat. vi.) It is observable, that the rites here mentioned were funeral ceremonies, and therefore the most proper to be used in the worship of the heathen deities, who were no better than dead men. In the service of the true God, the Jewish priests were forbid to rend their clothes, and shave their heads, thereby to distinguish them, as we may suppose with great probability, from the heathen priests. (See Lev. xxi. 5—10.) Calmet thinks the writer here refers to the lamentations for Adonis, customary not only in Egypt, Palestine, Phœnicia, and Syria, but also in Babylonia, and the provinces beyond the Euphrates.

Ver. 32. *They roar and cry before their gods, as men do at the feast when one is dead.*] This refers to a rite or custom among the Jews at their funerals, by the LXX. called περίδειπνον νεκροῦ, or the funeral-feast. For the Jews had feasts or banquets upon account or in honour of the dead, and for the refreshment of the melancholy relations and friends present at the burial. Thus we read of *the meat of mourners,* Hos. ix. 4. and of the *cup of consolation* to comfort them for the loss of the deceased, Jer. xvi. 7. And this probably the son of Sirach means, where he mentions θέματα βρωμάτων παρακείμενα ἐπὶ τάφῳ, *i. e.* Messes of meat set on the sepulchre. (Ecclus. xxx. Tobit iv. 17. see notes on those places.) This custom, as we are informed by one of the Jewish writers, was the impoverishing of many, and that almost unavoidably; for if any one omitted the funeral-feast, he was reflected upon for want of piety. On this account, and some abuses attending these sepulchral entertainments, this custom was at length abolished. By their lamentations and cries before their gods, Calmet thinks those for Adonis most probably are meant.

Ver. 40. *When even the Chaldeans themselves dishonour them.*] *i. e.* They inwardly laugh at them, persuaded of their weakness and inability to do any thing. If their priests presented any sick person before the idol, it was rather to comply with the prevailing superstition, than from any hope that the cure would be effected. They were conscious of the cheat, though for gainful reasons they continued the practice. "Haruspex ridet cum haruspicem videret," was Tully's sneer upon such impostors as these. St. Austin argues very strongly against the continuance of such superstitions, from the plain confession of the worshippers themselves of these pagan deities. Junius, who joins this sentence to the following verse, makes the sense to be, That the Chaldeans themselves sufficiently expose the weakness and impotence of such gods, when, despairing of help from their *Dii minorum gentium,* or inferior sort of gods, they carry the patient to their great god Bel, but to as little purpose.

Ver. 41. *If they see one dumb that cannot speak, they bring him, and entreat Bel that he may speak, as though he were able to understand.*] Bel was the principal idol of the Babylonians; (Isa. xlvi. 1.) the same with Baal, as Selden conjectures. (Syntag. 1. cap. 2.) How unable Baal was to hear, understand, or answer, the petitions of his worshippers, we learn from that signal instance, 1 Kings xviii. 26. where, though his prophets called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, *O Baal, hear us;*

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yet was there no voice, nor any that regarded. Strange that any should be so senseless, as the author of the book of Wisdom well argues, xiii. 18. as *for power to call on that which is weak, and for aid humbly beseech that which hath least means to help, and for speech apply to dumb idols;* emphatically, and by way of infamy, so called, as neither having any faculties themselves, nor able to confer the gift of speech upon others.

Ver. 42. *Yet they cannot understand this themselves, and leave them, for they have no knowledge.*] Καὶ οὐ δύνανται αὐτοὶ νοήσαντες καταλιπεῖν αὐτά. Or, as the Alexandrian MS. has it, τοῦτο νοήσαντες, which would be better rendered, *They cannot, though they observe the inability of their idols to administer any help, persuade themselves to leave and forsake them; for they are foolish and infatuated themselves.* And thus the Geneva version more clearly, *Yet they that understand these things, cannot leave them, for they also have no sense.*

Ver. 43. *The women also with cords about them.*] This refers to the tents or tabernacles of Venus, in which virgins were solemnly prostituted to the honour of that false goddess, under the title of Mylitta, and Venus πάνδημος, or the popular goddess of sensual pleasures. These tents were called Succoth-benoth, *i.e.* tabernacles of daughters, or the pavilions of girls, on account of their residence. According to Selden, it means the chapels of Venus Mylitta. The men of Babylon, (2 Kings xvii. 33.) are said to make Succoth-benoth, wherein their daughters were prostituted to such as came to worship Venus, as the manner was in Babylon, from whence this filthiness had its original. (See Selden, de Diis Syris, Syntag. 3. cap. 7.) And to this scandalous custom, he thinks Lev. xix. 29. particularly to refer. Every woman, it seems, throughout all the country, was bound once in her life to repair to the temple of Venus, and there to prostitute herself to any that would throw down a piece of money, be it less or more, which money was applied to the temple, and to the honour of the goddess. Herodotus gives the following account of this infamous custom, ὅδε δὴ αἴσχιστος τῶν νόμων ἐστὶ τοῖσι Βαβυλωνίοισι, κ. τ. λ. *erat Babyloniorum lex, ut omnes fœminæ semel in vita sederent apud templum Veneris, præstolantes adventum peregrinorum, qui cum eis congrederentur; primum adventantem, qui se offerebat, non debebant recusare, nec eam quam offerebat mercedem, quamvis non ita magnam, quæ in sacrum usum reponebatur. Advena dicebat,* ἐπικαλέω τὴν θεὰν Μύλιτταν; *tanti tibi deam Mylittam imploro. Et quæcunque fœmina sedere inceperat, non debuit abire, donec vitiata fuerat. Unde formosæ cito dimissæ, sed deformes unum aut plures annos exspectabant;* i. e. every Babylonian woman was once in her lifetime bound to prostitute herself to a stranger at the temple of Venus. They were crowned with knots and garlands, and ranged in long ranks before the temple, each rank being parted from the other by a line, that the men might conveniently pass between them, and choose those they liked best. They declared their choice by throwing money into the lap of the woman they most admired, and saying, as they threw it, *I implore the goddess Mylitta for thee.* The money, how little soever, was by no means to be refused, being accounted sacred. Nor had the woman the power of rejecting any man that accosted her in the form prescribed, but she was absolutely to retire without delay. Having thus fulfilled the law, and performed some ceremonies in honour of the goddess, she returned home; and nothing could tempt her to grant the same favour again to her new lover. Women of rank (for none were dispensed with) might be conveyed to the appointed place in a covered vehicle, and keep in it, while their servants waited their return at some distance. (Herod. in Clio, lib. i. cap. 199.) From this passage it appears into what infamous usage and indecency religion had degenerated: when the most dissolute pleasures were turned into so many acts of devotion, and it was counted a dishonour not to be defiled. By σχοινία, here rendered *cords*, some understand fine twine, of which their knots and garlands were composed; and possibly this may be the meaning of the Syriac, which has *funibus ornatæ*. Others suppose them to be rushes, which are easily broken. Selden understands cords, properly so called, to distinguish and guard the passages leading to the women, and to keep them separate.

The women sitting in the ways.] *i. e.* In the public ways leading to the temple of Venus. This description, and particularity of the place, is very natural and well suited to the followers and retainers of Venus, whose known custom it is to frequent the most public places, to entice and allure passengers. (See Prov. ix. 14, 15.) Thus Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. 14. is represented as sitting in an open place, or a place where roads crossed, *which is by the way of Timnath,* πρὸς ταῖς πύλαις Αἰνὰν, *at the gates of Ænan,* according to the LXX. Such a place as this was most likely to meet passengers in, and therefore most proper for Tamar's design. Of those who followed the trade in a public way, such whom Plautus calls *Scænicolæ*, seem most to resemble the Babylonish ones here mentioned. One cannot help observing a sort of gradual decay of decency in women of this profligate character; at first they had their haunts without the city, and followed the trade as it were in disguise, hiding their faces with a mask; afterward they dropped this, and appeared barefaced, but nevertheless, the laws not allowing them to come within the walls, they yet kept their distance: but the state of things every day growing worse and worse, they had the impudence at last to settle and carry on the business of lewdness publicly in cities. But though in all times and places such vile prostitutes have been too much followed and caressed, yet never was any age so degenerate, or people so abandoned, except the Babylonians, as to account them sacred.

Burn bran for perfume.] Badwell takes it in the sense of our version, and the oriental ones translate accordingly. The Syriac in particular has, *imponentes pro thymiamite furfures.* A poor incense this! but good enough for such a deity, and so scandalous rites. Grotius understands the Greek, θυμιῶσαι τὰ πίτυρα, in an impure sense, from the Hebrew פטרה *Petarah, apertura,* which the Greeks express by τὰ αἰδοῖα, and thinks it answers to *suffire naturam,* in Pliny; which seems to be confirmed from Strabo, who, speaking of the Babylonians, says, ὁσάκις δ' ἂν μισθῶσιν ἀλλήλοις ἐπιθυμιάσαντες. (Lib. xvi. Spencer, de Leg. Hebr. vol. i.) Selden renders πίτυρα by οὐλόχυτα, *moles,* or cakes and libations, called also θυλήματα; and in this sense we meet with θύειν τὰ πίτυρα, in Theocritus, as an expedient to procure love. And to this very custom the prophet Jeremiah is by him thought to allude, vii. 18. where it is said, *that the women knead their dough to make cakes for the queen of heaven,* another name for the Babylonian Venus, who was also called Venus Urania. (Syntag. 2. cap. 7.) The same learned writer ob-

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serves of ἐφελκυθεῖσα, in the next sentence, which our translators render *drawn*, that it means a seeming unwillingness in these votaries of Venus, and a reluctance to comply, *Funiculum forsan, usquedum ab amasio fuerit disruptus, veluti retinaculum pudicitiæ muliebri simulatione retinentes.* (Ibid.) An artifice only, as he observes, to make the persons that solicit their favour the more eager and enamoured.

Ver. 44. *Whatsoever is done amongst them is false.*] *i. e.* Whatsoever is done to or about them is vain, and the labour to no purpose: or whatsoever is said or pretended to be done by them is false. The Alexandrian MS. has γινόμενα παρ' αὐτοῖς.

Ver. 45. *They are made of carpenters and goldsmiths, they can be nothing else than the workman will have them to be.*] *i. e.* They are such as were carved out of a refuse piece of wood, (Isa. xliv. 13—15. Wisd. xiii. 13.) which the workmen could have formed into any shape he pleased, to be a thing either of honour or dishonour: or else they came out of the smith's furnace, and were fashioned by the anvil and hammer, as Arnobius expresses it, lib. i. Who in another place, speaking of himself when under a state of paganism, says, "Beneficia poscebam nihil sentiente de ligno:" (lib. vi.) and after, "At quæ dementia Deum credere quem tute ipse formaris, supplicare tremebundum fabricatæ abs te rei?" *i. e.* What an instance of madness is it to think that a piece of timber hath any more divinity in it than it had before, because it is fashioned and carved into the figure of a man? The prophet Isaiah, with a peculiar smartness of argument, exposes image-worship, from the absurdity, that a man should dress his meat and make his god out of the same stick of wood, and fall down to the sorry stock of a tree and say, *Deliver me, for thou art my god.* (Isa. xliv.)

Ver. 46, 47. *And they themselves that made them can never continue long: how then should the things that are made of them be gods? for they left lies and reproaches to them that come after.*] As the effect cannot be more perfect than the cause, so impotent and frail man cannot invent or make any thing or being immortal and divine. The makers of these idols, being mortal themselves, shall leave behind them indeed a proof of their ingenuity; but such as is disgraceful, and exercised upon wrong objects. For the idols made by them are lies and vanities, as the Scripture terms them, and are such despicable and reproachful things in themselves, as posterity, more wise and sagacious, will have in abhorrence. Or the sense may be, like that, Isa. xliv. 11. that the time will come when all the makers of images, and such as have been most devoted to their worship, shall be ashamed and confounded at their own folly, to think that the frail work of man's hands could have any divinity in it, or any principle of long continuance.

Ver. 49. *How then cannot men perceive, that they be no gods, which can neither save themselves from war nor from plagues?*] As material and perishable things, they are liable themselves to accidents and casualties, called here *plagues.* And if they cannot help themselves in time of public calamity and distress, much less can they be expected to succour and assist others. And how indeed should they watch over either their own or others' safety, being endued neither with power, life, nor understanding; and are indeed nothing but what they appear to be, senseless wood or stone? One reason which some expositors assign for Rachael's stealing her father's *teraphim*, Gen. xxxi. 19. was, to let him see that his gods, as he called them, could not preserve themselves, much less do any service to him. (See ver. 57.) The king of Assyria, with equal truth and smartness, reflects upon the impotence of such deities: *Have any of the gods of the nations delivered their land out of my hand? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim?* (Isa. xxxvi. 18, 19.) The like may be observed, from profane history, of Æneas's *penates*, which were so far from assisting him, that, if he had not taken them along with him, they could not have set one foot forward, nor have been saved themselves at the burning of Troy if his great piety had not secured them. (See ver. 55.)

Ver. 51. *There is no work of God in them.*] Οὐδὲν θεοῦ ἔργον ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐστιν, *i. e.* There is no Divine power in them, or they cannot work or effect any thing like a god.

Ver. 53. *Nor give rain unto men.*] The descriptive character of the living God is, *He that giveth rain, both the former and the latter in his season, that reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of harvest.* (Jer. v. 24.) The vicissitude of seasons, of cold and heat, of drought and moisture, so wisely fitted for the growth of the fruits of the earth, and other uses of human life, is both the effect and proof of a God and a Providence. "Videmus (says St. Cyprian) Dei nutu tempora obsequi, elementa famulari, spirare ventos, fontes fluere, grandescere copias messium, fructus mitescere vinearum, exuberare pomis arbusta." And therefore Maximus Tyrius expressly, and with great propriety, calls God τῶν ὡρίων ταμίαν, τῶν κάρπων τροφέα, τὸν γενέθλιον, τὸν ὑέτιον, τὸν ἐπικάρπιον. But false gods, or idols, have no power over the elements, nor at the request of any votary can they make any alteration in them, as the true God did, through the intercession of Elias. (James v. 17.) They can neither shew signs (ver. 67.) in the heavens above, nor produce any alteration on the earth beneath; but are themselves subject to, and often suffer by, the great inclemency of weather; they are sometimes struck down by a thunderbolt, or melted by the power of lightning.

Ver. 54. *Neither can they judge their own cause, nor redress a wrong; being unable, for they are as crows between heaven and earth.*] Our translators follow a copy which had ἑαυτῶν. The Alexandrian and others have αὐτῶν· *i. e.* They cannot interpose to right themselves by any miracle, nor to execute justice in their own behalf, as the true God did in the matter of Korah and his faction: see ver. 64. which respects the other reading. Nor can they relieve any city or country from distress, *Neque regiones liberabunt ab injuria* (Vulgate), as the God of Israel did Jerusalem from the power of Sennacherib. They as little know, and are as little able to alter things upon earth, as the meanest bird that flies. Possibly this writer might instance in the crow, as being a bird of omen, according to the superstitious notion of the ancients.

Ver. 56. *They cannot withstand any king or enemies: how then can it be thought or said that they be gods?*] The prophet Isaiah (xlvi. 1.) takes occasion to insult over the Babylonish idols, who could neither preserve themselves nor their worshippers, but were carried about by their enemies in triumph, by way of contempt and derision. And when he says, *Bel boweth down, and Nebo stoopeth,* he means to express, that the images of these deities were

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carried in triumph by the Persians, as part of the spoil; so that the very deities themselves, which were worshipped in the idols, must own that they were conquered likewise. We read, 2 Chron. xxv. 5. that the anger of the Lord was kindled against king Amaziah, for seeking after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of his hand. And indeed it was a great instance of folly likewise in that prince, after he had subdued and slain the Edomites, to set up their gods, which he ought rather to have burnt in the fire, than bow down to them, and burn incense before them, whose impotency he had proved and detected. Ahaz was more justifiable in this respect, who sacrificed to the gods of those people, who had overcome him, hoping they might be induced to assist him also. (2 Chron. xxviii. 23.)

Ver. 60. *For sun, moon, and stars, being bright, and sent to do their offices, are obedient.*] Ἀποστελλόμενα ἐπὶ χρείας. The Geneva version here seems preferable, *when they are sent for necessary uses, obey.* These great bodies follow the appointment of their Creator: if any creature really deserved worship, it should seem that these were most worthy of it. Their beauty and splendour attract our admiration, and the advantages we receive from them claim our acknowledgment: but all their glory and power they derive from the Father of lights. The gods of the nations neither equal these in beauty, nor are alike beneficial by their influence: we ought therefore to confine all our worship and homage to the living God only, and to give no sort of adoration to false gods of any kind.

Ver. 61. *In like manner the lightning, when it breaketh forth, is easy to be seen, and after the same manner the wind bloweth in every country.*] Ἀστραπὴ, ὅταν ἐπιφανῇ, εὐόπτός ἐστι. Grotius conjectures the true reading to be εὐπειθής ἐστι, *is obedient*, which indeed is more agreeable to the context, and the reflection, as it now stands, seems but of little weight and consequence. The meaning of the latter clause, which is obscurely expressed, is, that under all climates *the wind and storm fulfil his word.* (Psal. cxlviii. 8.) And in this sense we may expound Psal. civ. 4. *He maketh his angels spirits;* i. e. he maketh the winds occasionally his ministers to execute his pleasure; and thus the rabbins understand רוחות *ruchoth* in that place. (See De Muis, in loc.)

Ver. 70. *For as a scarecrow in a garden of cucumbers keepeth nothing, so are their gods.*] The birds for a little while are afraid of a scarecrow, προβασκάνιον (a very unusual word; Junius understands it of the statue of Priapus, which is probable enough, as Suicer renders it, *pudenda statua*), but when once they begin to be accustomed to the sight of it, they give themselves no more pain or concern about it: when one comes near to inspect and examine it, it is found to be a mere nothing, or something occasionally placed *in terrorem*, and not a real man. The case is the same with idols; it is only the folly and mistake of those who adore them, which gives them their authority, they only impose upon the weak and superstitious, the more knowing and inquisitive soon find out the cheat.

Ver. 72. *You shall know them to be no gods, by the bright purple that rotteth upon them.*] Ἀπὸ τῆς πορφύρας, καὶ τῆς μαρμάρου. Not the marble itself, which is more durable, but the shining varnish, or polish, like marble. Grotius reads, μαργάρου, *i. e.* that the lustre of the jewels decays upon them. It is observable that this writer is very explicit, and descends to a detail of the vestments, ornaments, and decorations, of these idols, whom their priests set off and adorned with all possible care, to make them look more rich and glorious. And the reason of his being so particular seems to be, that he might set their *delectable things*, as the prophet calls them, (Isa. xliv. 9.) in a true light, and expose their unprofitableness and decay to a carnal and gross people, too apt to be affected with pomp and pageantry; and whose senses were likely to pervert their understanding, so as not to discern the cheat and falsity of such a worship.

And they themselves shall afterward be eaten.] This may either refer to idols, worm-eaten through time, or to such living animals as, though they were the objects of the pagan worship, were eaten by others. The Christian fathers and apologists continually expose the heathens for worshipping such deities, as might be sacrificed and eaten, and declare against the practice, as infinitely absurd and ridiculous. Minucius Felix is very pleasant on the occasion, particularly with respect to the ox Apis. Athanasius mentions it as a strong instance of the folly of the heathen worship, that those fishes and calves which the Egyptians worshipped were made the food of others. (Cont. Gent.) And the reasons why Moses beat the golden calf to powder, and made the Jews to drink of it, was, according to St. Jerome, *Ut discant contemnere, quod in secessum projici viderant; i. e.* that the people might learn to despise what they saw went down into the stomach, and out into the draught. But as the scope of this epistle seems directed to expose idols as mere dead things, the former sense seems preferable.

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THE

HISTORY OF SUSANNA.

Ver. 1. IN many editions this and the two other supplemental parts are inscribed Δανιὴλ, and in some διακρίσεις Δανιήλ. In the preface to this story it is said to be set apart from the beginning of Daniel, where it stands in the Roman editions; others, as the Complut. and some Latin ones, make it to be the thirteenth chapter of that book. But if what is here related belongs to the prophet Daniel, it should seem that what is therein contained happened before some other remarkable particulars which are mentioned in his book; especially, if what Ignatius and Sulpitius Severus observe be well-grounded; *viz.* that the prophet Daniel was not above twelve years of age when this story happened. It has been concluded also from his established character, that it preceded Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation, because it is then said of Daniel, that he was looked upon as more wise and able than all the magicians, astrologers, and wise men, of the Chaldeans, which great repute he could not, it is thought, have obtained, but by some such wonderful action or determination as this which is here related. But Origen disclaims this history as belonging at all to the book of Daniel, and calls it κίβδηλον τοῦ βιβλίου μέρος, a spurious part of it. (Epist. ad Jul. Afric. see also Grabe, de Vitiis LXX. Interp.)

Ver. 2. *A very fair woman, and one that feared the Lord.*] This is a great commendation of Susanna, that she was as virtuous and religious, as she was fair and beautiful; qualities both very amiable, but yet do not always go together, as beauty often inclines the owners of it to vanity, exposes them to dangers, and is an inlet to temptations. To excel therefore in both respects was much to the honour of Susanna, as what follows about the great care taken by her parents of her education is to their credit, and probably her being so virtuously disposed was the effect of it.

Ver. 4. *Joacim was a great rich man.*] Africanus objects, that it is not credible that Joacim, the husband of Susanna, was so rich and powerful in the captivity, as he is here said to be. To this Origen replies, that the Jews that were carried away captives into Babylon, were not so plundered but that many among them were both rich and powerful. (See Tob. i. 13, 14. 22.) To his house the Jews seem to have resorted for advice, or as to a seat of justice. (See ver. 6, 7. 28.)

Ver. 5. *The same year were appointed two of the ancients of the people to be judges.*] The term *ancients* has not respect purely to their age, nor proves necessarily that they were far advanced in it: the sensual and impure love which inflamed them for Susanna, makes it more probable that they were in the vigour of their age. The government by ancients or elders was the regimen of most cities. We meet with them in several authors, and from them public sessions or meetings are styled *senatus*, and γερουσίαι; sometimes these elders are called, πρεσβύτεροι in general, sometimes πρεσβύτεροι λαοῦ; these some think to be the judges here mentioned. Josephus says, that Moses appointed that every city should have a council of seven magistrates, men of exemplary virtue, and lovers of righteousness: (Antiq. lib. iv. cap. 8. Seld. de Synedr. lib. ii. cap. 6.) and this perhaps was the determinate number in his time, but anciently there seems to have been more; for Boaz mentions ten elders, who were probably the same with judges, in the city of Beth-lehem, Ruth iv. 2. (See note on Judith vi. 21.) But in this history two only are mentioned, and those as annually chosen; a method and constitution, says Grotius, which obtained not among the Jews. He thinks them rather assessors to the ἀρχιμαλωταρκῆς, the chief or president among the captives. Their business was to be assisting by their advice and opinion, and to give counsel or determination in such cases as were brought before them, chiefly in suits of law, (ver. 6.) or forensic matters. It is probable the Jews retained a sort of judicial power, even in their captivity, and that they executed some of the penal laws of Moses in smaller instances. Thus Haman tells Ahasuerus, Esth. iii. 8. that the Jews observed their own laws. This history of the accusation and trial of Susanna is a proof, says Calmet, that the Jews had their judges and methods of administering justice during the captivity; but that they had not the power of life and death, seems most probable. (See note on ver. 62.)

Ancient judges, who seemed to govern the people.] Οἱ ἐδόκουν κυβερνᾶν. The Vulgate and Junius translate according to our version, with which that of Geneva and also Coverdale's agree. St. Jerome observes, that it is not without good reason that the text here says, that these elders *seemed only to rule*, for they who judge or govern with partiality and injustice, have only the honourable name of judges, and are rulers in appearance only, rather than true and valuable magistrates; *Qui injuste præsunt populo, tantum nomen habent judicum; regere videntur populum, magis quam regant.* There may also a second and more literal sense be given from the then state and condition of the Jews; for being in captivity, and under the dominion and tyranny of the Chaldeans, they had rather a shadow of government among them than any real power and jurisdiction. But there is no necessity of understanding these words of seeming power, or the abuse of it, as δοκεῖ and *videtur* are often used as mere expletives. See Mark x. 42. where οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν, an expression very much resembling this, is rendered by St. Matthew, xx. 25. οἱ ἄρχοντες, the rulers. And Luke xxii. 24. τίς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μείζων, i. e. *which of them should seem to be the greatest*, as Geneva and Coverdale have it, means only,

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which of them should be so. And thus δοκῶ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἔχειν, 1 Cor. vii. 40. would be more properly and consistently, I conceive, rendered, *I have the Spirit of God.* There are other instances of this usage in this epistle: see xi. 16. xiv. 37.

Ver. 9. *And they perverted their own mind, and turned away their eyes, that they might not look unto Heaven, nor remember just judgments.*] *i. e.* That they might not look unto nor reflect upon the God of heaven, nor remember his just judgments against such notorious sinners. *Heaven,* by a metonymy, means the Father of it. (See ver. 35. and Luke xv. 18.) The author of the book of Wisdom has the like observation, and makes the reason of men's going astray to be, *Because their own wickedness hath blinded them,* (ii. 21.) The judicious Hooker has the following pertinent reflection upon the passage before us; "How should the brightness of wisdom shine where the windows of the soul are of very set purpose closed? True religion hath many things in it, the only mention whereof galleth and fretteth wicked minds. Being therefore loath that inquiry into such matters should breed a persuasion in the end, contrary unto that which they embrace, it is their endeavour, as much as in them lieth, to banish quite and clean from their cogitation, whatsoever leadeth or pointeth that way. The fountain and well-spring of which impiety is a resolved purpose of mind, to reap in this world what sensual profit or pleasure soever the world yieldeth, and not to be barred from any whatsoever means available thereto. And this is the very radical cause of their atheism." (Eccl. Pol. b. v. p. 191.)

Ver. 14. *When they were gone out, they parted the one from the other, and turning back again, they came to the same place, and after that they had asked one another the cause, they acknowledged their lust: then appointed they a time both together when they might find her alone.*] The description here is very natural of the artifice used on the occasion; they pretend to go home as it were to dinner, and take a formal leave of each other, with hearts equally bent on mischief, and meditating the same wicked design. But hypocrisy and dissimulation were the least blemishes in their character. Lust, ever impatient to perpetrate its schemes, and satisfy its raging passion, hurries them both back to the same haunt, and conscious guilt urging to a confession, unites them in a shameful confederacy against virtue, of which by their station they ought to have been the guardians and protectors.

Ver. 15. *She was desirous to wash herself in the garden.*] St. Chrysostom takes occasion, from her great circumspection and care to guard all the avenues of her heart, to compare her to *a garden enclosed,* to *a spring shut,* to *a fountain sealed up.* (Cant. iv. 12.) Ἦν ἀληθῶς κῆπος κεκλεισμένος, κ. τ. λ. *Quasi hortus erat beatus, quem nemo poterat deprædari, pudicitiæ suaves effundens odores: quasi fons erat fide signatus, ex quo nemo petulans pudicitiæ pulchritudinem poterat haurire.* (Serm. de Susanna, tom. vi. p. 141.)

Ver. 19. *Now when the two maids were gone forth, the two elders rose up.*] St. Chrysostom observes, that these elders were like two wolves or lions, that had seized upon a tender lamb, ἦν μόνη Σουσάννα ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν δύο λεόντων, κ. τ. λ. "*Susanna* (says he) *was alone in the midst of two hungry lions;* none were near to assist or succour her, neither maid, companion, neighbour, friend, nor relation, only God was inspector and witness, who indeed could have hindered the wicked attempt, but permitted this trial that he might publish Susanna's virtue, and the others' incontinence; and, at the same time, by her exemplary conduct, give a pattern to the sex of the like resolution and constancy, in case of temptation." (Ibid.)

Ver. 20. *We are in love with thee.*] The tempter was not wanting to suggest reasons to them, such as they were, to encourage their boldness. They urge their suit from the opportunity of privacy, and the secret passion which they conceived for her; they would persuade her it was love occasioned their fondness, as if a name so tender belonged to their brutal design. Such carnal and sensual love differs as much from the real and virtuous passion so called, as good money from counterfeit coin, or truth from falsehood. Ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ σοῦ ἐσμεν, which the Vulgate literally renders, *in concupiscentia tui sumus,* is a particular idiom, it resembles that of St. Paul, ἐν σαρκὶ εἶναι, Rom. viii. 9. and that mode of speech among the Latins, *In voluptatibus esse, in vitiis esse,* which we meet with in Seneca, Epist. 59.

Ver. 21. *If thou wilt not, we will bear witness against thee.*] St. Chrysostom finely harangues upon these words, Κατέχουσι τὴν Σουσάνναν οἱ παράνομοι, κ. τ. λ. *i. e.* The ruffians seize upon Susanna, and first they attack her by discourse, and endeavour to intimidate her by threats, hoping to prevail that way. "We are the rulers of the people, the guardians of the laws, have the power of binding and loosing, of acquitting or condemning; you are in our hands, may comply safely, there is none present to make any discovery; come, consent to lie with us." On which he breaks out into the following exclamation, "Hei mihi, quos pastores arbitrabar, lupos video; quos arbitrabar eorum, qui tempestate jactantur, esse portus, hi naufragium excitarunt." And then he introduces Susanna thus nobly replying to these wicked tempters: "Ye shall not ruin my honour, nor violate my chastity; I will not consent to disgrace my parents, nor bring a reflection on my family: I will not injure or grieve my husband, nor forfeit my conjugal faith to him, by an unlawful and sinful compliance; a violent and unjust death is more eligible than to consent to your impure solicitations. My husband is always present, if not in person, yet in my thoughts and affections; nor can I so soon or easily forget my parents' valuable instructions, whose image and example are always before my eyes." (Ibid.)

Ver. 22. *I am straitened on every side.*] And well might she say so; for either way she was exposed to death. If she prostituted herself to their wicked desires, it was death by their laws; and if she refused to consent to their solicitations, she exposed herself thereby to the same peril of death, by an accusation which the authority of the witnesses would make weighty and convincing, though in itself false. Her resolution therefore to withstand the temptation was noble, and as such is commended by all antiquity. St. Ambrose particularly thus honourably speaks of her: "Sancta Susanna, denuntiato falsi testimonii terrore, cum hinc se videret urgeri periculo, inde opprobrio, maluit honesta morte vitare opprobrium, quam studio salutis turpem vitam subire. Itaque dum honestati intendit, etiam vitam reservavit: quæ si id quod sibi videbatur ad vitam utile præoptavisset, non tantam reportasset gloriam. Immo

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etiam pœnam criminis forsitan non evasisset. Advertimus itaque quod id quod turpe est, non potest esse utile, neque rursus id quod honestum est, inutile." (De Officiis, cap. 14. lib. iii.)

Ver. 23. *It is better for me to fall into your hands, and not to do it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord.*] Αἱρετόν μοι ἐστίν. Almost all the versions use the comparative degree, except the Greek, which has αἱρετόν ἐστι, *i. e.* it is good and eligible to fall into your hands, and not to commit the sin, and thereby displease God. A comparison, says St. Jerome, cannot be here properly formed; for to say continency is better, is allowing some sort of goodness to the sin itself. The Greek, therefore, says he, may be supposed not to use it, "Ne videretur comparatione peccati, quod erat bonum, hoc appellare melius." (Hieron. in loc.) But this remark seems rather nice than just; for, besides that there are many instances in approved authors, where the positive is used for the comparative, the comparison is not here instituted of the morality of the actions, but of the danger attending them; or, in other words, that it is better to suffer a temporal than an eternal punishment. Many of the fathers, as St. Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Bernard, Austin, have wrote set panegyrics upon Susanna's wise conduct and determination. The last of these draws a long parallel between her and the famed Lucretia, the heroine of Roman story; the boasted pattern of chastity for all ages:—"What is Lucretia when compared to Susanna? She murders herself, though she knew herself innocent: the action so much celebrated, was rather rashness than fortitude, the effect not of any superior love of chastity, but of weakness, or false modesty. She was too delicate, it seems, to bear the thought of a shameful action committed even against her consent and concurrence, without revenging it rashly upon herself. *Seipsam etiam non adultera occidit; non est pudicitiæ caritas, sed pudoris infirmitas.* Or some tincture of pride was lurking under it. She was afraid lest any should think her guilty of the crime, if she did not resent it thus unnaturally. She could not content herself with the approbation and testimony of her own conscience, unless she shewed her detestation of the fact by killing herself, to avoid the very suspicion of it. She ought rather to have hindered the base action of Tarquin at the expense of her own life, than throw it away afterward out of mere vexation. Herein Susanna exceeded her, that she was so far from consenting to the brutal attempt of the elders, that she chose rather to expose herself to the manifest danger of death, than comply with their vile solicitations.—Lucretia killed herself, innocent as she was, lest she should appear guilty; and it is this very consideration of her innocence that aggravates her fault. Why should she kill herself if she was no ways culpable? and if she was culpable any ways by consenting, she must then certainly be thought to have killed herself, merely to have it supposed that she was innocent. *Si adultera, cur laudata; si pudica, cur occisa?* Susanna was no less sensible of the rudeness offered, but she did not think it her duty to punish upon herself another's crime, and to add to the sin of others, that of wilful murder of herself; *Nec in se ulta est crimen aliorum, ne aliorum sceleribus adderet sua.* (August. lib. i. de Civit. Dei, cap. 18.)

Ver. 24. *With that Susanna cried with a loud voice, and the two elders cried out against her.*] One hears, says St. Bernard, two cries very different, and for very different reasons. Susanna cries like an innocent lamb, in danger of being devoured, and the two elders roar like ravenous wolves for their prey, or because they were disappointed of it. St. Chrysostom has the very same comparison, "Clamor ut luporum gravium, et balantis oviculæ inter eos." She cries to fetch in help, and to attest her innocence; they to drown her shrieks, and to cover their own crime by turning accusers, for they now quitted their office as judges, by appearing as witnesses and informers.

Ver. 32. *These wicked men commanded to uncover her face, for she was covered.*] The way of covering the head was used chiefly on three occasions:—1. In cases of grief and mourning. (2 Sam. xix.) 2. As an expression of reservedness and modesty, as in the instance of Rebecca, Gen. xxiv. 65. and this of Susanna. 3. As a testimony or token of the greatest respect and reverence, or when an inferior was unable to bear the sight and splendour of another's majesty and greatness. Thus Elijah, (1 Kings xix. 13.) when he heard the voice of God upon Mount Horeb, wrapped his face in his mantle. Covering the face with a veil was the universal practice of almost all nations. The Romans in particular were so strict and punctual in the use of it, that when C. Sulpicius Gallus knew his wife had appeared abroad without it, he divorced her only on that account. And from this covering, as the critics observe, the Latin word *nubere*, which at first signified no more than to cover with a veil, came to express marriage. Calmet thinks, that these judges ordered her to be uncovered under the pretext that it was an instance of disrespect to their office and quality, to continue veiled in their presence, especially when cited before them as a criminal: or, perhaps, pretending that her guilt would discover itself in her countenance, though doubtless the true reason was that given in the text, *that they might feed their eyes with her beauty.*

Ver. 34. *And laid their hands upon her head.*] A form used among the Jews, when one accused another of a capital crime: (see Lev. xxiv. 14.) by which ceremony these elders signified that they now appeared as witnesses, and had given the true testimony against her, and thought her worthy of death; and it was customary, according to the Jewish writers, to say, *Let thy blood be upon thine own head, which by thy guilt thou hast brought on thyself.* And to this alludes probably that other ceremony among them, of laying the hands upon the head of the victim intended for the sacrifice. (Lev. i. 4. iv. 4. 24. xvi. 21.)

Ver. 45. *Therefore when she was led to be put to death, the Lord raised up the holy spirit of a young youth, whose name was Daniel.*] It hath been objected against this history, that what is here related could not happen when Daniel was a youth, much less when he was παιδάριον νεώτερον, as the Greek expresses it; for it appears from ver. 65. or the last verse of this story, according to some ancient versions, that Astyages was at this time dead, and Cyrus reigned in his stead. Now Daniel, say some objectors, was then well advanced in years. To this it is answered, that this history happened a long time before, and that the verse referred to about Astyages does not at all concern this narration, but that of Bel and the Dragon, which immediately follows; and accordingly in many editions, both Greek and Latin, it is made the very beginning of it. (See

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Du Pin's Prel. Disc. p. 24.) As to Daniel's age, several writers expressly say, that he was only twelve years old at this time. (See Sulpit. Sever. Sac. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 2. Theodoret. in cap. i. Ezek. Ignat. Ep. ad Magnes.) It seems as if God, by the mouth as it were of an infant, meant to confound the malice and cunning of these elders, and to detect their hypocrisy and iniquity. "One sees in this story (says St. Chrysostom) how far it pleases God to permit the malice and wickedness of men to proceed, and how far he seems to abandon his servants: he permits Susanna to be condemned to death, and even to be led forth to public punishment, to prove her faith and constancy unto the end; in like manner as he tried the faith of Abraham, by letting Isaac come to the very spot where he was to be offered as a sacrifice, and not interposing till his father had bound him, actually had taken the knife, and stretched out his hand to kill him. But as he sent his angel in the very instant to hinder him from laying his hands upon, or doing any harm to, his son, and to assure him that he was pleased with this signal instance of his obedience, so, to prevent the evil intended against Susanna, the Lord raised up the holy spirit of young Daniel, to undeceive the people, and make them open their eyes." (Serm. de Susan. tom. vi.) "It should seem (says St. Jerome, from the text), that the spirit did not then first enter into Daniel, but that it was already in him, only quiescent on account of his tender age: but an occasion now offering to rescue thereby oppressed innocence, it appeared, and acted with power and clearness in favour of justice; God exemplifying in this instance, that his spirit, when he pleases, acts independently, or without regard to the weakness or minority of age, which serves rather to make his Divine power the more illustrious."

Ver. 46. *Who cried with a loud voice, I am innocent from the blood of this woman.*] God opposed to the two elders a child in comparison, and made innocent Daniel the judge of these corrupt ones; *I am clear*, says he, *from the blood of this woman.* "He uses (says St. Ambrose) the same expression with regard to Susanna, as Pilate did with respect to the holy Jesus, but does it much better, and more consistently; for he urges it for the deliverance of innocent blood, whereas Pilate bore testimony to his being a just man, whom he delivered up soon after as a criminal, which greatly aggravated his fault, *Gravius est peccatum unum eundemque et pronuntiare justum, et tradere quasi criminosum.* Daniel, by his declaration, freed the people from the mistake they lay under and the sin they were about to commit, whereas Pilate by his conduct confirmed the Jews in their wicked design." It is surprising that the words of so young a person should affect the people so all on a sudden, and make them defer the execution of a sentence pronounced in form upon the deposition of two witnesses, so irreproachable in all appearance; it should seem that God, who alone can rule the will and affections, touched the hearts of this people, and inclined them at this time to attend favourably to what the inspired youth offered in behalf of distressed innocence. They had judged too hastily upon the deposition of two such witnesses, without taking the necessary precaution to be assured of the truth of their testimony: especially as Susanna's conduct had always been such as put her beyond suspicion of the crime charged upon her, and she denied so solemnly that she had been guilty of it.

Ver. 48. *So he standing in the midst of them said, Are ye such fools, ye sons of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth, ye have condemned a daughter of Israel?*] St. Bernard observes, that though Daniel saw himself alone amongst so great a multitude, yet was he not afraid or ashamed, notwithstanding the great authority of these elders among the people, to oppose himself against their false accusation, and the sentence pronounced thereupon. He chose rather to be thought guilty of rashness and presumption for the honest freedom he had taken, than to be found guilty before God in betraying truth and innocence by his silence. Sulpitius observes, that the extraordinary courage and unusual boldness discovered by one so young on this occasion, before so numerous an assembly, was the very reason that induced those Jews who had passed the sentence upon her, to enter again into the examination of the cause: "Enimvero multitudo Judæorum quæ tum aderat, non sine Domino existimans, puerum contemptæ ætatulæ, in hanc constantiam prorupisse, favore accommodato, in consilium revertitur." (Sacr. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 2.)

Ver. 50. *And the elders said unto him, Come, sit down among us, and shew it us, seeing God hath given thee the honour of an elder.*] Κάθισον ἐν μέσῳ ἡμῶν. This compliment was paid him on account of the superior wisdom which he discovered. See Luke iii. 46. where our Saviour is described at twelve years old, the supposed age of Daniel, as sitting in the midst of the Jewish doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. But who are they who invite Daniel to this honour? if the persons who speak thus civilly to him are the elders that accused Susanna, we must then either imagine, that what is here spoken and offered him, is by way of sneer or raillery, to insult his youth, and to expose his forwardness and presumption, in pretending to reform the judgment of the whole assembly, or else that they thought to win upon him, and gain him over by their flattery. But it is more probable, that the persons who addressed Daniel in this obliging and honourable manner, were different elders or assessors, not in the plot or interest of the two others, but acting agreeably to their public office and character, and therefore well inclined to detect the falsity of the accusation, and to re-examine the cause for that purpose.

Ver. 52. *Thou that art waxen old in wickedness, now thy sins which thou hast committed are come to light.*] Ἡμερῶν κακῶν πεπαλαιωμένε. It should seem as if Daniel here alluded to the term elder, especially if that word is literally to be understood; by adding κακῶν the expression answers to πλήρης παντὸς δόλου, Acts xiii. 10. and πεπληρωμένος πάσῃ ἀδικίᾳ, Rom. i. 29. *Sins* may here either be understood strictly, and the sense be, "Thy former wicked way of life, which thou hast had the artifice to conceal, is now apparent, or may hence be inferred:" or, by a metonymy, we may understand ἁμαρτίαι of the punishment due to sins, (see Numb. xvi. 26. 1 Tim. v. 22. Apoc. xviii. 4.) and then the sense will be, "The punishment due to thy many sins hath now overtaken thee."

Ver. 54. *Under a mastic-tree. And Daniel said . . . Even now the angel of God hath received the sentence of God to cut thee in two.*] Daniel, in his reply to the elders, alludes to the Greek names of the trees, under which they said the fact was committed, and from the very names of these trees pronounces sentence to their confusion. When one of them

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said, that he saw the adulterous act ὑπὸ σχίνου, Daniel answers in allusion to σχίνου, *The angel of God is ready,* σχίσαι σε μέσον, *to cut thee in two:* and when the other elder said it was ὑπὸ πρίνου, Daniel replies, in allusion to this likewise, *The angel of the Lord waiteth with the sword,* πρίσαι σε μέσον; which allusions are not, nor can be, preserved in our language. The Vulgate retains the Greek names of these trees; the one is called *prinus,* the other *schinus.* The reflection we may draw from the condemnation of these elders, expert no doubt in the art of defence, as well as accusation, is, that the Spirit of God makes use of such means as he sees most proper to confound wickedness and injustice; if he had not in some measure blinded the reason of these wicked elders, it would have been easy for them to have eluded the force of Daniel's questions, and to have prevented the consequence drawn from his answers, by saying only, that they did not trouble themselves to be so particular as to mind the sort of tree they were criminally concerned under, it was sufficient that they saw them indecently acting together in such a part of the garden, and under the covert of some shady tree. As the allusion in these verses is founded upon the Greek names, some have from thence inferred, that this history could not be written by Daniel, but was wrote originally in the Greek tongue by some Hellenistic Jew: to which Origen replies, that Daniel never used the terms or names of the trees as they occur in the Greek, but such other Hebrew or Chaldee words, as the verb that signifies *to cut asunder,* best answered to: that the Greek interpreter, it is probable, in order to preserve the force of the original, changed the names of the trees, and sought out such other names instead of them, as had the same allusions as the original ones had which were lost. Many instances of this figure of speech, called paronomasia, are to be found in the sacred writings; in the Hebrew of the fifth chapter of Isaiah, ver. 7. it is, *he looked for* משפט *mischpat, but behold* משפח *mischpach; for righteousness* צדקה *tsedaka, but behold* צעקה *tsaaka, a cry.* (See also Isa. xxiv. 18. and Vitringa in Isa. p. 120.) The allusion is observable in the Hebrew text of Eccles. vii. 1. but Dan. v. 25. 28. is nearest to the passage before us. Many other examples might be collected out of both Testaments: see Jer. i. 11, 12. Ezek. vii. 6. Hos. ix. 15. Amos v. 5. viii. 2. John xv. 2. Rom. i. 29—31. xii. 3. 2 Thess. iii. 11. Heb. xi. 37. all which instances have an affinity of sound with each other, like these of Daniel, but cannot easily be translated into another language, and therefore the beauty of them is frequently lost.

Ver. 55. *The angel of God hath received the sentence of God to cut thee in two.*] The punishing offenders by sawing them in two with a wooden or iron saw, to which Daniel here seems to allude, was in use among the ancients. We are assured that the Thracians sawed men asunder alive, Val. Max. lib. ix. cap. 2. by Suetonius, that rebels and betrayers of their country were punished this way; and by Tertullian, Apol. cap. 3. that it was used of old to those who were false to their creditors. It appears from the laws of the twelve tables, that this punishment was annexed to certain atrocious crimes, but was so seldom put in execution, that Aulus Gellius says he never read of any that suffered it. (Noct. Attic. lib. xii.) This is thought to be the punishment inflicted by Samuel on Agag, the enemy of God's people, 1 Sam. xv. 33. and by David on the Ammonites, 2 Sam. xii. 31. It was by Nebuchadnezzar threatened to the blasphemers of the true God, Dan. iii. 29. In general it is observed, that all those places of Scripture, where the word פרץ *parats,* to divide, or break asunder, is used in the Hebrew text, for putting to death, probably allude to this punishment. In St. Matthew the wicked servant is threatened to be cut asunder, and to have his portion with the hypocrites, xxiv. 51. Among the sufferings of the saints of the Old Testament, the apostle mentions their being sawn asunder, ἐπρίσθησαν, Heb. xi. 37. which the Jews and Christians by tradition understand of Isaiah, who is said to have been put to death in this manner by Manasses king of Judah, for boasting he had seen the Lord sitting on his throne. (Isa. vi. 1.)

Ver. 56. *O thou seed of Canaan, and not of Judah.*] This is spoken by way of the greatest reproach; for the Canaanites were a cursed generation from an accursed father, so overgrown with wickedness, that God devoted them to destruction, and to be cut off from that good land which they possessed, that he might place Israel therein, the seed of blessed parents, whom for their father's sake he loved, and entailed his blessings upon. The expression here is the same with that Ezek. xvi. 3. *Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan, thy father was a Hittite, and thy mother an Amorite:* so of the elder it is observed here, that he resembled the manners of Canaan more than those of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, his ancestors, and is therefore said to be of the seed of Canaan, because those, in Scripture dialect, whose manners we resemble, are said to be our parents. And as the name Canaan, in the Greek Σάλος, i. e. *commotion* or *agitation,* alludes probably to that disorderly ferment in his blood, which betrayed him into that sin that derived the curse upon his posterity, so one thus wantonly and viciously disposed is properly said to derive his descent from him. There is also an expression resembling this, Hos. xii. 7. where Ephraim, on account of his injustice, violence, calumny, and false accusation, is called by way of indignation Canaan, according to the rendering of the LXX. Vulgate, and oriental versions. That of Geneva has it in the text, and this marginal annotation on it, *Ephraim is more like the wicked Canaanite, than godly Abraham,* or *Jacob;* intimating, that they were so unlike Jacob their father beforementioned, that they were not to be reputed his genuine seed, but, as if their birth and nativity were of the land of Canaan, had forfeited their right to the privileges and blessings belonging to Israel, and were become heirs of the curse annexed to Canaan and his posterity. It is observable, that where Ephraim is reproached as Canaan, Judah is before commended. (See xi. 12.) For the tribe of Judah, for the generality, retained the public worship of God, its purity, at least truth of worship, and was comparatively faithful, and that kingdom was the lawful succession of David's lineage. The Jews have a tradition, according to St. Jerome, that when Israel came out of Egypt and were encompassed on one side by a mountain, on another by the Red Sea, on another by the army of Pharaoh, and even quite shut in, the other tribes despaired and desired to return into Egypt, only Judah, with confidence in God, entered into the sea, and so deserved the kingdom. With respect to this fact, Judah is said in the place last referred to, and which ought indeed to begin the next chapter, to be a witness of God's word, and as a faithful assertor

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thereof, descended with God into the sea, and was most faithful among the holy ones, so as to believe the words of God commanding him. (See Pocock, in loc.)

Ver. 61. *And they rose against the two elders.*] See Apost. Constit. lib. ii. 49. 51. The Jewish writers, though they do not look upon this history as authentic, yet have a traditional account of the same story, differing only in the relation of it. They make the two elders to be punished by Nebuchadnezzar, by being roasted, or cast into the fire (burning among the Chaldeans being the punishment for adultery); and not by their own people, as mentioned in the following verse. They will have these elders to have been Ahab and Zedekiah, mentioned Jer. xxix. 21. of whom it is there said, that they committed villany in Israel, by adultery with their neighbours' wives. (See Orig. Epist. ad African. Jerom. Epist. 10. and Com. in loc. and on Dan. xiii.) The last clause of ver. 5. here, has been thought by some to countenance this opinion: but this is a mere fancy and conceit, the meaning of that sentence being only, that these elders resembled those corrupt ones which the prophet there speaks of; and it seems more probable from the following verse, that these elders were stoned, as they suffered according to the law of Moses, or in the manner appointed by it for such a crime, and in such sort as they intended to have done unto Susanna.

Ver. 62. *And they put them to death.*] Though the Jews, as Origen and others maintain, might have the power of the sword sometimes in their dispersions, yet it may be questioned, how far they had the power of life and death during their captivity under the Chaldeans. It seems more probable that they had not such a power, and therefore the Jewish writers will have these elders to have been punished by Nebuchadnezzar. Under the Romans, who gave the Jews as much liberty as the Babylonians, it is certain they had not this power of life and death, as appears from John xviii. 31. *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.* It is more likely that they had only magistrates, judges, and courts of justice of their own to decide differences in cases of property, in a way peculiar to themselves; as Strabo, quoted by Josephus, (Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 12.) says, they had at Alexandria in the like state. However this be, it is certain these elders deserved a very exemplary punishment; as their crime was greatly enhanced from their public character as judges, and their sway and authority as such among the people, and yet made use of all the respect and esteem which their age and office procured them, to colour and conceal their detestable crimes.

Ver. 63. *Therefore Chelcias and his wife praised God for their daughter Susanna . . . because there was no dishonesty found in her.*] As her father and mother, her children and all her kindred wept, (ver. 33.) at the unexpected charge against her, so their joy, no doubt, was proportionably great for her deliverance. "They praised God (says St. Jerome) not so much for the preservation of her life, which she would have lost very happily as being innocent, but because he had afforded her grace and strength enough not to fall under the temptation, and that he had so signally glorified his name by so miraculous a protection of innocence." The fathers greatly extol the constancy of Susanna, and call her the glory of her sex; as on the contrary they style these elders the shame and reproach of theirs.

Ver. 64. *From that day Daniel was had in great reputation in the sight of the people.*] It is one objection among others brought against this history of Susanna, that Daniel was not advanced upon the occasion that this story mentions; *viz.* for delivering Susanna from death by his wisdom, but rather for the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. (Dan. ii. 48.) But may we not conceive a double advancement of Daniel? the first by his judgment concerning Susanna, whereby he came into great credit with the people; and the second occasioned by his expounding the dream, whereby he came into favour and reputation before the king.

THE

HISTORY OF BEL AND THE DRAGON.

Ver. 1. *KING Astyages was gathered to his fathers, and Cyrus of Persia received his kingdom.*] Herodotus confirms this, telling us in express words, that Astyages was succeeded by his grandson Cyrus. This immediate succession of Cyrus to his grandfather is vouched by Diodorus, Justin, Strabo, Clemens Alexander, Lactantius, Eusebius, Jerome, Austin, and others: but these, as they have copied after Herodotus, add no weight to the scale. But though the above writers give Astyages no other successor than Cyrus, nor is any notice at all taken of any other in the Canon of Ptolemy, yet Xenophon (Cyropæd. lib. i. cap. 19.) does, and likewise Josephus. (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 12.) The former calls the successor of Astyages, Cyaxares; and the latter gives him the name of Darius, adding, that he overturned the kingdom of Babylon, being assisted in that enterprise by his nephew Cyrus: which is consonant both to Scripture and chronology. For if we suppose that Astyages had no other successor but Cyrus, we must allow him to have lived a hundred years and upwards. Could we believe that Astyages lived to so great an age, we should not scruple to follow Herodotus. But it is certain from Dan. v. 31. that Darius the Mede, or Cyaxares the Second (for they mean the same person), succeeded immediately. Perhaps the reason that Cyaxares is not mentioned as succeeding, may be his reigning only two years at Babylon after he took it, and at his death Cyrus became master of the whole empire: and because the other had no more than the name and shadow of the sovereignty, excepting only in Media, which was his

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own proper dominion. Our translators follow the Greek, Arabic, and Syriac copies, but the Vulgate places this verse at the end of the history of Susanna.

Ver. 2. *And Daniel conversed with the king, and was honoured above all his friends.*] It is not agreed what king is here meant, whether Astyages, Darius his son, or Cyrus his grandson. Calmet declares for the last; Messieurs of Port-Royal think the account of Bel suits with neither of the three, as it is well known they worshipped the sun, and not such an idol. Besides, what is mentioned ver. 28, 29. that the Babylonians were angry with and threatened to destroy the king and his house on account of the destruction of the Dragon, is an instance of outrageous behaviour not at all consistent with their being lately subdued by Darius and Cyrus. They suppose therefore this to have happened under Evil-Merodach, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, with whom Daniel was in as high esteem as he had been under Nebuchadnezzar. And they place this history about A. M. 3442. the beginning of Evil-Merodach's reign, Daniel being then, as is supposed, about fifty-six years of age.

Ver. 3. *An idol called Bel.*] This *Bel* was the great and national idol of the Babylonians, who had erected a most magnificent and sumptuous temple for it. As Baal is said to be the proper name of Belus, the king of Babel or Babylon, next after Nimrod, and as he is said to be the first man that was deified, or reputed a god after his death, so the said name is supposed by learned men more peculiarly and primarily to belong to him. And accordingly the Hebrew *Baal* answering to the Chaldee *Bel*, it is this successor of Nimrod that we are to understand by the god that is called by the name of *Bel* in this history. Ninus his son erected a statue or idol to his father Belus, to be worshipped, and thereby gave the first hint to idolatry, or image-worship, as many learned maintain. This image or idol of Belus is, they say, what is here called Bel, or Baal, contracted, and continued until Daniel's time, when it was destroyed by Darius the Mede, or Cyrus, upon the discovery of the imposture of Bel's priests.

And there were spent upon him every day twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep, and six vessels of wine.] There are but two ancient writers that make any mention of the history of Bel; *viz.* this apocryphal one, and Josephus Ben-Gorion, and their accounts differ in several particulars. The learned Selden hath extracted from the latter the daily allowance made to Bel, and makes it to be, *Juvencus*, 10 *arietes*, 100 *pulli columbarum, et* 70 *panes subcinericii, et* 10 *amphoræ vini.* Though they vary in the stated quantity of provisions, yet they had some warrant, says he, from sacred history, *viz.* Jer. li. 44. to represent Bel so voracious, and to countenance his being served in so plentiful a manner by the idolatrous priests. (Seld. Syntag. 2. de Belo et Dracone.)

Ver. 4. *And the king said unto him, Why dost thou not worship Bel?*] It should seem that the king did not know but that Daniel worshipped Bel, but by his not accompanying him with the rest when he went daily to worship him. But as Daniel hated all hypocrisy and dissimulation, he was too good to seem to countenance by his presence what he inwardly abhorred. But, that he might not appear to stay away through a supercilious pride or obstinacy, he assigns the reason in the following verse, for not joining in this idolatrous worship, and the reason is both natural and cogent; *viz.* that idols are inanimate senseless things, and both unworthy and insensible of the honour paid them: that God alone, who made all things by his power, even those very persons whose skill and ingenuity contrived and fashioned these idols, was the true object of worship, the ever-living God, subsisting in and from himself; the sovereign Being from whom all others derived their existence, and upon whom they depend for their preservation and continuance.

Ver. 6. *Thinkest thou not that Bel is a living god? seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh every day?*] One may easily judge what sort of god this Bel, the god of the Babylonians was, and how imperfect and insufficient to his own existence and happiness, who was beholden to his votaries for his daily sustenance and refreshment in the opinion of his very worshippers. But though the idol had no use of or occasion for this prodigious quantity of provisions, as being insensible of what was set before it, yet the devil, who inhabited and acted therein, greatly availed himself of the cheat and imposition put upon the credulous people, and though he ate none of the good things prepared, but left them to feed the luxury of the priests, yet, in the false religion maintained and propagated by them, he found means in return to satisfy a more craving appetite, *viz.* his insatiable appetite to ruin and destroy souls. (See Port-Royal Com. in loc.) What a strange blindness must possess this idolatrous king, to fall down before such a despicable object of worship! and how mean and groveling must his conceptions be, whom it became necessary to convince, that his god did not eat all, to prove him to be no god! as if a necessity of eating was any proof of divinity, and not rather an argument of decay and mortality; and as if all-sufficiency was not a distinguishing and an essential attribute of the Deity! How much juster was the conclusion of a much wiser king, who, because of God's absolute perfection and independency on any of his creatures, *said unto the Lord, Thou art my God; my goods are nothing unto thee,* Psal. xvi. 2. where the rendering of the LXX. who insert the particle ὅτι, is far more strong and beautiful, εἶπα τῷ Κυρίῳ, Κύριός μου εἶ συ, ὅτι τῶν ἀγαθῶν μου οὐ χρείαν ἔχεις. And so the Vulgate, *Dixi Domino, Deus meus es tu, quoniam bonorum meorum non eges.*

Ver. 11. *Bel's priests said, Lo, we go out; but thou, O king, set on the meat, and make ready the wine, and shut the door fast, and seal it with thine own signet.*] The wretched sordidness of these priests of Bel, who, through a greediness of gaining the offerings themselves, made the people believe that their god ate up all that was offered in his temple, is not so much to be wondered at, as they were heathens and priests of a false religion. "They are an image of such (if any such there be of the sacred order, say Messieurs of Port-Royal) who, through a selfish principle, are tempted to make free with the corban, or possess themselves of the goods of the church, which being a solemn tribute and homage paid by some among the faithful to God, and an instance of their pious acknowledgment for the many blessings received from him, and devoted by them to holy purposes, are sealed with the seal of the Most High, as things sacred and forbidden to be touched, and cannot be appropriated to private uses, without the guilt of manifest injustice, and even of sacrilege itself. If there be any such, who, after the example of these idolatrous priests, convert holy offerings to their own personal emolument]

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abuse consecrated things, or seize on what was given for the relief of his poor members, they are not the true pastors, who enter into the sheepfold by the right door, but come in by some private entrance, some unwarrantable way, like thieves and robbers." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 19. *Then laughed Daniel, and held the king that he should not go in, and said, Behold now the pavement, and mark well whose footsteps are these.*] "One knows not (says Tertullian, adv. Valentin. cap. 6.) whether to laugh at the folly or lament seriously the blindness of this prince, who suffered himself thus to be imposed upon by his self-interested priests." Daniel laughs at his folly, as knowing that some errors are best exposed by ridicule and contempt. "Let us laugh (say Messieurs of Port-Royal) when we look upon the ashes strewed through the temple of this false god, and the footsteps of these robbers of his offerings, who ridiculously attempted to establish the divinity of Bel upon their own lying and gluttony: but let us lament with tears of blood, if there be any in the church who thus play the hypocrite, and fall upon the piety of the faithful. It is by men's footsteps and goings, *i. e.* by their conduct and manner of behaviour in the temple of the Lord, that one only justly knows whether they be robbers or true pastors. It is by considering whether they be open or secret workers, and looking into their works, whether they be those of darkness or light. For those who, like these priests of Bel, walk in darkness, know not where they set their feet, and the traces of them, discovered by the light of truth, shew the hidden work they have been about. Happy for them if ashes were the symbol and token of their penitence." (Com. in loc.)

Ver. 22. *Then the king was angry, and took the priests with their wives and children . . . and slew them.*] A conduct so blamable in the priests, and so scandalous an imposture in persons dedicated to holy offices and the care of religious affairs, carries in it something so shocking and unworthy of their character, that one is not at all surprised at the rigour with which this king punished a cheat so detestable; for nothing is more criminal than fraud in matters of religion, or to impose upon the simplicity of persons who rest their belief often upon the authority of their pastors, whose integrity they entertain a good opinion of, and think they can safely depend upon. But these crafty priests of Bel had too much interest in this imposture not to carry on the ridiculous cheat by a solemn and affected gravity, and support it with all their artifice and power. It reminds one of what Aristophanes mentions of a like fraud practised by the priests of Plutus, and thus described by him:—

> Ἔπειτ' ἀναβλέψας, ὁρῶ τὸν ἱερέα,
> Τοὺς φθοῖς ἀφαρπάζοντα καὶ τὰς ἰσχάδας
> Ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῆς ἱερᾶς. μετὰ τοῦτο δὲ
> Περιῆλθε τοὺς βωμοὺς ἅπαντας ἐν κύκλῳ,
> Εἴποῦ πόπανον εἴη τι καταλελειμμένον.
>
> (Plut. act. iii. scen. 2.)

Ver. 23. *There was a great dragon whom the Babylonians worshipped.*] By the *dragon* we are to understand a serpent, which unaccountable sort of worship prevailed much in the early times. That the Babylonians had images of serpents in the temple of Belus, Diodorus Siculus informs us. We may observe, that the serpent has all along been the common symbol and representation of the heathen deities. (See Jul. Firmic. de Errore Prof. Rel. p. 15.) But serpents were not only mere symbols and hieroglyphics, but real objects of worship themselves, and had religious worship paid them by the ancient heathen, as appears from the passage before us, from the book of Wisdom, xi. 15. and other writers. It is well known that the Romans, upon a great plague, sent to fetch a serpent that was worshipped at Epidaurus; the serpent came, or rather the devil brought it, and it placed itself in an island on the Tiber, where it was worshipped as a god propitious to the Roman people, A. U. 462. (See Val. Max. i. 8. Ovid Metamorph. lib. xv.) The arrival of this serpent is beautifully delineated upon a coin of Antoninus Pius in Montfaucon. Supplement. vol. v. cap. 1. tab. 26. What Ælian says is much closer to our purpose, ἐν Μελίτῃ τῆς Αἰγύπτου δράκων ἐστὶ, κ. τ. λ. *i. e.* there was a serpent worshipped in Egypt, in a village called Melita, which lived in a tower, and had attendants, and officers, and a priest: a table was kept for it, and provisions served up to it; every day meal mixed with honey was put into a cup for its use, which was all eaten and gone the next day. (De Animal. lib. xi. cap. 17.) It seems as if the devil took a pride to be worshipped under that form, to insult perhaps fallen man, if we may indulge conjecture. Grotius out of several ancient authors has made it appear, that in the old Greek mysteries it was usual to carry about a serpent, crying Εὔα, the devil thereby, as it may seem, expressing his triumph in the unhappy deception of our first parents. (See Orig. cont. Cels. lib. vi.) And probably the story of Ophioneus among the heathen, was taken from the devil's assuming the form or body of a serpent in his tempting of Eve. That from his success at that time he should be encouraged to assume often the like figure to deceive her posterity, is not to be wondered at. But one cannot conceive what mankind could at any time find in such a hideous creature as a serpent is, worthy of their adoration. But if man in Paradise, in a state of innocence, and with that high degree of light and perfection that he was then possessed of, preferred the voice of a serpent to that of God, and thought he could be more happy in listening to the artful suggestions of such a monster, than the gracious commands of his Creator, what wonder is it, if one meets with marks and traces of that fatal blindness spread far and near among dark and unenlightened people, and even whole nations, as the Babylonians here mentioned, paying religious adoration to serpents and crocodiles?

Ver. 27. *Then Daniel took pitch, and fat, and hair, and did seethe them together, and made lumps thereof.*] The composition or materials which Daniel made use of to burst this dragon, had not in themselves any natural or specific power to effectuate that, or to kill him; but being crammed, say Messieurs of Port-Royal, into a throat naturally strait, they stopped the respiration or breath, and so suffocated it. Josephus Ben-Gorion gives a very different account of its destruction, as we have it translated from the Hebrew by the learned Selden: "Abiens vero Daniel a conspectu regis paravit instrumenta ferrea instar pectinum, quibus lina repurgantur, et conjunxit ea interius, tergum conjungens tergo; aculei autem eorum extra prominebant per circuitum limati et acuti, quibus undique adhibuit varias ciborum species, præsertim adipem, pingue-

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dinem, et alias res pingues. Lituram quoque sulphuris et picis apposuit ei, quibus fomentis absconditi sunt aculei ferrei et dentes illi serrati, habuitque formam demensi (Ebraice Mincha, quod est munus Deo oblatum): cumque Daniel illud projecisset in rictum draconis, suscepit ipsum draco, et devoravit eum, desiderio animæ suæ; at ubi descendit ad interiora ventris ejus, dissolvebatur adeps, et pinguedo a ferreis aculeis, et ingrediebantur acumina serratorum dentium in viscera draconis, atque perforabant ea, et illico cœpit draco sentire ingentem dolorem, corruensque mortuus est sequenti die." (Ben-Gorion, lib. i. cap. 10. apud Seld. Syntag. 2. de Belo et Dracone, cap. 17.)

Ver. 28. *They conspired against the king, saying, The king is become a Jew.*] *i. e.* The king seems, like the Jews, to have conceived a dislike and abhorrence of idols, as appears plainly from his permitting the overthrow of our national one: or they might imagine him to be turned Jew, or Jewishly inclined, from the great favour so lately shewed to that people, in setting them at liberty; or, lastly, they might conclude so from the particular esteem and regard shewed to Daniel. Grotius departs from the common interpretations, and quite transposes the sense, and, instead of the common rendering, *The king is become a Jew*, makes the meaning to be, *A Jew is become king*, Ἰουδαῖος γέγονεν βασιλεὺς (not ὁ βασιλεὺς, as the present reading is); *i. e.* Daniel assumes the supreme power, he acts as absolutely as the king, his power and sway over him are so great, as to persuade him to do as he pleases; he hath destroyed Bel, and slain the dragon, &c.

Ver. 31. *Who cast him into the lions' den.*] Some, from that single circumstance of Daniel being here said to be cast into the lions' den against the king's inclination, contend, that this is the same story with what is related Dan. vi. 19. with some addition of circumstances in the beginning, and want of others in the end: but there are many reasons against this opinion—as, that Daniel in this story is said to be six days in the lions' den, but in the sacred one to have remained there but one night. Secondly, The apocryphal history mentions, that it happened in Cyrus's reign, whereas the text of Daniel says expressly, that it was in the reign of Darius. Thirdly, The accusation and the matter on which Daniel is said to be cast into the lions' den are very different; the one being for his putting up his petition to the true God three times a-day, the other for destroying Bel and the dragon. It seems, therefore, most probable to suppose, that different facts and times are meant, and that either the prophet Daniel was twice cast into the lions' den, once under Darius, because he prayed to his God, contrary to the king's express command, and again under Cyrus, upon occasion of the killing this dragon; or that a different Daniel from the prophet so called is here spoken of.

Ver. 32. *And they had given them every day two carcasses and two sheep.*] The margin very properly renders *two slaves, i. e.* two prisoners condemned to death. As it is an ordinary mode of speech to use body for the whole man, so the Greeks often put σώματα for persons. Slaves in particular are called σώματα, Rev. xviii. 13.

Ver. 33. *There was in Jewry a prophet called Habacuc.*] St. Jerome thinks the prophet here mentioned to be the Habakkuk among the minor prophets, that he was at this time in Judea, where Nebuchadnezzar had left the meaner sort of people to till and cultivate the land; but if this be the same person, whose book we receive as canonical, he must have lived a long time, for he prophesied either before or at least in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar the Great. But Eusebius and others contend for the different Habacuc, whom they suppose to be the writer of this short history, as also of that of Susanna, and they ground their opinion on an ancient title or inscription in some of the Greek copies prefixed to the history of Bel, which runs thus, προφητεία τοῦ Ἀββακοὺμ, υἱοῦ τοῦ Ἰούδα, ἐκ φυλῆς Λευΐ. *Prophetia Abbakum, filii Judæa, de tribu Levi.* After which the first words of the book are, Ἄνθρωπός τις ἦν ἱερεὺς, ὀνόματι Δανιὴλ, υἱὸς τοῦ Ἀβδὰ, συμπότης τοῦ Βασιλέως τῆς Βαβυλῶνος. And from this title they conclude, that the facts here recorded relate not to Daniel the prophet, but to another Daniel, a priest, and of a different extraction, and the history to be wrote likewise by another, and not the canonical Habakkuk. (See Sexti Senen. Bibl. Sacr. et Du Pin. Eccl. Hist. vol. i.) It may be asked, and the question is natural enough, Why that Being, who is confessedly almighty, should choose to employ help so far distant, for the relief of a faithful distressed servant, as that here mentioned; *viz.* the sending a prophet express from Judea to Babylon for that purpose, when it was so easy and ready to have administered sustenance to Daniel by any of the faithful that were in the city itself, or near the place of his confinement, or even to have supported him without any nourishment at all, as he did in a miraculous manner his servant Moses for forty days together. But though it does not belong to or even become us, to search too curiously into the hidden reasons of God's counsel, yet we may be assured, that he acted herein with the same consummate wisdom, which is the standing rule of his providence; and in particular there seems to have been this weighty reason for this expedient, for hereby the Jews that remained in Palestine would receive great comfort and assurance, and be encouraged in their religious trust and confidence, as by Habacuc they would be informed both of Daniel's strong faith and God's remarkable protection and deliverance of him on that account. And without doubt it must afford great consolation to them, as well as to the rest of their distressed brethren, to be assured by this so signal an instance of his goodness, that the God of Israel still thought of, and had a regard for his chosen people, however dispersed, or in what manner soever persecuted and distressed; and probably would draw this or the like inference in their own favour,—that if he stopped in a manner so miraculous the mouths of the lions to save a faithful servant, he might as easily calm the fury of their enemies when he pleased; and that succour, which by the prophet of Jewry he administered to a distressed prophet, they might look upon as a pledge and earnest of a future recovery and reunion of all their captive brethren, who, though reduced to the last extremity like Daniel, ought not to set up their rest at a foreign Babylon, nor fix there their settlement, nor expect thence their comfort and refreshment, but aspire after their native land, and thence only wait for their sustenance and relief.

Ver. 36. *Through the vehemency of his Spirit.*] Greek, Ἐν τῷ ῥοίζῳ, *in stridore;* and according to Scapula, it hath no other signification. The Syriac has, *Viribus Spiritus Sancti.* The Arabic, *Adjuvante Spiritu suo.* Junius, *impetu Spiritus ejus;* i. e. *Domini,* according to the margin.

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It should seem from hence, that by the Spirit is meant the Holy Ghost, to whom the inspiration and conduct of the prophets is commonly ascribed in Scripture. Who might do this, either immediately by his own power, or by an angel, or by a vehement and strong wind. The Greek seems to countenance the last: such transportations of the prophets having been usual long before this time. (See 1 Kings xviii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 11. 16. Ezek. iii. 12. 14. Matt. iv. 1. Acts viii. 39.)

Ver. 38. *And Daniel said, Thou hast remembered me, O God.*] It is observable, that Daniel, without paying any regard, or speaking to the prophet who brought him this sustenance, immediately addresses himself to God, whose minister Habakkuk was. But it may be asked, How it happened that Daniel was so late in his acknowledgment, as now first to make this grateful and pious confession, and that upon so small an occasion in comparison as an unexpected dinner brought to him? The miracle of the seven hungry lions, who notwithstanding offered no hurt or violence to him, was it not a proof far stronger and more illustrious, that God does not forsake those that seek and love him, and called it not for an earlier and louder acknowledgment? I answer, that we are not to imagine that Daniel omitted the tribute of his thanksgiving, for the vouchsafement of that far greater mercy, nor can it indeed be inferred or concluded from this passage; but this new testimony which God gave him of his goodness, by the service and ministry of a prophet, sent to him from such a distance for his refreshment, drew from him this other explicit declaration of his loving-kindness. His answer shews a heart full of the most grateful sentiments, and if life be more valuable than meat, we may be assured he was not only thankful, but in a greater degree, for the preservation of the former, being the more important blessing. "One is at a loss (say Messieurs of Port-Royal) which most to admire, either the composure of Daniel himself, eating what God had sent him in the midst of the lions, or the tameness of the lions, almost famished with hunger, suffering him to do so, and not offering any violence to him, when they saw him eating before them." An event the most unusual and surprising, but arising probably from that respect and awe which God had impressed upon these savage beasts for the person of Daniel. Not that they were sensible themselves of any merit or superior goodness in Daniel, as some have whimsically imagined; but their seizing with so much fury upon his accusers shews that their sparing him was miraculous.

Ver. 42. *Cast those that were the cause of his destruction into the den.*] *i. e.* Those that intended his destruction. There is no mention here of the accusers' wives and children being involved in the same punishment, as is mentioned Dan. vi. 24. which shews the occasion to be different, though it is observable, that the Vulgate closes this fragment, or little history of Bel, with that decree of Darius, (vi. 26.) *That men should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.* However this be, we may draw the following useful reflection from the sentence passed on his accusers, "That if in imitation of this prince, those who falsely accuse others were exposed to the same punishment they endeavoured to inflict, as both the civil and canon laws do require, the world would be soon purged from the mischiefs of falsehood and perjury, nor should we see innocence so often oppressed by calumny and slander."

A

DISSERTATION

UPON

THE TWO BOOKS OF THE MACCABEES.

THERE are often reckoned four books of Maccabees; the two first I shall have only occasion to speak to. The third contains a miraculous deliverance of the Jews, who were exposed, in the amphitheatre at Alexandria, to the fury of elephants. This book, which is to be found in all the Greek editions, is, without reason, called the third book of Maccabees, since it does not speak of them in the least. If this history be true, it ought to have been placed the first of all, as what is mentioned there happened about fifty years before the passages that are related in the other two books. (See Du Pin's Bel. Dissert. Eccl. Hist. vol. i.) The fourth, containing the history of John Hyrcanus, is rejected as still more apocryphal, and probably was taken from the book or memoirs of his actions mentioned 1 Macc. xvi. 23, 24. The two books of the Maccabees, known and distinguished by that name, were not written by the same person, as the learned conclude from the style, and a different manner of counting the years; the one follows the Jewish account, the other that of Alexandria, which begins six months later. The first is generally thought to have been wrote by a Hebrew originally in that language, as the phrase of it is plainly Jewish, or rather in Syriac, which was the vulgar tongue in Palestine in the time of the Maccabees, and afterward translated into Greek, and is by some attributed to Josephus, or Philo, by others to the synagogue, or the Maccabees themselves. The other is supposed to be wrote

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originally in Greek, begins its history a great deal higher than the first, and is an abridgment or epitome, by what author it is uncertain, of a work wrote by Jason, a Jew of Cyrene, as appears from the preface of that book, which begins chap. ii. 23. The book itself is opened by two letters of the Jews at Jerusalem to their brethren in Egypt, and added by the author of this abridgment. The two books together contain the history of the Jews, or the state of the church under the third monarchy, which was that of the Greeks, comprising about forty years, from the death of Alexander the Great to that of Demetrius Soter, and they conclude about one hundred and thirty years and upwards before the coming of our Saviour. There is a great chasm in the Jewish history, occasioned by the loss of their books; for scarce one book written in the Hebrew tongue, since prophecy ceased, escaped the general calamity that befel the Jewish writings. Those that were retrieved by Judas Maccabeus, (2 Macc. ii. 13, 14.) from the ravage of Antiochus, or were written afterward, which were not a few, (see Prol. to Ecclus.) all perished under Titus's dispersion, or Adrian's persecution; on this account, and the obscurity occasioned by this calamity, Eusebius says he can go no farther than Zerubbabel in his catalogue with any certainty, as there was no sacred volume to be depended upon, from the return from the captivity to our Saviour's time. (Demonst. lib. viii.) During their captivity, indeed, the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel give us an account of many particulars relating to their history, as does Tobit likewise at Nineveh, Esther and Mordecai at Shushan. After the captivity we have the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, whose present work probably is but an abridgment of those writings or commentaries of his mentioned 2 Macc. ii. 13. since the passage quoted in the Maccabees is not to be found there. With Nehemiah ended the history of the Jews contained in the canonical books of the Old Testament. As Nehemiah died after the year of the world 3563, and the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes began A. M. 3829, from the one to the other there was a distance of two hundred and sixty-six years, which interval between Nehemiah and the Maccabees, for want of records, annals, and other proper helps from sacred or profane history, may well be expected to be dark and obscure. In the time of the Maccabees, care seems to have been taken to record all remarkable events which happened in that country; the author of the first book quotes at the end of that work the memoirs of the pontificate of John Hyrcanus, (1 Macc. xvi. ult.) which makes it probable that he wrote from the annals of that time. The author of the second says, (ii. 14.) that Judas made a collection of the historical accounts of his nation, which had been dispersed during the war. And in fact great use is to be made and much light is afforded from the apocryphal writings, chiefly the books of the Maccabees, for carrying on the third of the Jewish history. Next to the books of Maccabees, we are beholden to Josephus, Philo Judeus, and such Greek and Latin writers as would vouchsafe to take notice of them, for farther insight into their history. This then is the first use I shall mention of the books of the Maccabees; *viz.* in some measure to fill up the chasm of the Jewish history from the ceasing of prophecy. Secondly, No history is of like use to explain the book of Daniel, and what is contained therein relating to the Jews, and their great enemy Antiochus Epiphanes, on which account the fathers have always set a great value on these books. In them most of the particulars of the great revolutions mentioned by that prophet are so unfolded and explained, that even the very time and number of days which are there set down accord most strictly to truth and the evidence of fact. The first book in particular is a key to the mysteries in the eighth and eleventh chapters of that prophecy, respecting the horn by which the sanctuary was profaned. From thence it appears that that horn was Antiochus, whose great wickedness and wantonness in shedding blood, and the abomination introduced by him into the holy place, fully answer that character. The like use may be made of these books for explaining other parts of the Holy Scripture, as particularly 1 Macc. x. 88, 89. which, with other passages in this grave writer, whosoever, says the very learned Dr. Jackson, " will compare with the ninth of the prophet Zechariah, will perceive there may be good use of books not canonical for the right understanding of sacred writings most canonical, and that these books, though apocryphal, do not deserve to be left out in any new impressions of our Bibles." (Tom. ii. p. 844.) To which I must add what another judicious writer says on the occasion, " That without all doubt all the world could not recompense the loss of the books of the Maccabees, and the use of them for understanding the prophets; so inestimable is the benefit of them to that purpose." (Thorndike's Epilogue, p. 210.) Thirdly, God having withdrawn his prophets, many and great revolutions happened to the Jewish state, and the church of God underwent very severe and heavy persecutions both from the Greeks and Romans, in which the Maccabees in particular signalized themselves; the account of which times, and of their conduct on the occasion, we must take from these books; and therefore they are to be valued, and of the church not unprofitably used, says St. Austin, for those glorious instances recorded in them of persons suffering such horrible persecutions with a remarkable patience for the testimony of God's religion, and thereby encouraging others to undergo cheerfully the like trial of sufferings. Fourthly, There are some scattered remains in these books as well as the other apocryphal ones, which have preserved many notions of the ancient Jews in the interval between the days of Christ and the last prophets; and in particular their belief of a future resurrection, and the hope which the Jews conceived and entertained of the Messiah that was to come, whom they speak of sometimes as a prophet or priest, sometimes as a king, sometimes under the character of two of these offices joined together. (See 1 Macc. iv. 46. xiv. 41.) But notwithstanding the usefulness of the books of the Maccabees in these respects, it must be acknowledged, and is very apparent, that there are great errors, and often accounts different and even contradictory to be found in them, especially the second, arising probably either from ignorance of the Greek and Roman history, or national prejudice, and an immoderate partiality in favour of the Jewish nation. A learned writer has been at the pains (see Raynold's Prælect. vol. i.) to select such passages as are inconsistent with and contrary to the account given by approved authors and historians of particular facts and occurrences, and sets down among others, as instances of carelessness at least, the following passages, 1 Macc. i. 6. where it is said, that Alexander, before his death, divided his kingdom among his honourable servants: but the writers of this history say

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otherwise; the account generally received is, that after the death of Alexander, his dominions were parted among divers of his princes and captains, and after a short time fell into the hands of four, as is also intimated, Dan. viii. 8. Chap. xv. 16. it is said of the Romans, that they committed their government to one man, or magistrate, every year; whereas it is well known, that at that time there were annually two consuls chosen at Rome, and for three hundred years before. Lib. ii. ii. 4, 5. the ark is said to be hid, and concealed by the prophet Jeremiah, which could neither happen before the taking of the city, for Jeremiah was then in prison; nor after its being taken, for the Chaldeans would scarce have suffered so valuable a part of the spoils as the tabernacle, the ark, and the altar to be taken away, and secreted from them. And what follows after, that God would, upon the future return of that people, discover where Jeremiah had hid these, once so famous in Solomon's temple, is no less false, as it is certain the material furniture of that superb temple was all destroyed with it. The two books also often contradict one another in their relation of memorable events; as, lib. i. vi. 13. 16. it is said that Antiochus perished through great grief in a strange land, which is thought by some to be confirmed from Dan. viii. 25.; but, lib. ii. i. 16. he is said to have been slain in the temple of Nanea, by throwing stones like thunderbolts upon him and his company; and, ix. 28. to have ended his days miserably in the mountains, by an incurable and invisible plague in his bowels. Judas Maccabeus is said, lib. i. ix. 3. 18. to have been slain in battle, anno 152. but, lib. ii. i. 10. he is represented as writing a letter or epistle, anno 188. thirty-six years after his death. Again, lib. i. iv. 36. he is said to have purified the temple before Antiochus's death; but, lib. ii. x. 2, 3. it is mentioned as done two years after his death. Nor will it be sufficient to say that these two years are to be reckoned from the profanation of the temple, and not from Antiochus's death, for even thus will it not be consistent with the first book; for it appears from thence, that the purifying the sanctuary was three years after its profanation; for the profanation was on the fifteenth day of the month Chasleu, anno 145. lib. i. i. 54. and the purifying was on the twenty-fifth day of the same month, anno 148. lib. i. iv. 52. There are also some instances, particularly in the second book, which are contrary to the canonical Scriptures, and of dangerous consequence to be recommended as precedents, or to stand upon record uncontradicted in history; as lib. ii. xii. 44, 45. Judas Maccabeus is commended for praying for the dead, and making an offering or reconciliation in their behalf, that they might be delivered from sin: Bellarmine from hence takes occasion to confirm the doctrines of purgatory and prayers for the dead; (De Purgat. lib. ii. cap. 3.) but it appears plainly from the context, that Judas's prayer was not for the relief of the dead, but that the guilt and punishment of the trespass committed by some wicked ones who had displeased God, and perished in their sins, might not be imputed to, or transferred upon, the living. The rendering of the Vulgate here, and its inference, are both faulty, *Sancta ergo et salubris est cogitatio pro defunctis exorare, ut a peccatis solvantur.* The Greek has nothing like it, nor can any such doctrine be founded upon it. Herein lies the fallacy of that version; it joins those words, *It was a good and holy thought,* which manifestly is spoken of what went before, to the sentence that follows after; though the Greek, by a full stop, quite distinguishes it from this last sentence. Nor will the syntax of the present Greek text ever allow it to belong to it. There is a like mistake, and for the same purpose, two verses above, ver. 43. where the Vulgate reads, *Duodecim millia* (it should be *duo*) *drachmas argenti misit Hierosolymam offerri pro peccatis mortuorum sacrificium.* But the Greek barely is, προσαγαγεῖν περὶ ἁμαρτίας θυσίαν, as even the Roman edition of 1587, published by the order of Sixtus Quintus himself, expressly reads, without any notice or mention of the dead: nor is that version less faulty in rendering the Greek adverb ἀστείως, by *religiose.* It is most probable, that Judas thought of nothing less than purgatory in this action, for the money sent to Jerusalem was for a sin-offering, to expiate, or take away, the guilt from the rest of the people. And it is observable, that this sum was a general contribution, according to the appointment, Lev. iv. 13. So that upon the whole, what was here done by Judas, was not for the sake of the deceased soldiers, but for the safety and preservation of the remainder that were living, that the judgment of God might not overtake the rest. Lib. ii. xiv. 41, 42. Razias is commended for laying violent hands on himself, and is said to die manfully. But this whole account seems a fiction. That a man should fall on his sword first, then leap down from a wall into the midst of his enemies; that they should make way for him, where he fell amongst the thickest of them; that he should rise up again in anger, but in such a condition that his blood gushed out like spouts of water; that he should run through the midst of the throng notwithstanding; and standing upon a steep rock when his blood was now quite gone, should pluck out his bowels, and take them in both his hands, and cast them among the crowd; and even at his last gasp should have the use of his understanding so perfect, as to call upon God to restore him those bowels again; these are circumstances too odd and romantic to gain any credit to this story. It would be almost endless to instance in the several faulty particulars of the second book; but of all others, i. 18. to the end of that chapter, excepting the prayer itself, is the most unwarrantable, which the learned reader may see exposed with great strength and reasoning, by consulting Raynold. de Libr. Apocryph. tom. ii. Præl. 133, 134. But notwithstanding this mixture of dross, there is a fund of valuable treasure still remaining. Lastly, It cannot but be observed, that the series of these books is very much disturbed, that not only the same facts are frequently related in both, but the order of time is not truly preserved: it may not be amiss therefore, that these books may be perused with more pleasure and profit, to refer the reader to Wells's Histor. Geogr. of the Old Testament, vol. ii. where he will find the several chapters in each set down according to the true series of the Jewish history.

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A

DISSERTATION

UPON

THE TWO BOOKS OF ESDRAS.

THAT which is called the first, or, according to other accounts, the third book of Esdras, the author of which is not known, but supposed to be a Hellenist Jew, inserts an odd narration, in the third and fourth chapters, of three young men that were of Darius's guard, contending for the reward of a problem or sentence, propounded by every one of them. The arguments, it must be confessed, are weighty, and very proper on the occasion; but it is obvious that the writer makes these candidates to prescribe, as it were, to the king, what gifts and rewards he shall bestow on them in token of victory: and besides, the rewards themselves are too magnificent for such a contest, and more proper to be bestowed on a general, who had gained a signal victory, or conquered divers provinces. His design in this narrative seems to have been, to embellish the account of Zerubbabel, by a circumstance so honourable to him as the prize, and, at the same time, entertaining enough to the reader. I conceive it to be a traditionary story, as the true Ezra takes no notice of it, founded probably upon truth, but mixed with some fabulous circumstances. In different parts of the book there is a summary repetition of the two last chapters of the second book of Chronicles, and of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. But one cannot excuse the author for injudiciously inserting several particulars from them, to give an air of truth to his relation, and to make it more credible. But against its authority there are the following material objections: 1. When the Jews, by the permission of Cyrus, returned to Judea, this writer makes their governor, or conductor, to be Sanabassar; whereas, according to the true Ezra, Zerubbabel was their conductor. 2. He places the reconsecration of the altar, and the renewing the sacrifices in the second year of Darius; whereas, the canonical book of that name fixes it in the reign of Cyrus, (iii. 1.) and in the seventh month. 3. If Darius, when he permitted the Jews to return with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem, to rebuild their temple, wrote to his officers beyond the Euphrates in their favour, as this writer represents it, would they have had the assurance to demand of them by what authority they engaged in the work? Did they not know the king's orders, and were not they themselves obliged to furnish them with materials? Or would Zerubbabel have had any occasion to have recourse to the decree of Cyrus to rebuild their temple? 4. He makes Zerubbabel to be one of the guard about the king's (Darius) person at Babylon, when he confessedly was, at that time, at Jerusalem. (Ezra ii. 2.) 5. He represents Darius, (iv. 46.) as engaged by a solemn vow, before his advancement to the kingdom, to rebuild their temple: if this was the case, what need was there to search the archives with such diligence for Cyrus's decree for that purpose? 6. He distinguishes Nehemiah from the Tirshatha, making two separate persons of them; whereas, the latter is only a name of office. (Nehem. viii. 9.) 7. He contradicts both Scripture and himself, when he says, iv. 44. 57. that Zerubbabel entreated Darius to send to Jerusalem the holy vessels, which Cyrus had intended to have sent, as if Cyrus had not executed that design, contrary to what the true Ezra, and even himself says, vi. 18, 19. 8. He charges the Edomites with burning of the temple, at the same time that he mentions Jerusalem being taken by the Chaldeans. 9. He says, that when Darius gave leave to the Jews to return, he ordered them to be escorted for their greater safety by a thousand horse, as if a number so inconsiderable could be a safeguard for fifty thousand persons. Lastly, Where he does agree with the canonical books, he quite confounds the order of time and events; and, after all his pains to adjust his account to that of the true Ezra, he betrays his inability for so nice an undertaking, and has fallen into faults so gross, that the church has deservedly rejected this book as uncanonical, and unworthy to be read in its service. I have the rather taken notice of these, as well as those respecting the books of Maccabees, to acquit myself of a promise, (see Pref. to Comm. on Ecclus.) to make some strictures and observations upon particular passages in them. As to the second book of this writer, it must be confessed there are in it lofty sentiments, beautiful similes, ancient traditions, the appearance at least of a prophetic spirit, and a surprising close resemblance of many passages in the New Testament; but the following objections are made against it: 1. The genealogy of this Pseudo-Esdras, placed at the entrance, differs from that, 1 Esdras viii. 12. and from that in the true Ezra, vii. 1, 2. which has induced the learned to conclude that they are different persons. 2. It is said, (i. 11.) that God scattered the people of two provinces, even of Tyrus and Sidon, in favour of his people returning from Egypt, of which there is no confirmation in Scripture. And a little after, (ver. 22, 23.) two very different facts are confounded: Moses is made to work the miracle of sweetening the water at the brook Arnon, (Numb. xxi. 16.) which was wrought only on the waters of Marah. (Exod. xv. 25. 39, 40.) The author enumerates the twelve minor prophets, though

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Haggai, Zachary, and Malachi, whom, according to a rabbinical conceit he calls an angel of the Lord, prophesied after the captivity, and their times agree not with that of this writer. It is moreover observable, that he places them not according to the order in the Hebrew canon, but follows that of the LXX. or Greek Bibles. Chap. ii. 33. he introduces his having received a charge from the Lord upon Mount Horeb, abruptly, without any authority, connexion, or reason, except it be to insinuate and countenance a notion of his inspiration. Chap. iv. 35. 41. mention is made of souls departed in a state of grace, being kept in chambers or secret storehouses, till the day of judgment, agreeably enough to Apoc. vi. 9, 10. which has been objected to, as seemingly countenancing the doctrine of purgatory; and it must be confessed the catholics have so applied it, but without reason, as nothing is therein said or intimated of their being detained there by way of punishment, or to be purified by it. Chap. iii. 6. we have another rabbinical conceit of Eden, or the earthly Paradise, being planted even before the earth itself came forward, or was made. Chap. vi. 49. it is said that God, on the fifth day, created two animals of an enormous bigness, one called Enoch, the other Leviathan, and as the seventh part would not contain them both, he separated them, and put the former into a dry place, wherein there were a thousand mountains, and the Leviathan he reserved in the sea, to furnish an entertainment for his people at the coming of their Messiah. This is also another rabbinical whim, which the author borrowed from the Talmudists, who have likewise abused Gen. i. 20, 21. and Psal. ciii. 26. to the same fanciful purpose. (See Raynold's Prælect. xxvii. vol. i.) What he mentions, xiii. 40, 41. about the ten tribes being carried by God beyond the Euphrates, which divided itself for their passage, into a farther country, where never mankind dwelt, into a region called Arareth, that they might there keep their statutes without danger or disturbance, from thence to return at the latter time by a like miraculous stopping of the waters; I say, though these tribes are allowed to be in being, in what country it is uncertain, yet their passage both ways in the manner described is scarce credible. It seems a fond persuasion, arising from national prejudice, that God will never cease to do miracles in behalf of his chosen. Chap. xiv. 11. he makes ten parts and a half of the world, dividing it into twelve, to be in his time already past, and therefore, according to his account, the world should have been at an end above one thousand seven hundred years ago. It is computed, that from the creation of the world (for I see no reason to begin the account at the deluge) to the time of Esdras were about three thousand four hundred and seventy years, and therefore after five hundred years more, or the time of our Saviour's birth, or at least of his death, the period should have been completed, and this world have had an end. Chap. ii. 43. mention is made of a young man of high stature, taller than all the rest, crowning those that have confessed the name of God, called also, ver. 47. the Son of God: to confirm the same legend, and to give the more credit to this fable, are these words inserted, vii. 28, 29. *My Son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and they that remain shall rejoice within four hundred years; after these years shall my Son Christ die, and all men that have life.* This and many other passages speak so plainly of Jesus Christ, his coming, office, death, &c. that if this book had been known and received as authentic among the Jews, it seems almost impossible that any Jew should remain unconverted. From a number of parallel passages to those in the New Testament, which a learned hand has digested columnwise (see Lee's Dissert. on 2 Esdras), it seems necessary to conclude, either that Jesus Christ and his apostles copied from hence, or that this writer transcribed largely from the other. It seems most probable, that the author was a Jew converted to Christianity, who, in hopes of converting others, composed this work under the name of a writer, for whom the Jews had the highest esteem. And there seems good reason to conclude, that the author lived in the times of the first heathen persecutions, from many passages encouraging faith, and a spirit of constancy and persecution; as may, I think, be inferred also from some circumstances in the visions themselves, (see chap. xiii.) some of which have been thought to have been taken from Ezekiel's visions, Daniel's prophecies, (see Dan. vii. 7.) who, as from the mouth of God, is called his brother, (xii. 11.) or St. John's Revelation. But I forbear to enter or remark upon these, as acknowledging my ignorance of their true design, which the learned themselves are so much divided about. What a great critic (Scaliger) observed of Calvin, that he was wise in not writing on the Apocalypse, admonishes me not rashly to attempt the visionary part of this book, who have neither sufficient reading nor judgment to discern the scope and intendment of mystical and prophetic writings.

I cannot conclude without blessing the goodness of God for enabling me to put the finishing hand at length to these sheets, and am glad likewise to embrace this opportunity of acknowledging my obligation to those right reverend and reverend persons, who have occasionally favoured me with their learned assistance in the course of this work.

END OF VOL. IV.

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